

# PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST

Quality Assurance Framework

Children's Services

2022 – 2025



Thank you to the fabulous children of Lincolnshire who have provided the fantastic pictures above.

## Table of Contents

Introduction and Purpose .....	3
Quality Assurance Governance .....	4
Responsibilities: .....	5
Quality Standards .....	8
Quality Assurance Activity .....	10
Quality Audit Model – .....	16
Selection of Cases for Audit: .....	17
Audits: .....	17
Moderation: .....	17
Scaling and Escalation: .....	17
Practice Observation: .....	18
Groups: .....	18
Action Plans: .....	18
Voice of children, young people and families .....	18
Participation Team: .....	19
The Young Inspectors Programme: .....	20
Lincolnshire Young Voices .....	20
Learning from Quality Assurance Activity .....	20
Impact of Quality Assurance .....	21

## Introduction and Purpose

In Lincolnshire we have high aspirations and a clear shared vision that puts children first. To do this we will work together with families to enhance children's present and future lives. We want all children in every part of the county to be safe, well and thriving and to ultimately achieve their potential.

We recognise that we can only achieve our vision through effective partnership with families and across agencies, including schools, and a wide variety of voluntary and community sector partners, placing family's needs at the center of everything we do. In Lincolnshire we are proud of our strong track record of improvement and we believe that this success is because we recognise the critical importance of early intervention, delivered through integrated services which ensure that families can receive support at an early stage within their locality.

In Lincolnshire we have committed to four strategic outcomes for children and young people:

- Children and young people are **Healthy and Safe**
- Develop to their potential in their early years and are **Ready for School**
- **Learn and Achieve**
- Children and young people are **Ready for Adult Life**

The purpose of this Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework is to ensure that children, young people and families are achieving their potential through excellent service and practice. To achieve this, the framework will ensure that:

- Performance against required standards and agreed targets is measured and monitored
- Areas of both strength and improvement are identified to facilitate continuous improvement
- A whole system approach is adopted, that links individual supervision, training and planning to the findings of quality assurance activity
- Staff understand their quality assurance roles and responsibilities and that everyone has a role to play in improving quality
- A robust feedback cycle which drives a learning culture where problems are addressed openly and honestly is embedded throughout the directorate.

To be effective the Quality Assurance Framework will be underpinned by:

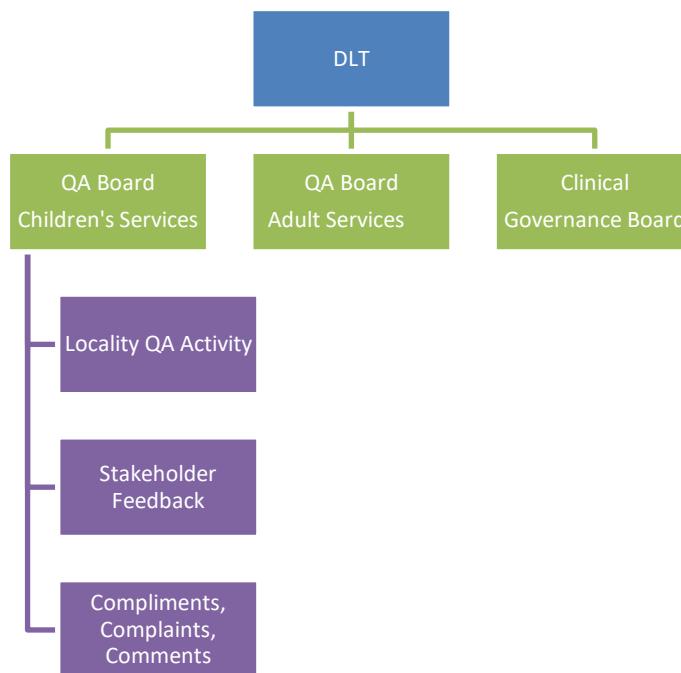
- Clear arrangements for monitoring quality assurance activity
- An ownership and understanding of roles by all staff at all levels in relation to quality assurance across the directorate
- Effective and accurate performance information
- A clear child centered and impact focused aim at improving services and outcomes for children and families

- A restorative approach – quality assurance activity will be more focused on working with staff and managers and building relationships
- The use of appreciative inquiry and looking to build on strengths
- Regular reporting and analysis of comprehensive and reliable performance data.

## Quality Assurance Governance

The quality assurance reporting and governance structure has been established to ensure clear sign off of recommendations and actions that are a result of QA activity to promote continued learning across the directorate.

The Quality Assurance Board will meet regularly and will be responsible for not only endorsing findings, recommendations, and future quality assurance development work but also for ensuring that information is disseminated effectively to teams and all staff within Children's Services.



To ensure information is shared across Children's and Adult Services there will be regular connections between the Principle Social Workers for each service. In addition, there will be a two-way flow of information between the Quality Assurance Board and the Clinical Governance Board to help ensure that information is shared appropriately.

The Clinical Governance Board is set up to ensure that appropriate and effective governance mechanisms, systems and processes are in place across the service for all aspects of quality and risk in relation to services that are commissioned or provided by Lincolnshire County Council that are CQC registered.

The Children's and Adults Boards alongside the Clinical Governance Board will together provide assurance to the Director Leadership Team (DLT) in relation to; the quality assurance processes that are in place, their effectiveness, the impact on services and improvement and ultimately ensuring that people of Lincolnshire are receiving high quality services and good experiences when working with Lincolnshire County Council.

## Responsibilities:

To be effective, quality assurance needs to take place within an organisational context which promotes and supports the continuous development of Children's Services as a 'learning organisation'. This depends on 'ownership' at all levels.

The role of managers and practitioners is to ensure that services provided to children, young people and their families are of a consistently high quality which positively impacts on good outcomes for children and their families. Each member of staff is responsible and will be held accountable for the quality of their own practice and has a duty to contribute to their ongoing learning through the evaluation of practice.

Role	RESPONSIBILITIES
Practitioners - all frontline staff working directly with children and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure practice meets statutory requirements</li> <li>• Ensure practice meets professional standards (e.g. SWE etc.)</li> <li>• Ensure practice is child-focussed and meets service standards in line with procedures</li> <li>• Ensure decisions are made appropriately</li> <li>• Seek manager advice where appropriate</li> <li>• Ensure recording is kept up to date</li> <li>• Ensure recording is in line with service standards</li> <li>• Work reflectively in order to continually improve practice</li> <li>• Participate in formal and informal opportunities for learning and reflection</li> <li>• Participate in reflective discussions about service improvements by providing your views, observations and suggestions.</li> </ul>
All Line Managers	<p>As above, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and monitor quality assurance with supervisees</li> <li>• Ensure staff are provided with supervision which is in line with service requirements and reflective.</li> <li>• Ensure staff have opportunities to develop their skills formally and informally</li> <li>• Ensure staff are able to participate in formal and informal opportunities for learning and reflection</li> <li>• Ensure that issues of capability are dealt with appropriately and in a timely way</li> <li>• Participate fully in quality assurance activities, such as auditing files as a standard part of supervision</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use performance management information to understand the performance of their teams, and the strengths and areas for development in the service areas they manage.</li> </ul>
Principal Social Worker and QA Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal Social Worker will offer support to teams to ensure that practice improvements are embedded and secured.</li> <li>• Issues arising during the course of any work will be addressed by the appropriate route if necessary.</li> <li>• Key training issues identified by the Principal Social Worker will be notified to the Learning &amp; Development Team to secure appropriate training.</li> </ul>
Independent Conference & Reviewing Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure your practice meets statutory, professional and service standards</li> <li>• Ensure your practice is child-focussed</li> <li>• Ensure your recording is kept up to date</li> <li>• Act as 'critical friends' in promoting best practice in services to children and young people, and challenging where practice does not meet required standards</li> <li>• Ensure that Child Protection Plans provide the child with appropriate safeguarding, that they are achievable and are reviewed regularly.</li> <li>• Ensure that plans for Children in Care are based on a detailed and informed assessment, are up to date, effective and provide a real and genuine response to each child's needs.</li> <li>• Monitor on an ongoing basis the quality of service provided to Children in Care, which also includes monitoring the performance of the Council's function as a corporate parent, identifying any areas of poor practice whether on an individual case basis or establishing collective patterns of concerns.</li> <li>• Contribute to the development and application of QA approaches for Council safeguarding service and the LSCP</li> </ul>
Children Services Team Managers	<p>As above, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure quality assurance activities are undertaken in your team</li> <li>• Ensure day to day management oversight and authorisation activity considers quality assurance issues throughout the pathway e.g. is the assessment of good quality? Is the plan SMART? Is an external placement fully risk assessed and able to best meet the needs of the child?</li> <li>• Audit team files regularly as part of supervision and record on feedback template to enable shared learning</li> <li>• Participate in service level file audit activity and ensure feedback on individual audits is provided to practitioners, remedial actions completed and reported back as requested.</li> <li>• Ensure supervision audits are undertaken.</li> <li>• Participate in quality assurance learning sessions and ensure that learning is cascaded to team members for their information and reflection.</li> </ul>
Heads of Service	As above plus:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure team managers within your service area are undertaking quality assurance activities</li> <li>• Ensure learning from quality assurance activities is shared and used to inform improvements in practice</li> <li>• Attend Quality Assurance Meetings, with information about QA activity within your service area.</li> <li>• Feed information from the Quality Assurance meetings to team managers and ensure it is disseminated and used to inform reflective discussions</li> <li>• Undertake additional QA activities within your service area in response to practice or performance issues and share the learning within your own service area and the Quality Assurance Board meetings</li> </ul>
Assistant Director	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a 'high support high challenge' improvement culture within Children's Services, so staff are aware of the importance of QA and their own responsibilities, confident to make decisions at the appropriate level, creative about solutions and feel able to discuss any concerns</li> <li>• Actively promote the importance of QA within Children's Services and engage with QA activities</li> <li>• Ensure HoSs are encouraged and supported to participate fully in all QA activities, and hold them accountable for quality of services within their area</li> <li>• Provide HoSs with reflective supervision, and ensure QA activity and learning is discussed.</li> <li>• Participate in service level file audit activity and ensure HoSs are engaged fully in the process</li> <li>• Reflect on QA reports that are presented at QA Board, take any agreed remedial action and report back to QA Board on progress.</li> <li>• Feed back to Director of Children's Services (DCS), Elected Members, LSCP etc. as appropriate</li> </ul>
Director	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure ADs engage fully with agreed QA activity</li> <li>• Provide ADs with reflective supervision, to include discussion around service quality</li> <li>• Hold ADs accountable for service quality and engagement with QA within their service</li> </ul>
Business Support Officers	<p>Business Support Officers can help teams with quality assurance but should not be held accountable for issues regarding quality of practice.</p> <p>You can assist by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring your tasks are completed within agreed timescales and to good quality standards</li> <li>• Entering information onto electronic case recording systems accurately and in a timely manner</li> <li>• Reporting any practice quality issues to the relevant senior practitioners or team managers</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participating in reflective discussions about service improvements by providing your views, observations and suggestions.</li> </ul>
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## Quality Standards

All areas across Children's Services, when auditing or undertaking any quality assurance activity, should consider the following 7 quality standards. Ensuring that these standards are constantly being considered and/or addressed (where applicable) will help to ensure that children, young people and families receive the best service and experience which in turn facilitates improved outcomes for them.

QUALITY STANDARD	WHAT DOES 'GOOD' LOOK LIKE?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE THIS
Assessments are good quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involve children/young people and their parents/carers</li> <li>Timely</li> <li>Proportionate</li> <li>Analyse historic information</li> <li>Identify risks and protective factors</li> </ul> <p>Result in a clear analysis of the child/young person's situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports on timeliness</li> <li>Practice Supervisors and Team Managers' sign off of assessments</li> <li>Bi monthly service related audit activity</li> <li>"External" audit activity</li> <li>IRO scrutiny at conferences and reviews</li> <li>Feedback from children and families and other professionals</li> </ul>
Plans are good quality and SMART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect assessment findings</li> <li>Are clear and outcome focussed with attributed actions which are:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific</li> <li>Measurable</li> <li>Achievable</li> <li>Realistic</li> <li>Timescales are clear</li> </ul> </li> <li>Other agencies are involved as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service related audit activity</li> <li>"External" audit activity</li> <li>IRO scrutiny at reviews</li> <li>Review length of plans</li> </ul>
Care Planning Meetings are held regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Held initially within 10 days of a child coming in care and every time there is a change in placement</li> <li>Meeting notes reflect the current situation of the child and outcomes are fed into CIC Reviews.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal drift in cases.</li> <li>Clear and up to date records of the child's journey.</li> </ul>
Child and family's voice is used to inform case planning and service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wishes and feelings of children/young people and families are:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visible in assessments</li> <li>Visible in notes of meetings</li> <li>Reflected in plans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External audit, team related audit, service user feedback</li> <li>Suggestions acted upon from VOICE</li> <li>Compliments and complaints</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feedback from VOICE informs service planning</li> </ul>	
Our involvement makes a positive difference to outcomes for the child/ young person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment and interventions achieve:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced risk to children and young people</li> <li>• Positive changes made and sustained</li> <li>• Positive feedback from children/young people and their families</li> <li>• Positive feedback from others agencies in respect of outcomes e.g., Adult Services.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External audits</li> <li>- Team manager feedback</li> <li>- Annual survey feedback</li> <li>- IRO questionnaire feedback following meetings</li> <li>- Number of repeat CP Plans</li> <li>- Number of repeat referrals</li> <li>- Educational outcomes</li> <li>- EETs improvement</li> <li>- Stability of placements and learning from disruption meetings</li> </ul>
There is good quality staff supervision, management oversight and independent review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supervision is:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular</li> <li>• Consistent</li> <li>• Evidenced in recordings</li> <li>• Clearly reflects the current situation</li> <li>• Reflective</li> <li>• Leads to effective decision making and improved outcomes</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Rationale for decisions is clear and drift is prevented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performance information to confirm supervision has taken place</li> <li>- Internal team activity and external audits</li> <li>- Permanence at second review (IRO)</li> <li>- RAG Ratings</li> <li>- Case supervision reports</li> <li>- Findings of fostering survey</li> <li>- "Getting to Good" improvements achieved.</li> </ul>
We meet Statutory Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All statutory requirements are met in terms of:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timescales for action</li> <li>• Statutory visits</li> <li>• Reviews</li> <li>• Legal proceedings</li> <li>• Core groups</li> <li>• Care planning meetings</li> <li>• Child protection conferences</li> <li>• Personal Education Plans</li> <li>• Unannounced visiting fostering</li> <li>• Child being seen</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reporting on timeliness of assessments</li> <li>- Stat visits timescales</li> <li>- Unannounced visits to foster placements PEPs etc.</li> <li>- Child seen within timescales Internal and external audit</li> <li>- IRO scrutiny</li> <li>- Child and family feedback</li> <li>- Feedback from virtual head.</li> </ul>
Visits are good quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visits:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are in line with statutory or service requirements</li> <li>• Have a clear purpose</li> <li>• Are recorded in detail to include agreed actions</li> <li>• Include the wishes and feelings of children/ young people</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stat visits requirements fulfilled</li> <li>- Reports</li> <li>- Internal and external audit</li> </ul>
Quality of recording is good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recording is up to date, proportionate and clear</li> <li>- Case files contain up to date chronologies and case summaries</li> <li>- Appropriate language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data quality reports</li> <li>- Internal and external audit</li> <li>- Management oversight case notes</li> <li>- IRO scrutiny</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Written to the child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feedback following case transfers</li> </ul>
There is good quality decision-making and application of thresholds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thresholds are applied consistently throughout the child's journey through our services</li> <li>- Decisions are made appropriately and based on evidence and are recorded with a clear rationale.</li> <li>- Intervention reduces risk and improves outcomes</li> <li>- Step up and down processes across the services are applied effectively and families experience them as seamless.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External audit at Front Door</li> <li>- Number of S47s leading to ICPCs</li> <li>- Outcome of LPMs</li> <li>- Court outcomes aligned to plan</li> <li>- ICPCs resulting in a CP Plan</li> <li>- Proportion of cases stepped down that are re-referred</li> <li>- Decrease in subsequent CP Plans</li> </ul>
We provide good quality intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children and young people and their families receive good quality services in line with service standards</li> <li>- Practice is reflective</li> <li>- Families are able to build sustainable relationships through having minimal change of social worker.</li> <li>- Service users and colleagues are treated with respect and courtesy</li> <li>- Diversity - children and young people's culture and diversity needs are recorded, considered and identified in assessments and reflected in plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Audits</li> <li>- Reporting of identity tab on protocol Internal and external audit</li> <li>- Annual survey</li> <li>- Feedback from other agencies</li> <li>- Reflective group feedback</li> <li>- Learning from complaints</li> </ul>
We have a positive organisational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff working within the service feel valued and are provided with the support and challenge necessary for them to undertake demanding, complex roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feedback from staff</li> <li>- Staff briefings</li> <li>- Learning from exit and stay interviews</li> <li>- Induction feedback</li> <li>- Participation at learning events</li> </ul>

## Quality Assurance Activity

A range of quality assurance methods are in place to elicit quantitative and qualitative information to measure standards and best possible outcomes for children and young people. These methods assist staff in ensuring that we deliver high quality services to all children, young people and families and provide assurance to senior managers. Below is a list of quality assurance activity (A-Z) used to assess the practice standards and service delivery:

Quality Assurance Activity	What it Does	Frequency
Audits (Collaborative)	<b>How?</b> : Monthly quality audits will be conducted by a cohort of managers (TM/PS/SEHW) as per the Quality	Ongoing

	<p>Audit Model (see below), using an impact and outcome based audit tool.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> Audit outcomes will be recorded on the individual case file by the auditor, with any restorative actions being the responsibility of the case worker.</p> <p>Reports will be provided by the Quality and Standards team both in terms of collective themes and specific areas of investigation. Heads of Service will provide sponsorship for any themes audits that are required.</p> <p>Workshops and/or Practice Leader sessions will be developed from any collective learning from audits as and when required. If sessions aren't required, learning will be disseminated as agreed on a case-by-case basis.</p>	
Audits (Thematic) /Dip Samples	<p><b>How?</b> : Thematic / Dip Samples focus on specific issues, informed by research and other evidence based social work to inform the assessment of practice in different service areas. These will be conducted by the Quality and Standards Team, External Collaborators, and locality teams, following the Quality Audit model.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> Will be provided in an overview report, with a headline report to be used by Heads of Service and Practice Leads to share with their teams. Bespoke training and workshops may be offered to support embedding learning.</p>	
External Quality Assurance: Care Quality Commission (CQC)	<p>From October 2015 commissioning for 0-5 health services transferred from NHS England to Local Authorities, joining up the whole 0-19 commissioning. Local Authorities (LA) are expected to ensure that the appropriate clinical governance arrangements are in place to support safe delivery of health services. Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) became both the commissioners and providers of Children's Health Services 0-19 in October 2017. In addition to this it is a requirement of The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (regulated activities) and The Care Act 2014 that all care providers are registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). As the regulator of health and social care in England, the CQC provides assurance that the care people receive meets the fundamental standards of quality and safety.</p>	
External Quality Assurance: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP)	<p>HMIP are an independent inspectorate, funded by the Ministry of Justice and reporting directly to the Secretary of State for Justice. HMIP report on the effectiveness of work with adults and children and young people who have offended by inspecting the quality of services provided and the organisations who deliver them.</p> <p>Recommendations are then made to assist providers with the continuing improvement and effectiveness of services.</p> <p>All youth inspections consist of three domains. Domain</p>	

	<p>one covers aspects of organisational delivery. Domains two and three look at the quality of post-court supervision and the quality of out-of-court disposals respectively. In all cases of external inspection Children's Services are required to meet or evidence a set of specific standards or regulations. This Framework and the audit and quality assurance activity that sits within it will help ensure that the services provided by Children's Services meet a level of 'inspection readiness'.</p>	
External Quality Assurance: Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)	<p>As a regulatory requirement, Lincolnshire County Council hosts a series of announced and unannounced inspections led by Ofsted. Children's Services can be subjected to an inspection against a number of different Ofsted frameworks. Whilst some of these frameworks are specific to particular services area for example Children's Homes, some have a wider scope. The Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) Framework can incorporate all elements of children's services. The aim of this particular framework is to ensure a culture of continuous improvement and high quality of service for children, young people and families. Inspection outcomes have a multi-purpose; informing parliament of national performance and quality standards, delivery of guidance for improvement to local authorities and to act as a review document for Ofsted in ensuring that all previous recommendations have been addressed</p>	
Independent Reviewing Officers and Child Protection Chairs	<p>The IROs / CP Chairs perform quality assurance functions in regard to children/ young people who are subject to child protection plan and looked after.</p> <p><b>How?:</b> They assess to ensure children/ young people receive a timely and effective support to achieve best outcomes without delay.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> An overview report of the CP, IRO and LADO function is completed annually and submitted to the LSCP and Corporate Parenting Boards for scrutiny and oversight.</p>	Ongoing
LADO	<p>LADOs will co-ordinate management of allegations to ensure children are safeguarded.</p> <p><b>How?:</b> They try and ensure this is timely, however they only indirectly contribute to safeguarding children</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> An overview report of the CP, IRO and LADO function is completed annually and submitted to the LSCP and Corporate Parenting Boards for scrutiny and oversight.</p>	
Learning Events/Days	<p><b>How? :</b> Learning Day's will provide the opportunity for staff engagement between teams and senior managers. These days will provide a platform for both issues and ideas to be explored with a view to advance and improve practice. Learning Days will be undertaken in a restorative manner and will provide an opportunity for reflective learning.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> The day focuses on exploring themes, systemic issues and identifies learning and action to be taken. A written feedback report is produced by the</p>	Ongoing

	senior manager attending.	
Learning from complaints and compliments	<p><b>How?:</b> Regular reports about performance are provided by the complaints unit and presented to Children's Senior Leadership Team and Practice and Outcomes Meeting.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> A systematic review of learning and outcomes is undertaken quarterly.</p>	Quarterly
Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and its subgroups	<p><b>How? :</b> Provides Independent scrutiny and challenge where all partners share responsibility and accountability for safeguarding the children and young people of Lincolnshire. The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP) has an annual audit programme which is agreed by the partnership and undertaken on a multi-agency basis. Children's Services are part of this partnership and participate in multi-agency audits co-ordinated by the LSCP. Children's Services involvement in multi-agency audits will be managed by the Quality and Standards Team. The team will also liaise with the LSCP when scheduling themed audits for the next 12 month period</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> Programme of multi-agency learning and development administered by the LSCP and evaluated for impact upon improved practice for children and families.</p> <p>The findings of each audit are collated by the LSCP and presented to the audit's task and finish group for quality assurance purposes. Quality assured audit reports, which will include recommendations and an associated action plan, will then be presented to the LSCP's Operational Delivery Group and finally signed off by the LSCP Strategic Management Group (SMG).</p> <p>Audit reports will include a set of concise and appropriate recommendations that focus on those areas that will really make a difference to single or inter-agency practice.</p> <p>Multi-agency audit reports once signed off by SMG will be presented to the Children's Service Quality Assurance Board for information and learning purposes. Any recommendations for Children's Services will be discussed at the meeting and tracked through the Children's Services Improvement Plan, as well as the relevant LSCP group.</p> <p>The Quality and Standards Team will also liaise with the Lincolnshire Adults Safeguarding Board when determining the audit programme for the coming year.</p>	
Moderators	<p><b>How?:</b> A selection of case audit are moderated by a moderator which can be from the senior leadership team, service managers, and QA Officers.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> The role of the moderator is to share learning with the auditor understanding the process and to support a good level of understanding about what good practice is and is able to identify and challenge</p>	Monthly

	practice and identify any risk. The role is also to ensure there is consistency of the applications of gradings across the county.	
Multi-Agency Thematic Case Audit	<p><b>How? :</b> Coordinated by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and chaired by a Partner Agency where multi agency audits will be completed.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> An overview report, analysis and action plan for monitoring and progress will be presented to the QA Sub-Group to promote learning for all partner agencies.</p>	
Operation Management Group (OMG) meetings	<p><b>How? :</b> At OMG meetings the data of each service is scrutinised and analysed and managers provide a narrative and a solution to performance that 'does not meet good'.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> OMG meetings aim to provide support to the development of a learning culture in Lincolnshire. The meetings are chaired by the Assistant Directors and attended by Heads of Service.</p>	
Policy Review and Development	<p><b>How? :</b> The development and maintenance of policies and procedures.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> TriX procedures have been adopted to ensure that procedures are compliant with relevant legislation and guidance. In addition, the updating of relevant local practice policy and procedures are reviewed annually.</p>	6 monthly
Practice Observations	<p><b>How? :</b> This is where a manager observes a worker in practice and providing constructive feedback. Practice Observation may also occur during a Learning Day event. The observer will always obtain feedback directly from children and families.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> Feedback will be provided by the observer to the practitioner following the observation proforma <a href="#">[link]</a></p>	2 x yearly
Practitioner Feedback	<p><b>How? :</b> Two- way dialogue between frontline staff and senior managers. The purpose of this is for staff to be able to raise issues, identify solutions, and contribute to service developments.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> Examples of such arrangements include Staff Briefings, case audit forms, Learning Days, Practice Bulletin (quarterly), forums and focus groups. Staff surveys are also be used as a mechanism to gain feedback and to evaluate our progress.</p>	
Principal Social Worker (PSW)	<p><b>How? :</b> Consultation events/Child Care Forum with Head of Service support.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> To ensure staff are able to contribute to/help shape the CYPS Vision, obsessions and new ways of working, health check and other in touch meetings.</p>	Quarterly
Rapid Response Reviews (RRR),	<b>How? :</b> Rapid Response Reviews are co-ordinated and	As and when

Serious Incidents, and Local Learning Reviews (LLR)	<p>overseen by LSCP. The agency completing the review depend on which agency was involved with the child.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> Learning from these reviews is led by the LSCP/involved agencies and staff are supported to attend learning events and to implement the specific action plans and recommendations of reviews.</p> <p>Oversight is provided via SIRG (Significant Incident Review Group) The PSW and CS representative from the SIRG group meet regularly to oversee actions plans and disseminate learning.</p>	required
Voice of children, young people and families (further details below)	<p><b>How?</b> : Feedback from children, young people and families will be collected throughout a number of activities from across the service.</p> <p>Service User feedback through the quality audit and observations process enables a critical friend to our practice through answering the question “so what?”</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> Feedback is collected, reviewed and analysed and feeds into the development of services and provision.</p>	
External Practice Assurance Stocktakes and Peer Reviews	<p>In addition to internal quality assurance activities, the Directorate/Senior Leadership Team will commission external scrutiny, where required. This may take the form of a peer review, Practice Assurance Stocktakes (PAS) or practice challenge from other local authorities.</p> <p><b>How?:</b> Areas of focus are agreed and commissioned with approval of DLT/SLT.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> Findings will be the subject of overview reports, shared with the service and improvement and action plans based upon recommendations. Progress to be monitored through QA Board.</p>	
Service Area Specific Quality Assurance Activity:	<p><b>How?:</b> Individual service areas will also undertake additional quality assurance and audit activity to that within this framework. This activity remains vitally important and to guarantee that it contributes to Children's Services continuous improvement journey it is important that findings are fed back into the Quality and Standards Team.</p> <p><b>Learning and Feedback:</b> A template has been developed for feedback, which Service Managers will complete on a quarterly basis and return to the Quality and Standards Team. The information submitted will then be collated and presented to the Quality Assurance Board.</p>	
Commissioned Services:	A number of services for children, young people and families are commissioned by LCC. All commissioned services will have in place a contract to which they are	

	<p>required to adhere to. Part of this contract will be focused on performance and quality assurance and issues in relation to these elements should be identified and addressed through standard contract monitoring processes. Where there is a concern over the quality of a commissioned service the Quality and Standards Team can work with the service (with their agreement) to develop a bespoke piece of quality assurance activity to investigate the concerns further. The Quality and Standards Team will work with the service and the contract manager throughout this process. Once the activity has ended the team will produce a report which will be presented to the Quality Assurance Board who will then determine the next steps.</p>	
Youth Offending Service (YOS) / Futures4Me (F4M) :	<p>It is also acknowledged that YOS and F4M will have dual recording case management systems (Mosaic and ChildsView) with additional auditing schedules and responsibilities under the HMIP framework. As such a separate Quality Assurance Framework has been developed for 2019/20 and can be accessed by contacting the F4M Management Team on:  <a href="mailto:Future4MeManagement@lincolnshire.gov.uk">Future4MeManagement@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a></p>	
Team Around the Child (TAC)	<p>The TAC Team has a comprehensive Quality Assurance Framework that covers both the quality of staff practice in supporting partners; and a process for supporting the quality of individual TAC cases.</p> <p>The TAC individual case Quality Assurance process is collaborative in nature in order to best establish outcomes being achieved for the child, young person and family. The Early Help Consultant will speak with the Lead Professional and ask best questions regarding identification of need, quality of assessment and planning, and success achieved. They will consider evidence provided and scale effectiveness. This is a learning process which identifies good practice and areas for development. There will be a reflective conversation to inform an improvement plan. The TAC Quality Assurance Framework, and Individual Case Template can be accessed by contacting TAC Admin on: <a href="mailto:TACAdmin@lincolnshire.gov.uk">TACAdmin@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a></p>	

## Quality Audit Model –

Below is an example of how a quarter could look:

QUARTER ONE		
April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
<b>Group A</b> <b>Themed Audit – linked to PL session/themes from OMG</b>	Group A Practice Observations – completed in localities, feedback to Q&S (all workers to have 2 per year)	Group A Moderation of current months Audit

<b>Group B</b> <b>Moderation of current months</b> <b>Audit</b>	Group B Audit – Collaborative – 2 collaborative audits from each team, feedback on themes/learning	Group B Practice Observations – completed in localities, feedback to Q&S (all workers to have 2 per year)
<b>Group C</b> <b>Practice Observations – completed in localities, feedback to Q&amp;S (all workers to have 2 per year)</b>	Group C Moderation of current months Audit	Group C Themed Audit – linked to PL session/themes from OMG

### Selection of Cases for Audit:

Cases for audit will be selected by the Quality and Standards Team using information produced by the Performance Team. Selecting the cases in this way will ensure that cases are not subject to numerous audits which will avoid duplication. It will also enable the Quality and Standards Team to co-ordinate and manage a Children's Services audit programme effectively to ensure all staff are involved at some level.

### Audits:

There will be a mix of themed audits and collaborative case end to end audits. Themed audits will support the Practice Lead sessions to help develop practice and knowledge of the SoS model and practice. The collaborative audits will focus on evidence and impact for the child. It will check particularly the journey and experience of the child through services; that the rationale for decisions made on behalf of the child is evident; that the help offered is planned and purposeful; and that improvement to the child's life has pace. Supervision and managerial oversight will also be strengthened through this audit. It will be expected that the auditor will review the previous 6 months case work when completing the audits.

### Moderation:

Each month all or a sample of the previous month's audits will be moderated by one or two of the teams within the group, depending on the nature of the audit and any other factors. The moderation group will examine quality, analysis, themes, observations and any contributions to improved impact for children. Moderation will also support learning, discussion and actions from the audit action plan. Senior Leadership will also be involved in moderation.

### Scaling and Escalation:

It is a requirement that all auditors scale the case they are auditing in line with the Ofsted grading as detailed within the audit tool itself. It is also expected that any auditor identifying a serious safeguarding issue or significant concern escalates the finding to the relevant Team Manager immediately.

### Practice Observation:

Co-ordination of practice observation will be at team level, with notifications being sent to the Q&S Team to ensure that by the end of the 12 month period all workers have had 2 observations. Managers will provide the Q&S Team with highlights of learning needs from their teams each quarter which will feed into the on-going learning and development programme, either delivered by the Learning and Development Team or the Practice Advisors.

### Groups:

Groups have been chosen as a mix of services and localities. During each quarter teams identified to complete a themed audit will be chosen depending on the theme. Not all teams will undertake a themed audit activity every quarter. Not all TM/PS's will be required to complete an audit each quarter. It will be determined on the theme for the Themed Audits.

### Action Plans:

Actions will be formulated based on agreed (by Quality Assurance Board) recommendations and will be monitored, tracked and updated through the audit action plan.

Further information can be found in the Quality Audit Procedure. [TO BE UPDATED]

### Voice of children, young people and families

Gaining feedback from children, young people, families and carers is an essential part of the quality assurance process as it is central to understanding the subjective experiences of those accessing services. It is equally important that those working for Children's Services have the opportunity to feedback on how we deliver services to individuals, working conditions and policy and processes that we expect staff to adhere to, to help us improve the quality of what we deliver in the future.

Feedback can be obtained in a number of ways and does not always have to be formally requested. Feedback can be found in:

- Assessments
- Plans
- Visit records
- Supervision records
- Case notes
- Complaints, comments & compliment logs

There is an expectation that every child, young person, family and carer who comes into contact with Children's Services is provided with the opportunity to express their views.

In addition to the feedback opportunities listed above. Specific pieces of work are also conducted to gain feedback from stakeholders, this includes:

- Quadrant events for staff
- Team meetings
- Development days
- Service specific feedback via surveys and questionnaires

As with additional quality assurance and audit work carried out in service areas it is important that the key themes from any feedback are shared with the Quality and Standards Team so that these can be shared and addressed where appropriate. To ensure that this feedback is captured, the template that has been developed for capturing additional quality assurance activity by each service area and includes a section for reporting on stakeholder feedback.

#### Participation Team:

It's easy to make assumptions about what children, young people and families think and feel, but we need to listen carefully and take their views seriously. Participation is about ensuring that children, young people and families are given opportunities to be involved in decision making processes on issues which affect them. It is not simply about seeking the views of children, young people and families, but acting on them as part of developing and improving services.

The Participation Team focuses its work in the following six areas, all of which will feed into service improvement:

1. **Strategic oversight** - work across Children's Services to develop a common approach to participation.
2. **Develop engagement of Children in Care** - work with other teams to increase the number of Children in Care actively sharing their views through:
  - a. involvement in V4C
  - b. contributing to their Review
  - c. completing the feedback through surveys and questionnaires
  - d. Reviewing Children's Services procedures and resources to improve how they support children and young people
  - e. meetings with their Social Worker
3. **Analysis of CYPF feedback to identify themes and trends** - too often feedback is not looked at in depth. Children, young people and families feedback will be analysed to identify themes and trends in different service areas and across localities.
4. **Training and support on developing participation practice** - deliver a standard participation training package to all front-line staff to ensure a common understanding and approach.
5. **Help with design of feedback systems** - help teams to develop systems which help to ensure that they are asking both the questions they need answers to, and the questions children, young people and families want to answer. Feedback will be standardised where possible to allow useful analysis of feedback across teams, localities and Children's Services.
6. **Collating and sharing good practice** - work in partnership with the Stakeholder Engagement Group to collate and share good practice. This will help to ensure the ongoing development of participation practice across Children's Services.

### The Young Inspectors Programme:

At the heart of Children's Services are children, young people and families. The young inspectors programme aims to support young people from hard to reach and underrepresented groups to participate in volunteer opportunities increasing their self- esteem and self-confidence leading to improved life chances and is a well- established part of the Quality Assurance Framework.

Lincolnshire Young Inspectors has a very clear remit to quality assure services which are accessed by other children and young people. Making recommendations for improvement and change and providing positive feedback where a service or project delivers a quality provision. Young people are uniquely placed to take on this role, providing an independent perspective which could not be gained through an adult evaluation.

Involving Young Inspectors can:

- Lead to improvement in standards in service design and delivery
- Identify previously unknown barriers to participation
- Increase uptake and participation in services by those children and young people who have previously not engaged

Moving forwards the programme for the Young Inspectors should be drawn up in conjunction with the plan for audits across Children's Services so that where possible and with the correct planning, the Young Inspectors could undertake an inspection on the same theme as the monthly audits. This would provide a more holistic review of the service

### Lincolnshire Young Voices

Lincolnshire Young Voices is our participation group for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The group has a remit and service development plan focused on giving children and young people with SEND a voice that is heard and acted upon, raising awareness of SEND issues and improving the support provided to children and young people with SEND.

### Learning from Quality Assurance Activity

As a learning organisation that is committed to continuous learning we understand that it is imperative that learning from all quality assurance activity is captured, addressed, implemented and monitored. It is important that this learning is shared with the right people and used in a meaningful way which will contribute to improvements in service and practice leading to improved outcomes for children, young people and families.

Once final reports from quality assurance activity have been ratified by DLT the Learning and

Development Officers within the Quality and Standards Team will work to explore potential arrangements for addressing the learning highlighted and supporting improvement.

In addition to learning captured from specific QA activity it is vitally important that other sources of information are considered when developing ways in which to improve practice. A whole system approach to QA and performance management is required to fully understand the learning and development needs of the service.



**Diagram 4 – Whole System Approach**

Once considered, improvement can be supported via a number of routes including:

- Increasing the volume of already existing face to face training opportunities
- Commissioning new and bespoke learning and development to meet needs or gaps highlighted
- Providing coaching and mentoring to individuals
- Development of new e-learning support packages
- Dissemination of information i.e through one minute briefings or SWAY
- Team meetings and group learning

## Impact of Quality Assurance

Evidencing the impact of learning from audits is central to ensuring audits make a difference to children, young people and families. An annual survey will also be developed for Children's Services staff, to help evidence the effectiveness of the audit programme; dissemination and embedding of learning and improvement to practice across teams. To make sure the Framework is truly child and family centered and follows the journey of the child, the impact of the Framework will be judged on the following factors;

- Is quality assurance activity being carried out in partnership with service users and professionals?
- Are we continually seeking to improve performance and demonstrate the impact of help for children and their families in improving their outcomes?
- Are the findings from all quality assurance activity driving service improvement and creating better outcomes for our children and our workforce?

