



WEST LOTHIAN CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Quality Assurance Framework

Introduction

The Child Protection Committee (CPC) is the key local multi-agency body for developing, implementing and improving child protection strategy across and between agencies, bodies and the local community. The CPC is expected to jointly identify and manage risk to children and young people, monitor and improve performance and promote the ethos that “It’s everyone’s job to make sure I’m alright”. All West Lothian children have a right to be safe and protected¹. All services have a responsibility to ensure children are safe and their needs are met.

The CPC is committed to ensuring the best possible service to children and families who live in West Lothian. One of the CPC’s roles is to ensure continuous improvement. To achieve this aim, the quality assurance framework sets out how we will ensure the services we offer to children and families are of the highest standard and result in positive outcomes for children and young people. Complemented by the Early Years Framework, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and The Promise, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) provides the overarching context for the development of a co-ordinated and common approach around child protection and supporting the wellbeing of children and young people².

Principles

- **Child Centred Approach;** focusing on the experience of children and young people to ensure they are safe and protected from harm and their voice is heard³;
- **Outcomes Based:** the focus is on outcomes not just processes⁴;
- **Positive:** our approach to quality assurance is positive - aimed at informing and encouraging improvement and supporting the development of staff and services⁵;
- **Reflective:** our quality assurance framework is designed to promote reflective practice and shared learning⁶.

Purpose of Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation

Quality assurance and self-evaluation enables multi-agency partners and single agencies: scrutinise and reflect on practice to identify strengths and areas for improvement; recognise interventions that have a positive impact on the lives of children and young people and where there might be gaps; answer three important questions – How good are we now? How do we know? and What do we plan to do next?

¹ Articles 19, 37a UNCRC

² Articles 4, 42 UNCRC

³ Articles 12, 19, 37a, 39 UNCRC

⁴ Articles 3, 4, 6, 44 UNCRC

⁵ Articles 4, 42 UNCRC

⁶ Articles 4, 42 UNCRC



The CPC QASE subcommittee is focused on two main areas of practice:

1. How good are we at recognising and responding when children and young people need protection?
2. How good are we at helping children and young people who have experienced abuse and neglect stay safe, healthy and recover from their experiences?

Key Sources of Information

Quantitative How much? How many? How often?	Qualitative How did we do? What did young people and their families feel & think? What did front line practitioners feel & think?	Impact/Outcome What difference have we made to the lives of children and young people? Have lives improved? How can we improve?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Indicators Management Info from a range of sources CP minimum data set Benchmarking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audits (single and multi-agency). Learning reviews. Management oversight. Feedback: practitioners. Feedback: children & families. Feedback: Reviewing Officers Feedback from Core Group Supervision Feedback: IRD Review Group Evaluations & Inspections Practitioner events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome measures. Voice of the child Practitioner events. Evaluations & inspections. Audit activity Analysis of date trends

Making sure the voices of children are heard, listened to and make a difference

Children and young people who are known to services are consulted in many ways about their views, but these views are not always visible or heard, as they can become lost within the plethora of information collected. Children and young people speak with a wide range of professionals who will ask them about their opinions and feelings, but these views are not always captured or shared, and after time they become lost. By ensuring that we are consistently hearing and recording the child and young person's views we can build a more in depth understanding of their needs and identify themes which the QASE subcommittee may explore more fully. Children and young people's views should be represented in their entirety, and not interpreted or given from a third person perspective. Observations and the development of pre-verbal children or children with profound disabilities gives an indication of how they are feeling and how risks factors are impacting on their safety and well-being.

Quality Assurance activity will seek to demonstrate that the voice of children and young people is visible and heard by:

- Whatever method a child is comfortable with;



- Audit activity that ensures plans, reports and assessments evidence the child/young person's perspective, in relation to what they want to change and how they feel, evidences that front line practitioners have the skills and confidence to engage and build relationships with children and young people through a range of activities and methods and understand child development;
- Ensuring that children and young people have access to independent advocacy services.
- Ensuring that children and young people have access to an interpreter if required.

Continuous Improvements Through Learning

Quality assurance is a continuous improvement cycle using a range of interdependent methods to measure prevalence, monitor practice, listen to people's experiences, identify areas for improvement and enact change as a result. Our framework identifies both "what is working well and why" and "what we need to do better". A key aspect in sustaining continuous improvements in practice is a learning culture which encourages reflection, professional curiosity, challenge and results in change being embedded in practice. The QASE subcommittee has strong links with the Practice and Training subcommittee.



- Front line staff are supported by procedures and guidance.
- Practitioners understand the reasons & need for practice change.
- Learning opportunities are provided by single agencies and the Child Protection Committee.
- Quality supervision is provided by single agencies.
- Core Group supervision is provided.
- Learning from local and national Learning Reviews is shared and considered with frontline practitioners.
- 7-minute briefings are used to encourage discussion and reflection.
- Practitioners are confident to challenge their colleagues, ask questions and debate issues.