

Building on previous Essex diagnostic work (e.g. MASH, looked after children service), it would help if as part of your 3 day 'helicopter view of the children's directorate, to provide a baseline assurance to the interim DCS and Executive Leadership Team that you would consider the following Key lines of enquiry (KLOE):

- 1. Are children safe? Starting at the front door (but not excluding early help) and following the journey of the child through the children's system there is evidence of:**
 - *Children being put first and are at the heart of our decision making (consistent application of threshold) management of risks and child and family assessments, all of which evidence a child's lived experience and their voice has been captured and is reflected in the social work analysis?*

- 2. Do we have an open, albeit professionally challenging, supportive culture? That evidences:**
 - *all our social workers throughout the directorate are supported through good regular supervision, with clear management oversight within cases. specifically do staff feel listened to and able to freely contribute to care planning and future recommendations for the child/ young person? How are differences of professional opinion dealt with between staff and their line manager (following recent work is the culture becoming more enabling of reflective practice)?*
 - *our team managers are equally supported through supervision and their line manager's provide clear management direction and have good oversight of cases causing concern.*

- 3. The effectiveness of the journey of children who have come into care (Considering drift and delay) – (tracking back on their journey, including the quality and timeliness of decision making for looked after children. With a specifically focus on:**
 - *the child, care planning and review (including timeliness and IRO involvement)*
 - *achieving the best permanence outcomes, management oversight and decision making.*
 - *Supervision and line management oversight on looked after children work, including that of IRO's. Specifically do staff feel listened to and able to freely contribute to care planning and future recommendations for the child/ person? How are differences of professional opinion dealt with between staff and their line manager (following recent work is the culture becoming more enabling of reflective practice)? Including:*
 - *IRO escalation/dispute resolution – how many times has this been instigated and outcome?*
 - *Role of the principle social worker, and how they support the social worker around escalation/dispute resolution with manager's?*
 - *Escalation/dispute resolution for social workers – how many times has this been instigated and outcome?*

As our independent assurance team is looking at SGO cases for them not look at these to avoid duplication and confusion.

