Outcome measures based on 'Good' grade descriptors

Overall effectiveness (OE)

1.1   The views and experiences of children, young people and their families are at the centre of service development and strategic thinking

1.2   The views of children, young people and their families are listened to, analysed and used to inform practice

1.3   Children experience good quality of practice in most cases and adequate in nearly all

1.4   The quality of practice leads to improved outcomes for most children, including some hard to reach groups

1.5   Help and protection are delivered through a coordinated multi-agency response.

1.6   A well-coordinated multi-agency early help offer is available to meet the diverse needs of the local population

1.7   Leaders have a track record of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of their services, tackling the issues and delivering improvement

1.8   A well-embedded learning culture ensures that opportunities for learning and improvement at individual and strategic levels are taken

The effectiveness of the help and protection provided to children, young people and their families and carers (EHP)

2.1   Children and young people at risk of harm are identified and protected and, in the majority of cases, their needs are responded to in an effective and purposeful way

2.2   Children, young people and their families clearly understand the intentions of the help they receive

2.3   Risks are well assessed and well managed

2.4   There are no cases identified in which children are currently at risk of, or suffering, significant harm as a result of systemic deficits in practice or management

2.5   Most children, young people and their families feel that they have been effectively helped

2.6   There is a diverse and wide ranging early help offer that is accessible and reflects the needs of the population

2.7   Agencies work together effectively to provide help to children and young people in need of protection

2.8   Multi-agency services are effective in offering help and working together to protect children

2.9   Services are well-coordinated, proportionate, and are provided early in the emergence of a problem at any stage of their lives

2.10   The help and protection received is sensitive and responsive to ethnicity, culture, religion, language or disability

2.11   The help and protection given to children and young people is equally accessible and robust, irrespective of the ethnicity, culture, religion, language or disability of the child, young person and family

2.12   As a consequence of the help offered, circumstances have improved and, in some cases, the need for targeted services has reduced or been avoided

2.13   Early help enables children and young people to develop in line with their peers and to access similar life experiences, such as maintaining attendance at school

2.14   The help given is proportionate to risk; children and families are not subjected unnecessarily to formal child protection processes

The quality of practice (QP)

3.1   Children who are the subject of concern are consistently seen alone by a social worker

3.2   Practice is focused on the experiences of children and young people, and informed by their wishes and feelings

3.3   Work with children and families is explained to, and understood by, them in the majority of cases

3.4   Social workers develop effective and on-going relationships with children and young people as the medium for their work

3.5   Children, young people and their families are kept informed about all actions and decisions being taken

3.6   Social work staff receive regular and effective supervision that is focused on their work with children, young people and families

3.7   There is effective management oversight, monitoring, risk assessment and decision making in almost all work with children and families

3.8   Locally agreed thresholds for access to services for children in need of protection are understood across the agencies.

3.9   Thresholds are well embedded and are reviewed and updated regularly

3.10   Social work expertise and advice is available to other professionals to support them in determining whether a referral should be made to children's social care

3.11   Universal, preventative and non-social care refer children and young people to social care in a timely and effective manner

3.12 The management of, and response to, referrals concerning children and young people who live in households where at least one parent or carer misuses substances or suffers from mental ill health, or where there is domestic violence, is timely and facilitates early help and protection.

3.13 Section 47 enquiries are thorough and timely and always carried out by a qualified and suitably experienced social worker. Findings in relation to significant harm are clear.

3.14 In the majority of cases, assessments (including common assessments) are timely and result in a direct offer of help or appropriate protection where appropriate.

3.15 Assessment and planning addresses children's physical, social, emotional and/or educational needs, including supporting their attendance and progression at school and their capacity to learn.

3.16 Planning is outcome-focused and the progress and impact is measureable and reviewed.

3.17 Decision making is undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced social work staff and/or managers, as appropriate, and those decisions are recorded effectively.

3.18 The majority of case recording is coherent, timely, reflects the work undertaken, is clear about the reasons for decisions, including decisions not to take actions, and includes an up to date case chronology.

3.19 Information sharing between agencies and professionals is timely, specific, effective and, where necessary, is the subject of consent to that sharing by the family concerned.

3.20 In the majority of cases, multi-agency case conferences, strategy meetings and core groups are consistently attended by key participants and are effective forums for information sharing, planning, and informed and risk-based decision making.

3.21 Response to children and young people at immediate risk of harm is effective at all times, including out of normal office hours.

3.22 Almost all case recording is coherent, timely, reflects the work undertaken, is clear about the reasons for decisions, including decisions not to take actions, and includes an up to date case chronology.

3.23 Recording clearly demonstrates outcomes for children and young people.

3.24 Plans are dynamic and change in the light of emerging issues.

3.25 Most multi-agency case conferences, strategy meetings and core groups are consistently attended by key participants and are effective forums for information sharing, planning, and informed and risk-based decision making.

3.26 Children, young people and families have access to the services of an advocate where appropriate.

Leadership and Governance (LG)

4.1   Leaders prioritise, identify and implement strategies in relation to the commissioning and provision of child protection services, including early help services, which are clear about priorities and identify what needs to be done to secure improvement.

4.2   The shared local strategy: is based on established local need; includes the provision of a range of services for early help; is appropriately resourced; and is focused on the effectiveness of help that is provided and the difference that it makes to children and young people's lives.

4.3   There are clear accountabilities and responsibilities between the LSCB, the Director of Children's Services, the Chief Executive and the Lead Member for Children's Services, to ensure that sufficient and focused attention is given to children and young people, who are suffering, or likely to suffer, harm from abuse and neglect.

4.4   The LSCB has been effective in improving the quality of child protection practice across the system, and all key partners are committed to its work.

4.5   The LSCB ensures that multi-agency training is available and effective in improving the protection of children and young people.

4.6   Performance management and evaluation is established within the local authority and in partner agencies, and leads to improvements in keeping children and young people safe from harm, and in outcomes.

4.7   There are effective mechanisms in place for feedback from children, young people, families and front line staff, both individually and collectively.

4.8   There is an adequate supply of suitably experienced and competent social work and other staff, and effective arrangements for their training and development.

4.9   The local authority and its partners have an accurate understanding of their effectiveness and their key strengths and areas for development.

4.10   Staff feel supported, challenged and motivated to improve.

4.11   The authority can demonstrate some learning from the range of sources available.

4.12   There is active and visible leadership and commitment from the Leader or Mayor of the Council, from the Chief Executive, and from the Lead Member for Children's Services.

4.13   Leadership, at all levels, is active and visible.

4.14   Senior managers personally scrutinise and audit practice on a regular basis.

4.15   The local authority and its partners have a consistent track record of sustained improvement and are able to sustain those improvements.

4.16   There is a robust and up to date joint strategic needs assessment, which informs effective strategic commissioning, both by the local authority and though joint commissioning.

4.17   The strategy includes a clearly articulated and deliverable early help offer.

4.18 The LSCB provides effective challenge to all partner agencies, which drives improvement.

4.19 Elected members champion the needs of children and young people and respond proactively and effectively to their needs.

4.20 The local authority can demonstrate that feedback from children, young people and families, and from staff, both individually and collectively, impacts appropriately on strategy, service development and design.

4.21 Effective workforce planning addresses staffing requirements to meet the needs of the local community and to reflect its diversity.

4.22 Resource deficits are understood and risk assessed and appropriate action is taken.

4.23 Leaders are effective in tackling weaknesses and overcoming barriers to improvement.

4.24 Management information is used effectively and the local authority is responsive to changes and challenges; this is demonstrated in the priorities set and the progress made.

4.25 There are systematic mechanisms in place to feedback, act on, and evaluate the impact of learning from all sources.

4.26 There is effective and continuous learning from feedback from children, young people, families and carers, and from practitioners, and a range of other sources, including complaints, serious case reviews and audits, peer review and challenge, inspection findings and research.

4.27 Knowledge, learning and development are well embedded and demonstrate that staff increase their skills to effectively help and protect children and young people.