

Quality Assurance Overview Quarter 2

This report seeks to provide members with an overview of some of the quality assurance activity that has taken place or been reported during quarter 2 in 2022-23. This report collates activity from across Social Services: Children and Young People Services, Adult Services and Youth Justice Early Intervention Service and the work of the Quality Practice Strategic Group.

Children's Rights Approach Action Plan

The group is responsible for overseeing the Children's Rights Approach Action Plan that was developed following a series of training sessions for a cohort of staff to become Children's Rights Champions. During the sessions, staff from across a diverse section of the service learned about children's rights and a "Children's Rights Approach", with champions providing ideas of how they plan to take this approach in their work. The plan focussed on the five principles of a Children's Rights Approach:

1. Embedding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) – Putting Children's Rights at the core of planning and service delivery
2. Equality and non-discrimination – Ensuring every child has an equal opportunity to be the best they can be
3. Empowering Children – Giving children the knowledge and confidence to use their rights and hold organisations to account
4. Participation – Listen to children and take their views seriously
5. Accountability – Duty bearers should be held to account for how well they support children to access their rights

This action plan is reviewed on a six monthly basis with the champions with the Quality Practice Strategic Group having oversight of progress, this then feeds into the Children's Services Management Group. The action plan was reviewed in the summer of 2022 with the relevant champions updating and progressing the action plan, over the time the plan has been in existence there has been many work strands that have developed further within Children and Young People Services to ensure that a Children's Rights Approach is promoted throughout the service. A copy of the action plan is provided below for reference (Pages 5 – 10).

Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)

During this quarter the strategic group continues to have oversight of the work being undertaken around Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS), which provides protection for people aged 16 and above who are or who need to be deprived of their liberty in order to enable their care or treatment and lack the mental capacity to consent to their arrangements. Due to the changes in legislation, this has required the department to review all cases that are affected, the Quality Practice Strategic Group has oversight of this work through the Principal Officer for Safeguarding. A dedicated Project Lead for LPS has been identified to take forward this work and the post will sit within the Quality, Practice and Performance Team.

Learning Review

Learning reviews are undertaken on cases where it has been identified that practice could have been different and there is learning to be shared to aid practitioners on similar cases. The aim of the

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learning review is to try to understand the practice on the case against the background of their physical and psychological work environment. If what people did made sense to them at the time (even if it led to a negative outcome), then this may well make sense to others like them as well. If it does, and if we leave in place the conditions that make it so, then we will very likely repeat this. The point of this review is not to assign blame or responsibility, but to learn: to learn to improve. It should, in that sense, not even be seen as a review, but as a learning opportunity.

In this quarter a learning review was reported on a neglect case which was also due to be subject to a child practice review with the Safeguarding Board which is a criteria for a case being automatically referred for an internal review. The internal learning review gave the opportunity for those staff within Social Services to talk through the timeline and identify any learning and reflection points were pertinent in the case. The internal learning review highlighted several areas for reflection, such as:

- The quality and timeliness of information received from the originating local authority
- The transient position of parents in relation to which area they wanted to reside in
- The complexity of the case given the many different dynamics
- The impact of COVID restrictions hindering agency involvement
- The need for a neglect toolkit to aid practitioners when working with neglect cases
- Shared responsibility with other agencies in relation to safeguarding

The report, the findings and actions has been shared within the Quality Practice Strategic Group for learning and further developments. All practitioners involved in the learning review reported the benefits of having the time out to reflect on the case and provide a focus on practice.

Performance Clinic

All teams will run a structured review of quality assurance feedback and data every 6 months, through a "Performance Clinic" meeting with a range of senior leaders for shared learning. Teams will receive:

- Performance Indicators for their team
- Results from audits
- Consultation data
- Key practice issues arising from practice reviews
- Learning from feedback, compliments and complaints
- Feedback from practice observation

A performance clinic was held with managers from the Children with Disabilities Team and their Principal Officer, qualitative and quantitative was provided and analysed by the group which also included the Quality, Practice and Performance Manager and the Specialist Teams & Performance Manager. Following the clinic being held an action plan was developed with the team for them to explore further such as assessments, frequency of supervisions, recording of information, outcome focussed plans, capturing the voice of the child/family and the recording of contacts. This plan will be subject to review on a quarterly basis and a further clinic at the six month point.

Inspection Preparation

During the quarter we were notified by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) of their intention to undertake a national survey and thematic audit around planning for children and young people subject to the Public Law Outline (PLO) pre-proceedings. PLO sets out the duties Local Authorities have when

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thinking about taking a case to court to ask for a Care Order to take a child into care or for a Supervision Order to be made. Usually when PLO is initiated, the child has been subject to a Child Protection Plan, but the service continues to have worries in relation to Safeguarding.

The purpose of the CIW activity is to:

- *Provide external scrutiny, assurance and to promote improvement regarding the quality of practice in relation to the care planning for children and young people subject to the public law outline pre-proceedings*
- *To consider the extent to which practice has progressed since the publication of both the CIW 'National Review of care planning for children and young people subject to public law outline pre proceedings' and the publication of the Public Law Outline working group report 2021 including best practice guidance.*

The review and the subsequent report will be framed against the following four questions.

1. *Is there a systematic approach to ensuring that the threshold for Public Law Outline pre proceedings has been reached?*
2. *Are arrangements in place to support effective communication and collaborative planning with parents/significant others about the PLO including the opportunities for change?*
3. *Do care and support planning arrangements support timely permanence for children and young people to achieve good outcomes?*
4. *Do arrangements promote rights-based practice and the voice of the child?*

As with all local authorities in Wales, the service completed the initial survey which provided data in relation to PLO and children who are looked after numbers, along with a detailed response on different areas of practice in relation to PLO. The findings of the national survey will be made public in 2023 by CIW.

To prepare for the survey and possible inspection numerous focussed activity took place to ensure that senior managers were assured of the standard of work both within the case files and with the advance information that was required to support the focussed activity. These included:

- Meetings to check for data integrity and accuracy of information
- A bespoke audit tool being developed to use for auditing cases
- Audit sessions with social workers and managers in reviewing cases that fit the criteria for the inspection
- Weekly meetings to track the progress and quality of the advance information to be submitted
- Sessions with practitioners of the selected cases for the inspection to provide support and reassurance around the inspection

Neath Port Talbot was then selected at the end of the quarter for the fieldwork element of the review which took place in November 2022 over a series of three days, further details will be provided in the quarter 3 audit report, however initial feedback on the inspection was that it was a positive experience for both the local authority and CIW.

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Audit Activity

Several audits have taken place during the quarter which will be detailed in future quarterly reports following the reports being shared with the relevant management group, these include audits on Mental Capacity, Domestic Abuse, Exploitation and Adult at Risk.

An audit around the journey of cases in Children's Services was reported on in this quarter, the purpose of the audit was that we wanted to understand how cases progress through our system from the beginning of the journey through child protection, Public Law Outline/cases in the court arena. We wanted to better understand how we support families through early intervention/prevention, care and support, child protection as the case escalates though to those cases that reach legal surgery.

The highlight findings from this report was:

What do we currently do well?

- Auditors highlighted that there were clear attempts made on cases to engage with families and support them to remain together where possible
- Most cases evidence the volume of work that the case manager had undertaken at each of the stages of intervention
- Recordings and Assessments were thorough, balanced factual and use plain language
- There was regular supervision and management oversight evident
- Some cases evidenced good outcomes for the child and the family being achieved, significant work being undertaken to help families remain together and effective support services working in place
- Good evidence of multi-agency decision making, safeguarding and analysis with a good standard of evidence based practice and interventions

What will we develop further?

- Ensure all relevant documentation and assessments are stored in the correct area and is referenced in line with the applicable practice guide
- More consistency around the use of chronologies
- Reduce case management changes where possible and avoidable
- Consistency in practice through the development of practice guides more generally

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Quality, Performance and Practice Manager

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	Description	Resources	Barriers	CR Principles	Resp	Lead	Deadline	RAG	Jan-22	Jul-22
No	Principle 1 - Embedding the UNCRC									
1.1	Policies and Plans - ensure reference is made to the UNCRC in all policies and plans relating to CYP.	Admin	Cross departments	1	All staff	CSMG HS	Ongoing		Awaiting response from performance management team as to when IT have capacity to add CR articles as a footnote to recordings, plans, assessment, Looked After minutes, Child Protection minutes, S47, C&S and core group paperwork.	This is still ongoing, some elements will need to be included in the new IT system build. Although where possible the current system will have references built in.
1.2	Safeguarding Board Policy - to include a statement for 'due regard' to the UNCRC.	Admin		1	All staff	CFD	Ongoing		Mel follow up with CFD	This has been put in the policy - due to be signed off shortly on a Corporate level. Safeguarding Business Support have been notified for other policy revisions
1.3	Social Work documents - all to include reference to Children's Rights (including LAC review booklet; complaints)	Admin	IT system	1	All staff	CSMG DB	Ongoing		Developing - Looked After Review Booklets have been updated to include children's rights. Further docs to follow.	
1.4	Child Protection Conferences/LAC reviews - remind professionals to seek the views of CYP and reference relevant articles. (Refer to 1.3)	Admin	Awareness	1;4	All staff	JW	Ongoing		Established practice in CARS, Chair asked about voice of the child and lived experience; regarding LAC the IRO is proactive in establishing the voice of the child in advance of their reviews.	Ongoing
1.5	Job Descriptions/Person Specifications - include reference to knowledge of Children's Rights and championing Children's Rights as duty bearers.	Admin	Awareness	1	All staff	TO	Ongoing		Wording agreed 31.1.22.	Need confirmation from HR if now being completed (MW to check)
1.6	Children's Rights Training - for new staff in Children's Services; Children's Rights Champions; Foster Carers.	Admin	Release of staff	1;2;3;4;5	CRU	JS	Twice yearly		Ongoing	Ongoing
1.7	Audit - ensure that all staff consider the rights of the child as a standard question in all plans and assessments.	Admin		1;4	MW	MW	Ongoing		For all new audits there will be a question relating to CR included.	
1.8	Safeguarding Training - Children's Rights to be included in all Safeguarding training.	Admin	External provider	1;2;3;4;5	RD	RD	Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
1.9	Children's Rights Charter - develop a Children's Rights Charter for Children's Services.	Time HR resource Budget		1;2;3;4;5	DB/CR U	DB/CRU	TBC		Developing - dates in Jan & Feb set to meet Foster Carers, SW's and C&YP. Charter event planned for Feb 21 st in Climbing Hangar Swansea.	Consultation with foster carers, social workers and CYP is complete. Report provided. Draft Charter content complete. Next steps are to provide a design concept for consultation with stakeholders.
1.10	Awareness of Children's Rights - ensure all staff have resources and information to share with CYP in their contact.	Admin	Reach/Access	1;2;3;4;5	CR Champions	DB/CRU	Ongoing		Now developing. Resources have been sourced from child com Wales and forwarded to Leigh Batchelor. NPTCBC Website to include page for staff with resources.	Follow up with LB to upload content to intranet. CR info on NPT website.

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1.1 1	Information - support all services to identify CYP who may need more information (ensure it's accessible and CYP friendly).	Time Budget	Cost Time	2;3	All staff Disability team		Ongoing		Ongoing	
1.1 2	Core Group Meetings/Care & Support - ensure issues and concerns are linked to Children's Rights. (Link to 1.3 and 1.4)	Admin		1	All staff	VS/MS	Ongoing		MS link with VS	Changes to the system and some documents to reference the UNCRC articles - ongoing
1.1 3	Good Practice Standards (Children's Services) - embed the UNCRC throughout	Admin		1;2;3;4;5	MW	MW	TBC		Ongoing	As guidance is developed this will be included throughout
	Principle 2 - Equality and non-discrimination									
2.1	Commissioning - To involve disabled children and their families in the development of commissioned services.	Admin	Time	2;4	VS/GH	VS/GH	Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
2.2	Information - consider easy-read/accessible versions for children and young people.	Time Budget	Cost Time	2	All staff	LB	Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
2.3	Information - consider alternative language provision for children and young people.	Time Budget	Cost Time	2	All staff	All	Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
2.4	Interpreter requirements - provide access to interpreters where appropriate.	Time Budget		2	All staff	All	Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
2.5	Communication skills - To upskill team members in relation to specialised communication skills with children with disabilities.	Time Budget	Appropriate training	2	VS	VS	Ongoing		The team have had PECS training and we have considered the communication passports for children and young people.	MW to check for update
2.6	Information - to produce Children's Review Booklet in the Welsh Language.	Time Budget		2	All staff		Ongoing		We also link in really closely with specialist education provisions in respect of communication	
2.7	Welsh Language - to converse with children and young people in Welsh if that is their preferred language.		Staff	2	All staff		Ongoing		Ongoing	
2.8	Advocacy Information - ensure this is in an accessible format for all children to understand.	Admin		2	GH	GH	TBC		Our commissioned advocacy provider NYAS publish their information in various languages to suit individual children and young people. They develop and produce child friendly publications in a coproduced way with children and young people, which are published in a variety of paper and online mediums. This will next be monitored by the Commissioning Team in mid 2022.	Our commissioned children's independent professional advocacy service provides advocacy information bilingually as standard and also access translation services to accommodate any further language needs. Quarterly performance reports track and monitor performance on this matter.

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2.9	Information for children going into care - in an emergency situation share photos electronically (TBC)	Time	IT	2	Fostering	KG			MW to check with KG	MW to check for update
	Principle 3 - Empowering children									
3.1	Board member training - offer board member training for young people.	Time		3;4	CRU	JS	Annually		Summer 2022	Dates were agreed and a flyer distributed to all schools for JSB members but there was no take up so the course was postponed to Autumn/Winter.
3.2	What's App - CYP access to contact staff where appropriate.	N/A		3	All staff		Ongoing		Ongoing; training to staff around this MS	Ongoing
3.3	Interviewing - CYP to be given opportunities to interview Children's Services staff.	Time	Timing of interviews	3;4	DB	DB	As and when		Ongoing	Ongoing
3.4	Children's Rights - raise awareness of Children's Rights to CYP accessing services.	Time		3	All staff		Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
3.5	YoVo - provide opportunities for children and young people to increase their skills, knowledge and confidence.	Time		3	DB/CRU	DB/CRU	Ongoing		Fortnightly meetings with young people.	Ongoing
3.6	Youth Council - opportunity for care experienced young person to be a rep on NPTCBC Youth Council.	Time		3;4	DB/Youth Service	DB/Youth Service	Ongoing		Opportunity has been shared with young people.	Opportunity has been shared with young people.
3.7	Conflict Resolution - ensure CYP are given the opportunity to be part of conflict resolution process.	Time	Time Staff	3	Hillside	CL	Ongoing		Used when appropriate	
3.8	Help children create their own storybook of their life to help them understand what has happened to them.	Time Budget	Time	3;4	JB	JB	Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
3.9	JSB - support young people to have their voices heard on safeguarding issues that matter to them.	Time	Covid	3;4	DB/CRU	DB/CRU	Ongoing		Currently working on LGBTQIA+ Equal-Tea project. Young people will be delivering the workshop to stakeholders and change makers.	LGBTQIA+ resource pack complete and circulated to all secondary schools. Offers have been made to run the session in schools.
3.10	Record CYP views when you ask them (including informal/verbal discussion).	Time Admin		3;4	All staff		Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
3.11	Plan - ask CYP their views/wishes and include in their plans. Plan - give CYP the opportunity to speak one to one; in different settings to give them the confidence to talk.	Time Admin	Covid Space	3;4	All staff		Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
	Principle 4 - Participation									
4.1	YoVo - continue care experienced CYP group.	Time		4	DB/CRU		Ongoing		Fortnightly meetings with young people.	Ongoing

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4.2	YoVo - share opportunity with CYP; encourage them to join.	Time		4	All staff		Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
4.3	LOVE group Hillside - set up CYP group.	Time		4	CL	CL	Ongoing		Monthly meetings	Ongoing
4.4	JSB @Hillside - set up CYP group	Time		4	SG	SG	TBC		Ongoing	Refer to 4.3 above - JSB to be considered within the LOVE Group periodically
4.5	Christmas party/other events - ask CYP for their input and ideas.	Time	Budget Staff	4	GD	GD	As and when			
4.6	Commissioning - involve CYP in the development of services.	Time		4	GH	GH	As and when		Ongoing; see 4.18	Ongoing; see 4.18
4.7	Meetings - CYP to be invited to attend where appropriate.		Explore further	4	All staff		As and when		Ongoing	
4.8	Corporate Parenting Panel - provide opportunities for ALL CYP to raise issues and address the CPP.	Time	Explore further	4;5	All staff		As and when		Invited to LGBTQIA+ workshop with YP from JSB.	
4.9	Corporate Parenting Panel - To put children with disabilities on the agenda for CPP.	Time	Explore further	4;2	VS		As and when		Ongoing	Ongoing
4.10	YOT Exit interviews - Gain the views of YP on services.	Time		4	YOT	DB	Ongoing		Still ongoing.	Ongoing
4.11	Quality Practice Framework Document - seek CYP opinions on customer standards.	Time		4	HS	HS	Annually		Will review at 12 month stage.	
4.12	Consultation events eg Big Chat. Seek views from CYP.	Time		4	All staff	DB	As and when		Consultation events have been taking place.	Consultation events have been taking place.
4.13	Supervision - include a note to ask staff/foster carers if they have encouraged CYP to join in with activities/participation opportunities.	Time		4	All staff	VS/MS	As and when		Ongoing - will be considered as part of supervision policy review.	Supervision draft due October 2022 where this will have been considered
4.14	Pupil Voice at Hillside - ensure CYP continue to be listened to.	Time		4	Hillside	CL	Ongoing		Ongoing	Ongoing
4.15	National Participation Standards Charter and Kite Mark - commit to the Charter and undertake self-assessment to work towards the Kite Mark.	Time		4	DB/CRU	DB/CRU			Self assessment undertaken and all evidence sent to Children in Wales. Awaiting response from Chris Richards CiW.	Kitemark has been awarded.
4.16	Girls group - to give them a voice; take part in activities.	Time		4	YPT/DB	DB/CRU	TBC		Established and meeting fortnightly.	Ongoing
4.17	JSB - support young people to have their voices heard on safeguarding issues that matter to them.	Time		3;4	DB/CRU	DB/CRU	Ongoing		Ongoing	In contact with schools to start meeting face to face in the Autumn.

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4.18	Commissioning - contact social workers to involve CYP in the development of services.	Time		4	GH	GH	As and when		Commenced and under further development. All commissioned contracts require commissioned services to coproduce their service development with CYPs and their families. CYP's are invited to provide their ideas and feedback during contract monitoring visits and commissioned service reviews. Families have been invited to participate more in the shape and design of short break services which has led to a short breaks outcomes framework (a tool which monitors performance of short break services in line with what children and families want from the service) and more involvement in the procurement process. This will be further rolled out to other service areas.	Ongoing
4.19	Audits - ensure voice of families and CYP are listened to.	Time Admin		4	MW	MW			Ongoing and will be monitored through the QPSG/PIG groups.	Ongoing
4.20	Quality Practice Framework Document - seek CYP opinions on customer standards. (Refer to 4.11)	Time		4	HS	HS	Annually		Will review at 12 month stage.	
4.21	Reviews - include CYP in shaping their plan/outcomes in review meetings. Use play to obtain views where appropriate. Share information with CYP.	Time Admin		3;4	All staff		TBC		Ongoing	
	Principle 5 - Accountability									
5.1	Consultation - feedback to CYP "You said, We did".	Time	Covid	5	DB	DB	As and when		JSB You Said - due March 2022.	Via newsletters throughout the year providing updates on projects eg Stay Safe in Sport; LGBTQIA+ resource. Awaiting feedback on LGBTQIA+ session from schools and issues raised by CYP, these will be collated and presented to the WGSB.
5.2	Consultation Booklet - feedback what we did with their views.	Time		5	IRO/SW		As and when			
5.3	CYP views - feedback what we did with their views.	Time		5	All staff		As and when			
5.4	Complaints procedure Hillside - feedback to CYP after a complaint is received, let them know of the outcome.	Time		5	Hillside		As and when			
5.5	TAF assessment - introduce section on the form to ascertain the views of CYP. Ensure they are made aware of what has happened to their views.	Time		5;4	TAF	RG	As and when		MW check with RG	Has been discussed, GD to link with RG and provide update on future plans

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5.6	Closure Forms - when closing a case have an option to contact CYP for feedback to get their views. Social workers to put responses on the system and track any themes through compliments/ comments/ complaints.	Time Admin		5	SW	SW	TBC		Look at in PIG group	To be discussed in QPSG with DB/JS
5.7	Comments, compliments and complaints - mechanisms in place for CYP/families to raise comments at staggered intervals. Ensure they are aware of how to do this. Provide options to do this that are easy and accessible to all e.g. paper; online; verbal.	Time Admin		5	All staff	DB/CRU	TBC		CYP aspect started with DB/CRU. HS to look into family side.	CYP complaints, comments, compliments is complete (flyer; postcard; magnet) HS to look into family side.

Five principles of a Children's Rights Approach	
1 - Embedding the UNCRC Putting Children's Rights at the core of planning and service delivery.	Strategic Plan - link to UNCRC; UNCRC training; Champions; Resources
2 - Equality and non-discrimination Ensuring every child has an equal opportunity to be the best they can be.	Policies; Plans; Training on Equality; Children's Rights Impact Assessment; Accessible info; Data on Service users
3 - Empowering children Giving children the knowledge and confidence to use their rights and hold organisations to account.	Accessible info; Rights knowledge; Opportunities to influence decisions; Training and skills
4 - Participation Listen to children and take their views seriously.	Audit of participation opportunities; Involve in service design; Set target to reach all groups; Recruitment; National Participation Standards
5 - Accountability Duty bearers should be held to account for how well they support children to access their rights.	Include UNCRC in JD; Policies; Annual CR update; Feedback to CYP; Info on how to complain

as at 15.9.22

