

Report for Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board

Date on Meeting: 19th November 2015

Prepared by: Jon Doyle – Implementation Manager MACH

Report presented by: Rhona Bollands – Service Manager Assessment & Fieldwork

Title: Children’s Social Care Case File Audit – Quarter 1 Monitoring Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview and analysis of the findings from the Children’s Social Care case file audits completed in April – June 2015.
- 1.2 Case file audits are one element of the overall quality assurance framework within children’s social care which defines what we believe quality social work practice to be, how we will assess this and how we will ensure practice can be continually improved.
- 1.3 The following teams have case files audited as part of this process:
 - Social Work Teams which include:
 - Assessment Team (North and South)
 - Fieldwork Teams (North and South)
 - Permanence Teams 1 and 2
 - Complex Needs Social Work Team
 - Sensory Loss Team
 - Leaving Care Team
 - Family Support Teams
 - Review Unit
- 1.4 Other than the Leaving Care Team cases, each case file is assigned to a pair of managers to audit.
- 1.5 Business Support and Improvement produce a monthly list of cases to be audited by each pair of managers, except for the Review Unit whose cases are selected by their Service Manager.

2. Quarter 1 Overview

- 2.1 In Q1, the auditor pairing of Corporate Director and First Contact Team Manager did not participate in any audits. The Corporate Director completed audits with the Review Unit Manager.

- 2.2 Q1 included two themed audits. The theme for April was CSE and the them for May was Disability / Sensory Loss.
- 2.3 To avoid duplicating information for the SLSCB, the information and analysis from April's CSE themed audit has been included in a separate report titled 'Themed Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Audit – April 2015' prepared and presented by Rhona Bollands.
- 2.4 In May and June, a total of 20 cases were selected for audit and 19 completed audits were received which is a completion rate of 95%. The month to month break down is highlighted in the following table:

MAY	JUNE	Review Unit
Disability / Sensory Loss Themed Audit (Family Support Team Managers and Leaving Care Team Manager not included)	Non-themed Audit	
8 cases selected	10 cases selected	2 cases selected
8 audits completed	9 audits completed	2 audits completed

- 2.5 Of the 19 completed audits:

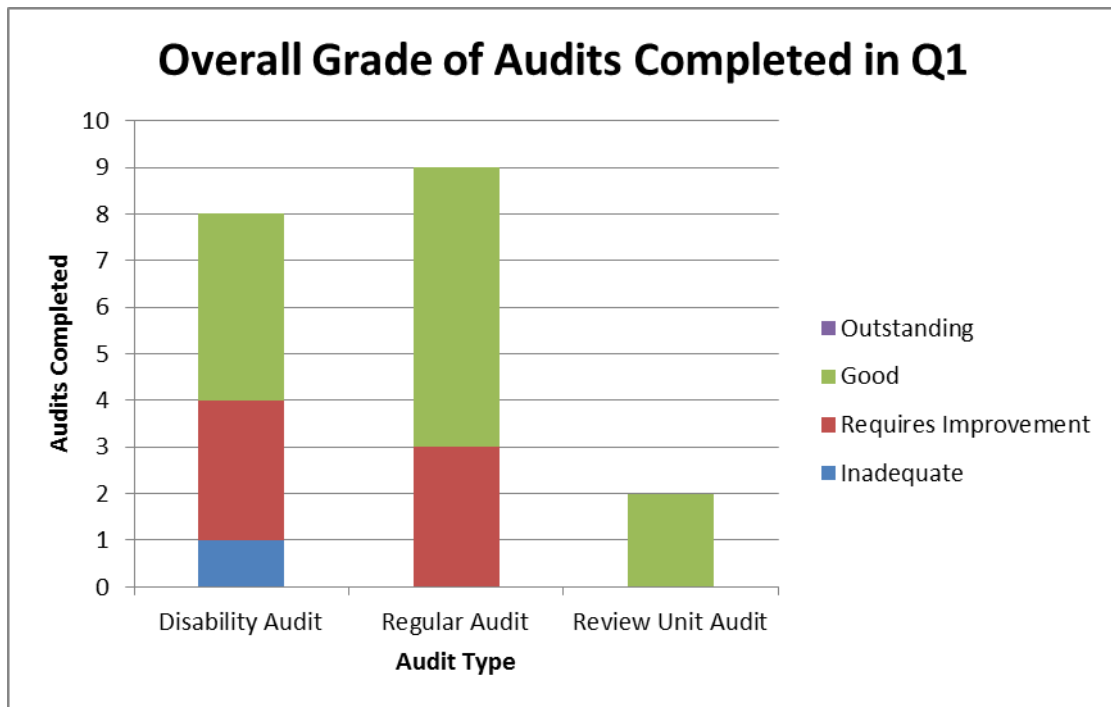
12 had an overall grading of 'Good' – 63%

6 had an overall grading of 'Requires Improvement' – 32%

1 had an overall grading of 'Inadequate' – 5%

- 2.6 1 of the 'Requires Improvement' audits was initially graded as 'inadequate'. The grading was changed by the auditors following the manager's right to reply.
- 2.7 The month to month breakdown is highlighted in the following table:

MAY	JUNE	Review Unit
5 audits completed	9 audits completed	2 audits completed
4 - Good	6 - Good	2 – Good
3 - RI	3 - RI	
1 - Inadequate		



2.8 Of the 19 completed audits:

- 11 were CiN cases
- 5 were LAC cases
- 2 were Leaving Care cases
- 1 was a Family Support Team case

2.9 The month to month breakdown is highlighted in the following table:

MAY	JUNE	Review Unit
6 audits completed	9 audits completed	2 audits completed
5 - CiN	6 - CiN	
2 - LAC	1 - LAC	2 – LAC
1 – Leaving Care	1 – Leaving Care	
	1 – Family Support	

3. Themes arising from the completed audits

Disability / Sensory Loss Themed Audit

Chronologies:

- One audit identified that there wasn't a chronology
- One audit commented that the chronology was 'poor'
- Two audits commented that the chronology wasn't up to date
- Three audits commented that the chronology was up to date

Child Seen:

- In two cases the auditors were not convinced that the child was being seen at all
- In two cases the auditors found evidence of the child being seen alone
- In one case the auditors could only find evidence of the child being seen alone once
- In one case the auditors did not find evidence of the child being seen alone
- In one case the auditors stated that the child was not being seen enough

Case Recording:

- In four cases the case recording was noted to be good and clear
- Two cases highlighted case recording issues with one case only having two case recording entries and one case having inappropriate case notes
- One audit highlighted that although the case notes identify issues, they didn't really capture the purpose and focus of visits.

Effective Communication:

- Six cases were highlighted as having effective communication
- One audit specifically mentions evidence of some reflective discussion

Child's Wishes and Feelings:

- Three cases had clear evidence of the child's wishes and feelings being gathered
- Two cases showed no evidence of the child's wishes and feelings being gathered

Supervision:

- In five cases the auditors were happy that supervision was taking place to the required frequency
- In one case there was no record of supervision
- In one case the auditors highlighted that supervision was not taking place to the required frequency

Care Plan

- Four audits raised issues with the care plan. There was either no evidence of a plan (1 case) or the plan needed to be updated (3 cases)
- Three audits found a clear and effective care plan on the case file

Immediate Follow-up

- Two audits recommended immediate follow-up

Non-themed Audit

Chronologies:

- Six chronologies were up to date (one of these was specifically labelled as 'good' and one of these 'could have been more detailed')

- One chronology was believed to be 'too detailed'
- One chronology was described as 'poor'
- Two chronologies were believed to be 'out of date'

Child Seen

- Seven audits highlighted that the child was being seen (with five highlighting that the child was seen alone and one also highlighting that the child was being seen 'almost too frequently')
- In one case there were attempts to see the child but not frequently enough
- In one case the auditors were not satisfied that the child was being seen

Case Recording:

- All nine audits highlighted positive case recording with most being 'clear and appropriate' but in two cases the auditors felt the case recording was not reflective enough

Effective Communication:

- All nine audits highlighted either 'effective communication' or 'multi-agency working' as positive aspects of the case file

Child's Wishes and Feelings:

- Seven audits highlighted either 'good direct work with the child' or that the child's wishes and feelings had been gathered
- Two audits could not find evidence of the child's wishes and feelings being gathered although one of these cases was new

Supervision:

- Supervision had taken place on all nine cases but supervision on five cases was not reflective enough and on four cases the supervision was not frequent enough

Care Plan

- Six audits highlighted a 'clear plan' on the case file

Immediate Follow-up

- Immediate follow-up was recommended on two cases

4. Team Manager Comments

- 4.1 The team manager of the case being audit has the opportunity to comment on the completed audit before the audit has been finalised.
- 4.2 In all but one of the audits, the team manager either agrees with the auditors or doesn't make a comment.

- 4.3 In one case that was initially judged 'Inadequate' the team manager offered explanation and the auditors changed their judgement to 'Requires Improvement'.

5. Analysis

- 5.1 The audits highlight that the basic tasks required on a case are generally taking place e.g. children are being seen – often alone, case recording is being completed, chronologies are present and supervision is taking place. Those cases that required immediate follow-up were those with a lack of evidence that these basic tasks were taking place.
- 5.2 The introduction of the management trackers (child seen, chronology, supervision) may have helped with this.
- 5.3 The audits do highlight that the quality of tasks may need to be the focus of future improvements in the service. For example, recording and supervision could be more reflective and challenging. Before this can be achieved the workforce needs to have a clear view as to what reflection and challenge 'looks like' so that it can be consistently incorporated into practice and consistently audited.
- 5.4 Some audits highlighted that case notes and/or supervision were reflective and challenging so the skills to do this exist within the department.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Children and Young People's Management Team (CYPMT) has accepted the following recommendations for implementation:
- Good practice examples incorporating case notes and supervisions to be identified by Service Managers and added to the Good Practice folder.
 - Audit template to be amended to incorporate a section for the auditors to highlight any specific examples of good practice .e.g. assessment documents, care plans that can be anonymised and added to the Good Practice folder.
- 6.2 CYPMT has also directed that the following themes are used to select cases for audit for the remainder of 2015:

September 2015	Leaving Care and Child Protection Themed Audits
October 2015	Leaving Care and Child Protection Themed Audits
November 2015	Non-themed audit
December 2015	CSE Themed Audit