

# Worcestershire Children First

## Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Service Quality Assurance and Performance Management Framework

### Introduction:

In Worcestershire we want to achieve sustainable improvement to services for children, young people and families. This focus on improvement is a shared priority across the organisation from our Lead Member, Chief Executive and DCS through to our front-line practitioners and support staff. This is our Quality Assurance and Performance Management Framework to support our services to children & families in Worcestershire.

Our Vision, Mission and Values is for all children in Worcestershire to be Happy, Healthy and Safe and Worcestershire is a wonderful place for children to grow up, a key element of this is Good Education for All; and this is the foundation stones of our approach to Quality Assurance in SEND Services.



The Structure of Worcestershire Children First can be found here:  
[About Worcestershire Children First \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Structure of All Age Disability Service:  
[Education & Early Help Structure \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

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### 1. Our Framework:

In Worcestershire we want our Quality Assurance Framework to:

- ensure children and young people benefit from **consistent high-quality** Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- ensure **compliance** with primary legislation and statutory regulations
- drive **consistently high-quality practice** across the local area
- improve **the experiences** of children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers
- improve **outcomes** for children and young people with SEND

This document describes the three domains of quality assurance activity and how we bring together the learning from all to drive improvement in what we do. Our Quality Assurance and Performance Management Framework bring together the key processes and activities that contribute to our development as a learning organisation. There are three core principles within the framework, they are:

- How much we are doing – Performance Management
- How well are we doing it - Audits
- What difference are we making – Outcomes for children/young people

### 2. Practice Standards:

In Worcestershire, we want our services for children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities to achieve against the following Practice Standards:

- The plan clearly records the views, interests and aspirations of the child, young person, their parents, and carers and these are (a) fully represented within the plan and (b) inform the outcome of the plan
- Plans are clear, concise, understandable, accessible and outcomes are SMART. In addition, they should be aspirational, person centred and identify prior attainment
- Plans are holistic, all agencies involved with the child, young person, their parents and carers have contributed to the plan within timescales
- Plans are focussed on individual special educational needs and not medical diagnosis, highlight strengths and capabilities as well as the need for support or intervention
- Plans specify the provision required and how education, health and care services will work together to meet the child or young person's needs and support the achievement of the agreed outcomes, including transition planning

The Council for Disabled children has developed examples of good practice for EHCPs, and

they can be found at:

[Education, Health and Care Plans: Examples of good practice | Council For Disabled Children](#)

### **3. How much are we doing - Performance Management:**

The performance reports and datasets available to SEND Services provide a clear line of sight on practice from the Lead Member & DCS and throughout our Education structure. We use data across the local area to build a clear and shared understanding of what we do, how we do it and the children and young people that we are supporting.

We want the experience of children and young people and their parents and carers to be positive. As a minimum this means doing what we say we will do in the timescales we are expected to do it.

We want to ensure that children and young people receive appropriate services to support them to achieve positive outcomes.

We have several reports and dashboards that enable our managers and leaders to understand practice, celebrate achievements and target areas for improvement. Performance information will be reviewed and addressed through regular Performance Meetings chaired by the Director of the All-Age Disability Service.

### **4. How well are we doing it – Audits:**

This section describes our audit arrangements. These arrangements are intended to ensure that the EHCP assessment and review processes produce high-quality EHCPs and that they make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people.

#### **Audits:**

Audits are one of the most important elements of an effective Quality Assurance Framework that demonstrate compliance with Practice Standards. Audits enable us to know if we are delivering services to a high standard, and if not, we will take remedial action.

SEND will undertake a quarterly programme of case file audits using a Moderated/Peer Audit methodology, each quarter audits will be undertaken that are a combination of both new EHCPs and Annual Reviews. Cases for audit are selected either at random or from specific data reports/trends. The Quality Assurance Officer will circulate to the relevant managers and group managers on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.

The following documents at appendix 2(a) and 2(b) describe the roles & responsibilities and the approach to our Audits

Audit Reports will be produced Quarterly and will analysis quarter on quarter data to evidence the impact of our improvement activity.

Learning briefings will be developed out of the Quarterly Audit Programme.

#### **The whole Service learns from audits:**

- Messages from audits are feedback to the individual casework officer and their manager for any necessary actions to be taken and/or recognition of good practice;

within the Audits, learning for partners may also be identified and how best to share this can be reflected and agreed by the Audit Moderator

- On a quarterly basis, learning from audits is brought together with an analysis of Service User Feedback, through a quarterly Quality Assurance Report prepared by the Quality Assurance Service
- This learning is disseminated across the whole Service through SEND Management Meetings, Newsletters and End to End Leadership presentations, in addition to feedback to professional teams contributing advice to the need's assessment process

## **5. What difference are we making - Outcomes for Children/Young People:**

This section describes our approach to gathering the views and experiences of children and young people and their parents and carers, so we can understand the impact of our services, areas of practice to celebrate and areas for improvement.

### **5.1 Audit Feedback:**

As part of the Audit, we will seek feedback from both the parent/carer, and wherever possible, from the child/young person on the quality of our work. This will form a crucial element of our Auditing Work as this will be triangulated directly from the child and family's experiences of our service and the services of those around the child in the plan.

Findings and Learning from Service User Feedback is reported within the Quarterly Quality Assurance Reports.

### **5.2 Survey Feedback:**

Following the completion of a Final EHCP or Annual Review, a link to an electronic survey will be sent to families/carers to hear their feedback the questions will be the same as the Audit feedback and will enable a wider sample of feedback and more opportunities for families to share their views with us.

Again, Findings and Learning from this Feedback will be reported within the Quarterly Quality Assurance Reports.

### **5.3 Learning from Compliments and Complaints:**

It is a requirement of Children's Act 1989 and National Health Service Act 1990 for local authorities to establish a procedure for representations for complaints, compliments, or comments. The statutory complaints procedure can be used by service users, carers, or their representatives.

Compliments are accepted from external sources. This includes service users, parents, carers, and other organisations.

An explanation of the process for compliments, comments and complaints including the three stage complaints procedure is available on the Council's website, the guidance can be read here:

[Compliments and complaints | Compliments and complaints | Worcestershire County Council](#)

The Consumer Relations Officer offers help and advice to staff about the process through training sessions. Advice to staff about the handling of complaints is provided when/if required. The Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice (2015) set

statutory guidelines and processes for resolving disagreements in relation to EHCP assessments and plans. The principle being that we aim to resolve all disagreements at the earliest opportunity. Where complaints and disagreements regarding decisions and needs follow a mediation, tribunal, or other legal process we reflect for learning and share and embed lessons across services and the system for SEND.

Children, Young People, Parents and Carers can access support, advice, and information through SENIDASS in respect of complaints through:

[Making a complaint Information - SENDIASS Worcestershire and Herefordshire \(hwsendiass.co.uk\)](http://hwsendiass.co.uk)

Information is collated from complaints and compliments for Quarterly and Annual Reports; this work is coordinated and presented by the SEND Team Manager with responsibility for Complaints and Compliments. This is shared with staff across the service to embed lessons learnt.

Issues relating to individual staff capability or competency will be taken up by the relevant line manager through supervision or when necessary other formal processes.

#### **6. Workforce Development:**

Within Worcestershire Children First we support and develop our staff through supervision, annual appraisal and a training/CPD offer. The Strategy can be read at: [Worcestershire Children First Workforce Strategy 2021 - 2024 \(sharepoint.com\)](http://sharepoint.com)

Our annual Staff Review and Development process uses the Practice Standards and the Professional Capabilities Framework to highlight good performance and identify any learning and development needs of staff. Our performance management matrix can be found at:

[Meetings and key documents Information - Worcestershire Children First \(worschildrenfirst.org.uk\)](http://worschildrenfirst.org.uk)

We will undertake an annual staff survey to hear managers and practitioners' experiences of working for Worcestershire Children First and this feedback built into our continuous improvement.

#### **7. Governance:**

##### **Worcestershire Children First Board:**

Worcestershire Children First has an established board and governance Structure, full details of this structure and our governance can be found at the WCF Business Plan here: [Meetings and key documents Information - Worcestershire Children First \(worschildrenfirst.org.uk\)](http://worschildrenfirst.org.uk)

##### **All Age Disability (AAD) Partnership Meeting:**

In Autumn 2021, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission inspected how effectively the special educational needs and disability provision is delivered in Worcestershire by the Council together with NHS Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Groups. Inspectors looked at the local information that is provided across the county on services to support children and young people and their parents and carers. They reviewed joint commissioning between health services and the Council, and the way schools support children in mainstream education. Inspectors also looked at assessments and planning for children and young people with special educational needs and disability.

Some strengths were recognised by inspectors, however, there were 4 Key Areas of Improvement which have been developed to an Accelerated Progress Plan – this has been reviewed & signed off by the DfE and we will report to them regularly.

Information on our SEND Written Statement of Action and Improvement Board can be found here:

[SEND Improvement Plan | SEND Improvement Plan | Worcestershire County Council](#)

**Ofsted and CQC:**

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission are both regulatory bodies that have responsibility for the inspection of SEND service and the Local Area effectiveness for SEND including education, health, and social care provision. These inspections will consider key aspects of a child's journey including identification of SEND, assessment, provision and outcomes and the quality of our approach and response to SEND. The inspections are intended to identify areas of strength and for further development.

**8. Review of the Framework:**

This Framework will be reviewed on an annual basis and amended accordingly.

Tina Russell  
Chief Executive WCF & DCS

Date: August 2022