

Quality Assurance Highlight Report – Four Year Analysis

This summary report reflects on the Quality Assurance activity/audit programme for the last four years. Quality Assurance is a core aspect of our activity in Social Care & Safeguarding, being clear on what we are doing well alongside areas for focus & improvement – this helps us know ourselves well. Our Quality Assurance Framework is built system wide, meaning we have focus on managers/leaders undertaking regular audit activity through Case File Audits, Mid-Way Audits and Targeted Audits. Our Framework:

1. How much are we doing? KPI's
2. How well are we doing? Audits
3. What is the impact of our work? Feedback

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Our Framework is robust and reflects on three core areas of Practice, this report will reflect on Learning from our Peer/Moderated Case File Audits, please see separate reports on Voice of the Child and KPI Analysis.

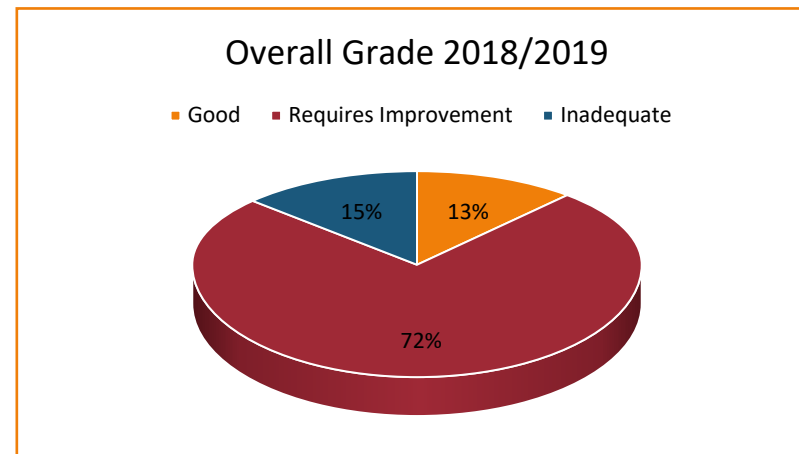
In July 2021, Ofsted completed their ILACs Focused Visit they told us

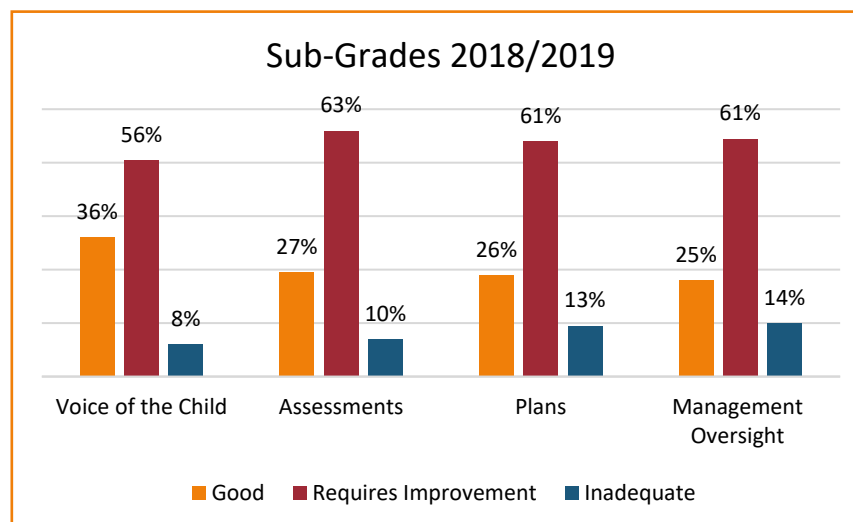
“Leaders have established a positive culture of commitment to continuous improvement across this service area, supported by particularly strong quality assurance arrangements”



Audit Outcomes 2018/2019

In the year 2018/2019 we undertook Case-File Audits on 145 children's experiences, a breakdown of the total audit outcomes



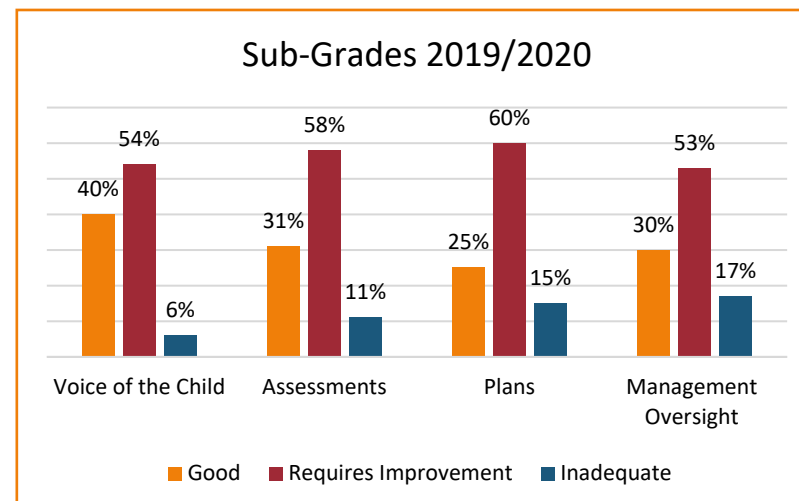
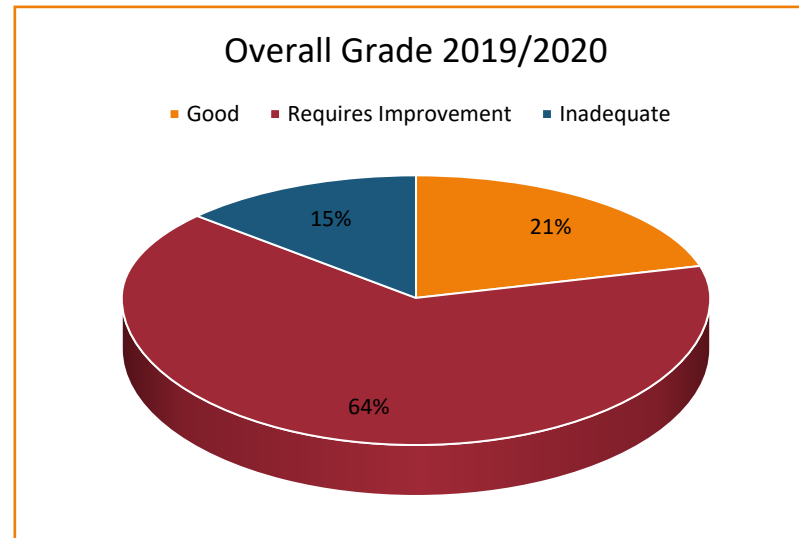


The year 2018/2019 we established our Quality Assurance Framework and introduced for all Team Managers and Group Managers undertaking peer/moderated case file audits. Across the year a total of 145 case file audits were undertaken, each audit includes 3 elements, the lead audit, peer audit and the moderation, this means we undertook **435 pieces of audit activity for this cohort of children**. Requires Improvement was the highest overall and sub-grade for all areas, the overall Good Judgement, was the smallest category of overall grades. **Voice of the child** was identified strength with this being the highest area judged to be Good throughout the audits.

Audit Outcomes 2019/2020

In the year 2019/2020 we undertook Case-File Audits on 149 children’s experiences, a breakdown of the total audit outcomes

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As we move into the year 2019/2020, we continue to embed and our approach to Quality Assurance and consolidate our audit programme. In this year we **sustain the volume of audits being completed**, in total we completed 447 pieces of audit work for this cohort of children. We see an **increase of our audits**

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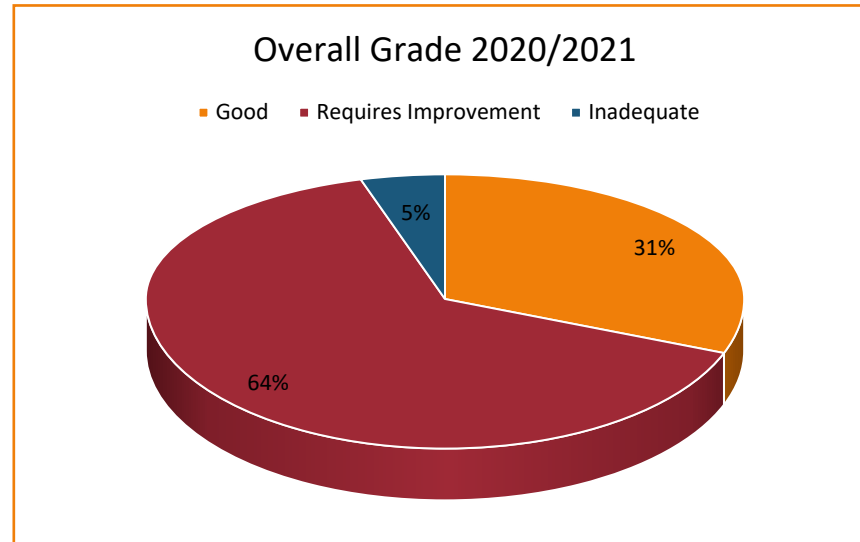
Judged to be Good and an **increase in Voice of the Child and Assessments judged to be Good**. Although we see a small decrease in Plans and Management oversight judged to be Good, we also see this reduction in Inadequate grades and the increase in Requires Improvement.

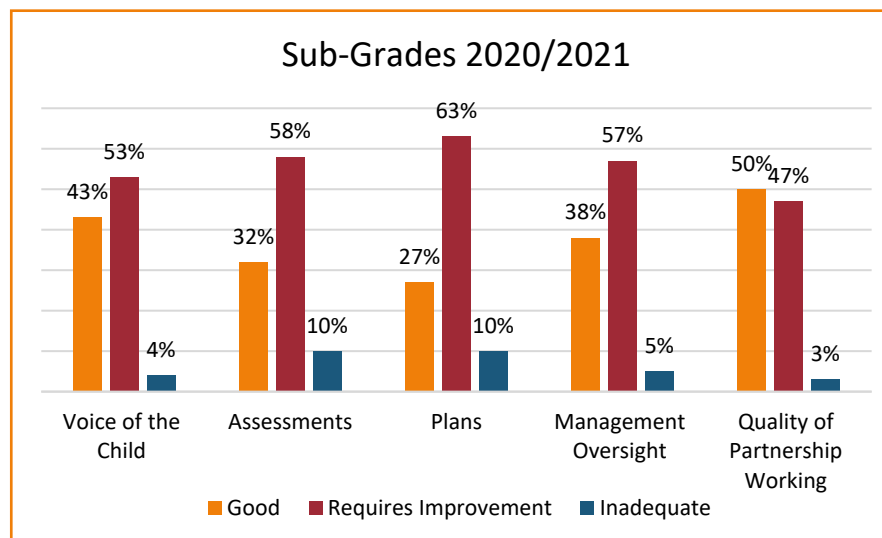
In June 2019, Ofsted completed their ILACs inspection of our services they told us *“The local authority has implemented a quality assurance system and has established a range of performance information, allowing senior managers to better understand its practice. Auditing of work is undertaken on a regular basis and is strengthened by a moderation system that gives the local authority a clear understanding of practice compliance”*.



Audit Outcomes 2020/2021

In the year 2020/2021 we undertook Case-File Audits on 204 children's experiences, a breakdown of the total audit outcomes



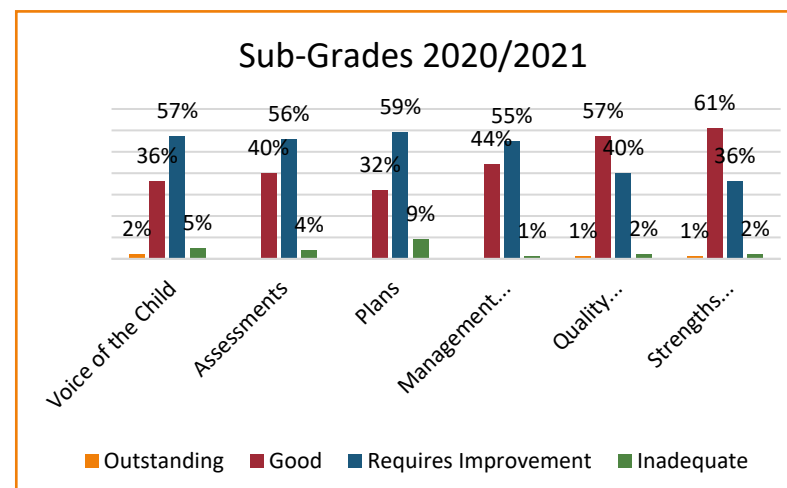
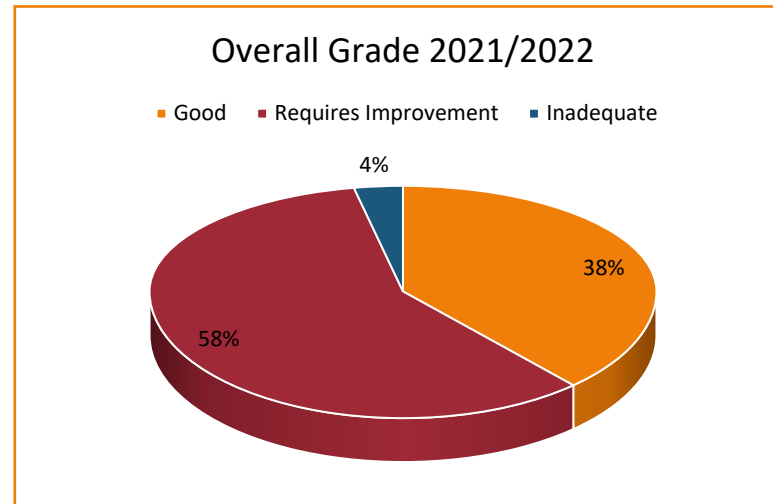


Through this year we **continued our focus and priority of quality assurance**, we have seen a significant increase in the number of case file **audits completed totalling 204, this is an increase of 36%**, when considering the triangulation of the lead, peer & moderation, this totals 612 pieces of audit activity. In this year not only have we seen an increase in the volume of audits completed, the number **judged to be Good, this increased by 10%** and when considering this Grade 2 years ago, this is an increase of 14%. We have seen **all areas increase in Good Grades**. We introduced a fifth element to our audits this year by including **partnership working, 50% of audits judged this to be Good** and this is identified as a key strength. All areas have seen a reduction in audits graded Inadequate, overall, this accounts for 5% of all Audits.

In addition to the above, in Quarter 3 of this year we introduced audit programmes for WCF Fostering and our Residential Homes, across Quarter 3 & 4 a total of **27 Audits** were completed for these services. **82% were judged to be Good** with 18% judged to be Requires Improvement.

Audit Outcomes 2021/2022

In the year 2021/2022 we undertook Case-File Audits on 162 children’s experiences, a breakdown of the total audit outcomes



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In this year we have remained committed to a business as usual and a priority focus of strong quality assurance systems across Social Care & Safeguarding. We completed a total of 162 peer/moderated Case File Audits across the year, although this is a reduction on the previous year, this remains an increase from 2018, 2019 and 2020 – using our peer/moderated approach this equated to 486 pieces of Audit Activity.

We have continued to an **increase in Good Cases** and a reduction in Requires Improvement and Inadequate; in total **38% of audits had a Good Outcome** – this is a 7% increase from the previous 12 months but a **25% increase from 3 years ago**. We have seen an increase in Good Judgements within Assessments, Plans, Management Oversight and Quality of Partnership Working – our first full year of Strengths Based Practice Judgements evidenced this as area of significant strength with 61% graded Good. We have seen a small reduction in those cases judged Good for Voice of the Child.



Key Messages

This summary report highlights the overall progress from Audits across the past four years of our Quality Assurance work, this has demonstrated how we have consolidated our approach to Quality Assurance, year on year, increasing the volume of Auditing Activity. In total across the four years, we audited 687 children's experiences.

Each year we have seen an increase in our overall Judgements being Graded Good, with **38% totalling Good** in the year 2021/2022, we have seen this judgement increase year-on-year and in comparison, to **2018 this has increased by 25%**. We have started to see sub-graded areas of Outstanding Practice this year with judgements in Voice of the Child, Partnership Working and Strengths & Relationship Based Practice.

We continue to see an incremental **reduction in cases with an Inadequate Judgement** and this has reduced by 11% since 2018.

We see **strengths in Partnership Working** (57% judged Good) and **Strengths Based Practice** (61% judged Good) within our practice – evidencing the embedding of our Signs of Safety Practice Model and how we work with a child's network, including professionals, to inform our work and families plans.

Last year we identified Plans as an area of focus – we are pleased to see this area has increased in Good and reduced in Inadequate and Requires Improvement Grades – however, this remains a focus and priority for us to continue to improve. Voice of the Child has seen a small reduction in Good Grades this year and this remains a key priority in ensuring we hear children's experiences – however, we do know from our Voice of the Child Reports that children do feel listened to and heard by our practitioners.

We see very small numbers of case work judged Inadequate – however this remains a relentless focus to ensure our practice continues to sustain and improve.

Our learning is shared through Quarterly Focused Audit Reports that share the key highlight learning per service area, this is supported through Newsletters, End to End Leadership Meetings and Service Events. Individual case learning is also discussed between managers and practitioners. Our ASWP now also review cases 8 weeks following the completion of an audit to ensure actions have been completed.

In our 2021 Ofsted Focused Visit, they told us *“The quality assurance framework is a strong area of practice, well embedded internally and across the safeguarding*



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partnership. In particular, the audit approach is very effective. Children's case file audits are well moderated and identified actions followed through to completion, making a real time difference to improving interventions in case work. Collective learning from quality assurance activity, including extensive child and family feedback, is used well to inform service improvement" – this is independent validation of the strength of our Quality Assurance Framework and programme.