Draft Quality Improvement Framework

2018-2019

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Care Inspectorate

1. **Introduction**

This guide provides a framework of quality indicators to support self-evaluation which leads to improvement across services for vulnerable children, young people and families. It places the child at the centre and is applicable to the full range of services which contribute to the wellbeing of all children, young people and their families.

The framework of quality indicators is designed to provide a complementary approach to robust self-evaluation and independent scrutiny. Using the same set of quality indicators reinforces the partnership between internal and external evaluation of services. This guide is primarily for Community Planning Partnerships and those with strategic responsibility for the planning, delivery and evaluation of services for vulnerable children, young people and their families. It will assist partnerships to establish a shared understanding of wellbeing and set challenging targets for improving services and making a difference to the lives of children in need of protection and those for whom they are corporate parents. The content is relevant to a wide range of organisations in the public, independent and third sectors. The framework of quality indicators does not replace existing approaches to self-evaluation and quality improvement which are already embedded within services. Rather, it is designed to enable the evaluations and supporting evidence from a range of self-evaluation activities across the full range of services for vulnerable children, young people and families to be brought together.

Throughout this guide, we use the term 'vulnerable children and young people' to refer to:

- children and young people in need of protection; and

- children, young people and young adults for whom community planning partnerships have corporate parenting responsibilities.

We define 'partnerships' as groups of services and organisations who have collective responsibility for improving services for vulnerable children and young people. Arrangements vary across local authority areas, however these may include:

- Community planning partnerships

- Chief officers groups

- Health and social care partnership

- Child protection committees

- Corporate parenting boards

2. **The quality improvement framework**

The framework is consistent and can be used in conjunction with a number of quality models and awards including Customer Service Excellence, Investors in People, the Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and aspects of ISO 9000. The approach is also consistent with the principles of Best Value, the statutory framework provided within the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. It can also be used in conjunction with the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) which provides a useful tool for corporate self-assessment within public service organisations.

The framework is arranged under six high-level questions.

- What key outcomes have we achieved?
- How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?
- How good is our delivery of services?
- How good is our management?
- How good is our leadership?
- What is our capacity for improvement?

These questions are set out in a framework of 10 key areas with one or more being linked to each question. These key areas are numbered one to 10, then broken down further into 22 quality indicators shown in section 4 and explained in the diagram below.

High level question	What key outcomes have we achieved?
Key area	1. Performance outcomes
Quality indicator	1.1 Improvements in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people

The 22 quality indicators cover the key aspects of the work of Community Planning Partnerships and key strategic planning groups in the delivery of services for vulnerable children, young people and their families and include a global indicator on the capacity for continued improvement.

Each indicator contains illustrations which describe very good and weak practice, which can be used as a gauge to the quality of services. The illustrations build on those contained within previous self-evaluation guides[12] and reflect a greater emphasis on impact, outcomes and the experiences of vulnerable children, young people and their families. These are not designed to be used as checklists, but are intended to sit alongside other evaluation tools and sources of evidence. Alongside each quality indicator are potential sources of evidence partners may consider to support their findings.

3. **Self- evaluation**

The process of self-evaluation

Self-evaluation is central to continuous improvement. It is not a bureaucratic or mechanistic process. Rather, it is a reflective process through which Community Planning Partnerships and strategic planning groups responsible for improving services for vulnerable children and young people get to know how well they are doing and identify the best way to improve their services. This framework of quality indicators is designed to help this by:

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[1] How well are we improving the lives of children and young people? A guide to evaluating services using quality indicators. Care Inspectorate 2014
[2] How well do we protect children and meet their needs? HMIE 2009

- encouraging partners to reflect upon practice and identify strengths and areas for improvement
- recognising the work partners are doing which has a positive impact on the lives of vulnerable children, young people and their families
- identifying where quality needs to be maintained, where improvement is needed and where partners should be working towards achieving excellence
- allowing partners to inform stakeholders about the quality of services for children, young people and families.

Self-evaluation is forward looking. It is about change and improvement, leading to well considered innovation in service delivery. It is based on professional reflection, challenge and support and involves partners taking informed decisions about actions which result in clear benefits for vulnerable children, young people and families. Rather than a one-off activity which is done in preparation for inspection, it is a dynamic process which should go on throughout the year. It establishes a baseline from which to plan to improve outcomes for children and promotes a collective commitment to set priorities for improvement. Used effectively, continuous self-evaluation helps partners to monitor progress and impact.

Self-evaluation for improvement broadly focuses on answering three key questions:

How good are we now?
This is the starting point in self-evaluation
- what **direct outcomes and impacts** do services have on vulnerable children, young people and their families?
- how effective are key processes in achieving improved outcomes and impacts for vulnerable children, young people and their families?

Answering these questions should help partners identify strengths within and across service delivery and begin to consider areas which need to improve or further develop.

How do we know?
In considering this question, services should be gathering evidence and developing auditing processes which illustrate how well the lives of vulnerable children, young people and care leavers are improving. There are a number of sources of evidence which can inform partners and services about the quality of their work.

Alongside each quality indicator in this framework are potential sources of evidence partners may consider to support their findings. Self-evaluation can only be as reliable as the evidence supporting it.

- Conclusions should be based on a range of evidence sources. It is important to test out the strength of evidence through 'triangulation', comparing one source of evidence with a second and third source. The key sources of evidence should include:
  - performance data collected nationally, locally or within a service
  - surveys of stakeholders' and service users views
  - direct observation and auditing of practice
  - review of a range of documentation that evidence's decision-making and assessment of risk
- Consider evidence in context – the relationship between cause and effect is not always straightforward, for example there may be a time lag between identifying a problem, making changes and seeing results
- Reliable self-evaluation involves benchmarking inputs, outputs and outcomes with comparator areas
- Self-evaluation should be open to scrutiny and how evaluations are determined should be a transparent and credible process. Judgements should flow logically from the evidence.

How good can we be?
This question should help to take forward the learning from the self-evaluation and to develop a set of clear and tangible priorities for improvement.

In taking this approach, partnerships will have the best possible opportunity to arrive at well thought out and robust conclusions. This then allows identification of the most appropriate course of action to ensure improvement is realistic, achievable and likely to impact positively on outcomes for vulnerable children.

The following framework of indicators is designed as a toolkit to help with evaluating and improving the quality of services for vulnerable children, young people and families. This approach enables professional reflection on practice within and across services. Where best practice is identified, it should be celebrated, and shared with others. If impacts and outcomes are not as good as expected, the source of the issues can be tracked down by 'taking a closer look' at a particular theme or topic using some selected indicators. This proportionate approach allows a focus on areas of priority, rather than routinely covering all aspects of work

4. **The Quality Indicators Framework**

What key outcomes have we achieved?	*How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?*	*How good is our delivery of services for children, young people and families*	*How good is our operational management?*	*How good is our leadership?*
1. Key performance outcomes	**2.** Impact on children, young people and families	**5.** Delivery of key processes	**6.** Policy, service development and planning	**9.** Leadership and direction
1.1 Improvements in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people	**2.1** Impact on children and young people **2.2** Impact on families	**5.1** Initial response **5.2** Assessing risk and need **5.3** Care planning, managing risk and effective intervention **5.4** Involving children, young people and families	**6.1** Policies, procedures and legal measures **6.2** Planning and improving services **6.3** Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders **6.4** Performance management and quality assurance **6.5** Self-evaluation	**9.1** Visions, values and aims **9.2** Leadership of strategy and direction **9.3** Leadership of people and partnerships **9.4** Leadership of improvement and change
	3. Impact on Staff		**7.** Management and support to staff	
	3.1 Impact on staff		**7.1** Recruitment, deployment and joint working **7.2** Workforce development and support	
	4. Impact on the community		**8.** Partnership and resources	
	4.1 Impact on the community		**8.1** Management of resources **8.2** Commissioning arrangements	

		10. *What is our capacity for improvement?* Global judgement based on an evaluation of the framework of quality indicators		

What key outcomes have we achieved?

Key area 1.   Performance outcomes

This section is about the real difference and benefits that services are making to the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families. It focuses on the tangible results partners are achieving in relation to making and keeping children safe. It specifically looks at how well partners can demonstrate they are improving the wellbeing and life chances of children looked after at home, away from home, in kinship care, those in continuing care and care leavers.

Quality Indicator 1.1	Improvements in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which: • There is notable progress over time in improving outcomes for the most vulnerable children – looked after and those in need of protection. • Children in need of protection are safer. • The wellbeing of looked after	• Partners are able to use data measures in a reliable way to provide dependable results that can demonstrate what difference they are making • Partners are becoming increasingly competent and confident in gathering trend data and utilising this to help them understand the cause and effect of performance • Segmentation of measures is considered by partners to gain a better understanding	• Reports on performance using the shared dataset • Systems and processes in place to produce reliable and robust data gathering and analysis • Trend data and benchmarking against comparators

children is improving. • Care leavers are being supported into adulthood and their wellbeing is improving.	of outcomes and impact for different groups of children and young people who are care experienced (including those children and young people looked after at home, away from home in kinship care etc.) • Increasingly reliable and sophisticated data is gathered from dependable sources.	

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
The partnership: • Can demonstrate a wide range of improving trends as a result of very effective approaches to prevention and early intervention. • Can confidently show all partners contribute to and play a key role in the strong and sustained results for vulnerable children and young people. • Sets and consistently achieves targets that are aspirational and challenging, and aims to improve the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people • Uses performance measures which show children are	**The partnership:** • Is unable to demonstrate a wide range of improving trends as a result of very effective approaches to prevention and early intervention. • Is unable to demonstrate with confidence that children are being kept safer as a result of limited use of quality data. • Is unable to show they are tackling the range of protection issues to minimise the longer terms risks and negative impact of concerns. • Has set targets which are either unachievable and not based upon a clear understanding of what can be achieved, or they lack aspiration to significantly improve

safer as a result of high quality responses to child protection concerns.

- Can demonstrate that children in the child protection system are being protected both initially and longer term and they are successfully tackling protection concerns.
- Is successfully improving the wellbeing, life chances and outcomes for all groups of looked after children.
- Is able to demonstrate how, as corporate parents, they are prioritising particular groups of looked after children to ensure their wellbeing is optimised.
- Can demonstrate how care leavers are successfully moving into adulthood and are flourishing as young adults.
- Sets challenging targets which are both realistic and aspirational.

the lives of the most vulnerable children and young people.

- Is fragmented in its efforts to demonstrate how positive outcomes for vulnerable children and young people are being achieved. Partners may over-rely on the efforts of one single agency.
- Is unable to show little or no trend data that reflects progress.
- Rarely measures what difference service improvement makes to the wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people.

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

Key area 2 Impact on children, young people and families

This section is about the experience and feelings of vulnerable children and young people and their parents and carers. It relates to the differences services are making to their lives and their live chances in

the future. It includes the impact of services in optimising the wellbeing of individual children and young people across the wellbeing indicators. It takes into account how well care leavers feel they have been supported towards adulthood by their corporate parents. It considers how vulnerable children, young people and families are helped through warm, supportive and empathic engagement with staff. It focuses on the extent to which families are helped to build resilience and meet their own needs.

Quality Indicator 2.1	Impact on children and young people	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which children and young people in need of protection, those who are looked after at home or away from home , in continuing care and care leavers: • Feel listened to, understood and respected • Experience sincere human contact and enduring relationships • Get the best start in life and are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. • Care leavers have improved life chances and feel their corporate parents have the highest ambitions and aspiration for their futures. In particular around health and wellbeing, housing and accommodation, education and training, employment, youth and community justice, rights and participation.	• Children and young people feel listened to and their views are taken seriously when decisions are being made about them. • Children and young people feel that staff have taken the time to get to know them and understand their strengths and needs. • Children and young people enjoy good relationships, built up over time, with consistent adults who they trust enough to talk to when they need help. • Children and young people feel that they are in the right place to experience the care and support they need. • Children and young people's wellbeing is improving across all the wellbeing indicators . • Care leavers experience enduring relationships with staff built on empathy, respect and 'stickability' • Care leavers are increasingly moving on to successful independent adulthood.	• Feedback from children and young people in all forms including digital communication. • Focus groups • Use of the Wellbeing Web • Recording of children's and young people's views in case records • Contributions from children and young people to CPCCs, core groups and LAC reviews • Use of independent advocacy services • Endorsement of the Scottish Care Leavers Covenant

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
Children and young people: • Say they are confident that staff listen to them and take seriously what they say • Have a sound knowledge of their rights • With learning or communication difficulties or for whom English is not their first language are helped to understand as much as possible about what is happening to them and to communicate their views • Who are very young, or whose disabilities mean they cannot easily communicate their feelings and views, benefit from careful observation to identify and understand any changes in their health and wellbeing • Confirm that staff know them very well and understand their needs • Say they have been given opportunities to build positive and meaningful relationships with those who care for them • Enjoy trusting, stable and nurturing relationships with carers and staff who know them well and provide continuity in their lives • Know they have someone to turn to when they are upset or troubled • Have the best start in life and are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. **See appendix 1** • Care leavers feel well supported and encouraged to stay on in school if this is what they want to do. • Care leavers are more likely to be in full time education, training or employment	**Children and young people:** • Feel that staff do not always respect, listen to and understand their views • Are unclear about their rights • Whose first language is not English, or who have learning or communication difficulties, are not always clear what is happening and do not feel they get enough support to take part in meetings • Who are very young, or whose disabilities mean they cannot easily communicate their feelings and views, can have their needs overlooked because not enough attention is paid to changes in their presentation and behaviour • Consider staff have not taken the time to get to know them and build a helpful relationship with them • Report that frequent staff changes or shortages make it hard for them to build consistent relationships with staff • Do not feel they are receiving the support they need to be able to help themselves • Say they have to speak to several different people and feel that no one person is there to help them • Do not always have the best start in life and their wellbeing needs are not always met. **See appendix 1** • Care leavers consider they are not given enough support to stay on at school • Many care leavers feel there is little benefit in remaining in contact with their corporate parents • Care leavers are not always managing to access health services when they need them

• Care leavers feel that concerns they have about their physical and mental health are identified early and addressed quickly • Care leavers feel they have been helped to build and sustain their own home, enabled to fully participate in training and secure employment through the consistent support of staff.	• Care leavers feel they do not always benefit from the right support to enable them to build and sustain a stable home, participate in training or secure employment.

Quality Indicator 2.2	Impact on families	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which: • Parents and carers experience supportive, trusting relationships • Parents and carers, who find it difficult to accept help, successfully build trusting relationships with staff • Parents/carers demonstrate improved capability and capacity for change • Parents and carers experience greater confidence in parenting and increased resilience • Parents of looked after children and young people in permanent placements, understand their role in terms of contact and planning and work alongside staff and carers.	• Parents and carers consider staff communicate well and they find it easy to understand what practitioners mean and what is expected of them • Parents and carers are confident that staff listen to, understand and take their views seriously • Skilled practitioners, in children's and adult's services, establish good working relationships with parents and carers. • Relationships between practitioners and parents/carers are based on honesty about what needs to change and why, sensitivity, a willingness to listen and supportive use of power. • Parents and carers are well supported to build their parenting confidence	• Regular feedback from parents • Focus groups • Recording of parent's views in case records • Contributions of parents to CPCCs, core groups and LAC reviews • Evaluation of parenting programmes • Reflective supervision

	through a range of different parenting programmes
	• Parents and carers work in partnership with staff to develop the flexible support they each need to build their resilience. As a result they become less dependent on services.
	• Parents whose children and young people are looked after away from home feel their rights are respected. They feel supported by staff and carers to retain involvement in their child's life.

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
Parents and carers:	**Parents and carers:**
• Feel they are listened to and staff take seriously what they say	• Do not always feel that they are listened to and taken seriously
• With learning or communication difficulties or for whom English is not their first language are helped to understand as much as possible about what is happening to them and to communicate their views	• Who are unable or unwilling to accept help are sometimes not given enough help to engage with the services they need
• Fell that their cultural and spiritual needs are taken fully into account.	• Whose first language is not English, or who have learning or communication difficulties, are not always clear what is happening and do not feel they get enough support to take part in meetings
• Consider they are kept well informed about what is happening and why.	• Do not always feel that their cultural and spiritual needs are acknowledged and/or understood
• Consider they are working in partnership with practitioners who know them well and understand their needs	• Do not feel well informed about what is happening and why.
	• Report that frequent staff changes or shortages make it hard

• Are motivated to make important changes in their behaviour • Have become more confident parents as a result of effective parenting programmes which were chosen specifically to meet their particular needs • Who have benefited from effective parenting support are able and willing to help other parents through involvement in a parenting group or becoming a mentor • Demonstrate that as a result of the help they have received they have become much more confident, competent parents who no longer rely on services when they face difficulties	for them to build consistent relationships with staff • Do not consider practitioners understand their family's needs and remain unclear about what needs to change • Are not always able to get the specialist support they need • Find that the help they are offered is not always appropriate to their particular needs

Key area 3

Impact on staff

This section is about how staff think and feel about working in this partnership. It considers the extent to which staff are motivated to achieving the best possible outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and families. It relates to how well they are involved in the development of services. It focuses on how well staff feel their contribution is recognised and valued. It looks the extent to which staff feel professionally confident and that their practice is competent.

Quality Indicator 3.1	Impact on staff	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**

The extent that staff		
• Feel motivated and experience positive supportive leadership • Feel listened to and respected across agencies • Participate in multiagency approaches to improve outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and families. • Consider that they routinely have the opportunity to input to service development, policies, guidance, etc. • Can demonstrate professional confidence and competence in day to day delivery of services.	• Staff feel motivated, involved and committed. • Staff feel confident and valued. • Staff feel their work contributes to improved outcomes for children and young people. • Staff enjoy working for their service and are active partners in a range of joint work with colleagues who work in adult as well as children's services. • Staff consider that they are meaningfully involved in developing and improving services for vulnerable children, young people and families. • Staff are motivated to improve the impact of their practice through learning and development. • Staff consider they are routinely consulted on service improvements/change/ redesign. • Staff are confident and competent in delivering services. • Staff routinely benefit from support and high quality reflective supervision, personal development planning and annual reviews.	• Feedback from staff, managers and leaders • Focus groups • Staff survey/iMatter • Policies and procedures • Absenteeism, sickness and turnover records. • Internal consultations, exit interviews • Service inspection reports. • Communication strategy • Use of procedures for staff suggestions and complaints. • Agendas and Minutes of meetings • Speaking to union representatives. • Initiatives to disseminate learning and good practice.

Very Good illustration	**Weak illustration**

Staff:	**Staff:**
- Experience consistent levels of consultation, they feel well informed and are confident that their views are listened to. - Are engaged meaningfully in the ongoing planning and development of services for children, young people and families. - Have a strong and shared commitment to protecting vulnerable children, improving the wellbeing of children, young people and families and to tackling inequalities. - Experience effective communication between staff across all levels of the partnership - Routinely receive support, high quality reflective supervision and take part in a performance review process. - Are confident and competent practitioners with access to learning and education opportunities to meet their identified needs - Have a shared understanding of the needs of vulnerable children and apply this to their work confidently. - Have a clear understanding about their roles and responsibilities as well as those of their colleagues. - Are highly motivated to work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people. - Are engaged purposefully in promoting good practice and identifying areas for improvement. - Are encouraged and supported to test out new and improved ways of working and take pride in the contribution they make. - Understand fully what they need to do within their own service and with colleagues across services to further improve the quality and effectiveness of their work - Experience a high level of satisfaction in working together to deliver services and are confident that they are making a difference to the lives of vulnerable children, young people	- Consider that their views are not listened to and there is insufficient opportunity to contribute meaningfully to service development. - Are not clear about the rationale for change and unclear about what is expected of them. - Are not confident about joint working with colleagues from other services and, as a result, partnership working is not well developed. - Are not engaged in promoting good practice or identifying areas for improvement. - Working in adult services are not confident about their role and the role of others in the protection of vulnerable children and young people - Experience varying levels of job satisfaction and their morale is low. - Feel isolated and unsupported by managers. - Have limited access to support, supervision and performance review. - Experience barriers to joint working with colleagues across the partnership. - Experience difficulties in accessing education and learning opportunities and have limited scope for improving practice. - Feel that they are not deployed effectively. - Feel they are under-valued with their contribution unrecognised. - Feel that ineffective or poor practice is not sufficiently challenged

and families. • Feel valued and their contribution recognised.	

Key area 4

Impact on the community

This section is about how well the community understands, values and assists the partnership in planning and providing services to vulnerable children, young people and families. It includes how community members take on specific roles in providing services to vulnerable children and young people. It has a focus on the extent to which there is public confidence in services for vulnerable children, young people and families.

Quality Indicator 4.1	Impact on the community	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which: • Communities are empowered to actively participate in planning and service development. • Communities are co-producers of local services. • Communities are involved in a wide range of activities to support children, young people and families. Such as befriending, independent advocacy, the children's panel, foster caring and supported lodgings for care leavers.	• The views of communities are sought, heard and taken on board to inform policies, planning and service development. • A range of approaches and mechanisms are available to support community engagement (IT, written and verbal communication including access to translation and specialist communications tools) • Children, young people and families are involved as co-producers of	• Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and locality plans • Children's Services Plan. • Participation/communication strategy. • Volunteering strategy and progress reports • Data on the recruitment and retention of foster carers and other similar roles undertaken by community members. • Support for self-help strategies and projects for children, young people and families. • Support of local voluntary organisations that promote community capacity.

• Communities are confident in public services available to support families and protect vulnerable children and young people.	community services. • Community members and service providers work together in an equal partnership to deliver local solutions to meet local need. • Communities have developed the capacity to successfully meet their own needs. • Communities have an awareness and confidence in their public role to protect children from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation. • Suggestions, feedback and complaints procedures are readily available for the public to share their experiences as service users and it is used to inform service delivery and improvements • The views of the communities are reflected in policies, procedures and strategic documentation • Communities demonstrate their awareness of their role in protecting children and young people.	• Strategic consultation framework and service implementation. • Citizen surveys. • Action taken by services to increase social inclusion and reduce discrimination. • Inspection reports – e.g. children's houses and their relationship with their local community and Community Learning and Development services.

Very Good illustration	**Weak illustration**
In local communities: • There are high levels of public participation in the design and delivery of local services for children, young people and families.	**In local communities:** • There is insufficient engagement of the community in the co-production of service development and delivery • There is little evidence of communities of interest and

- Minority groups and communities of interest are empowered to be involved fully in co-producing services to meet their particular needs.
- There is a steadily increasing number of volunteers and a good level of volunteer retention.
- Strong community capacity ensures there are enough foster carers, independent advocates and supported carers to provide a wide range of local services to looked after children and care leavers.
- The public has a high degree of confidence in the effectiveness of services to meet the needs of vulnerable children, young people and families.
- Members of the public are alert to signs of risk and harm to children and young people and are confident in sharing their concerns with services.
- Members of the public have a high degree of awareness about how to report concerns and are confident that children and young people will get the help they need as a result.
- Children, young people and families feel safe, supported and cared for in the community. They live in increasingly safer communities and young people are viewed positively.
- Parents and carers have very positive experiences of bringing up children and young people in their local area.
- There are positive relationships with young people living in foster care, supported lodgings and children's houses.

minority groups being engaged in service development. The groups are not always identified or involved meaningfully in the planning services to meet their needs.
- Community groups and local voluntary organisations are not well enough supported to enable them to play a key role in building community capacity.
- Youth crime and anti-social behaviour continues to have a detrimental impact on local communities.
- There is a lack of public confidence in services for children, young people and families. They are not viewed as matching the needs of communities.
- Members of the public are unclear about their role in the protection of children, including when and how to report their concerns about the signs of risk and harm to children and young people.
- Members of the public lack confidence that any concerns they raise will be taken seriously.
- Many families do not rate their local area as a good place to bring up children and help young people flourish
- Families report that they do not feel their community provides a safe environment for children and young people.
- There remain barriers to inclusion and community involvement of young people living in young people living in foster care, supported lodgings and children's houses.

How good is our delivery of key processes?

Key area 5

Delivery of key processes

This section is about processes for service delivery. It considers the effectiveness of the initial response to children and young people when there are concerns about their safety. It focuses on the timeliness and quality of decision making when a child/young person needs to become looked after. It looks at how assessments of risk and need are kept up to date and relevant to changing circumstances and children and young people's development. It considers the quality of plans to reduce risk, meet needs and improve wellbeing. It takes account of the effectiveness of arrangements for reviewing progress. It looks at timely and effective intervention. It considers the extent to which children, young people and families are informed, included and enabled to take part meaningfully in assessment, planning and intervention according to their individual needs and life experience.

Quality Indicator 5.1	Initial response	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which effective processes	• Systems are in place for receiving and recording information from	• Feedback from children, young people and families

are in place to:

- Respond promptly to concerns about a child or young person's safety or wellbeing.
- Enable initial information gathering and investigation.
- Ensure appropriate consideration of legal measures.
- Support timely decision making about children and young people who need to become 'looked after.

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anybody who is concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a child (including outside office hours).

- Staff, including those who work with adults, are alert to and recognise the signs that children and young people may need help or protection from harm. This includes patterns of concern over time and cumulative harm.
- If a concern is raised about a child or young person which requires further exploration, staff have the skills to gather relevant information, know what the other sources of information are and how to get them. This includes from schools and early learning and child care services.
- Staff confidently analyse the information gathered to reach an initial assessment.
- Appropriate consideration is always given to arranging inter agency referral discussions involving the police, health and social work.
- Appropriate consideration is always given to conducting a medical examination
- Staff take immediate action to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to continued risk of harm.

- Results of previous scrutiny
- Relevant plans and policies
- Information sharing guidance and protocols
- Child protection procedures
- Looked after children and young people procedures
- Public information
- Relevant performance management data
- Review of records for individual children and young people
- Audit of inter-agency referral discussion minutes
- Audit and review of medical examinations
- Observed practice

	• Consideration is always given to whether to refer the child or young person to the Children's Reporter. • Decisions to look after children and young people are timely and made only when it is in their best interests.	

Very good illustration	Weak illustration
• All staff recognise signs that a child may be at risk of harm, abuse or neglect (including self-harm or sexual exploitation) and report any concerns promptly and appropriately. This includes concerns of risk to an unborn baby. • Similarly staff recognise signs that a child/young person may present a risk to others and share concerns promptly and appropriately, clearly identifying what the concerns/risks are. They use agreed multi-agency procedures in accordance with national guidance where applicable for example Care and Risk Management (CARM). • All staff receiving these concerns respond without delay, whether concerns are made within or outside office hours. They gather information from all relevant sources to make an initial assessment of risk. • Staff share information with others as needed to agree how to ensure public safety and the safety of the child or young person. • Inter-agency referral discussions involving the police, health and social work ensure that all relevant information	• Although staff have some knowledge about how to respond when a child needs help, they do not consistently recognise when they should further assess the situation. • Staff within a service which does not have direct responsibility for children, do not always take appropriate action when they see vulnerable children in the course if their work. • Staff pass on concerns if a child seems at immediate risk, but sometimes overlook signs of neglect or harm and are less clear about the impact of cumulative harm • Staff are sometimes unsure how to respond when they are concerned that a child or young person may be at risk of harm and do not always consider the risks to other children who are not the subject of the referral. • Staff do not always carry out immediate risk assessments after initial referrals are made to police and social work. • Information is not consistently secured from all relevant agencies at the time of the initial referral. For example health information may be omitted reducing the effectiveness of decision making. • Although investigations are usually planned jointly there

is available and all of the child's needs are properly considered.

- Staff are sufficiently trained, skilled and supported to make appropriate decisions on how to proceed, based on all the available information
- Investigations are planned and conducted effectively by staff with appropriate skill and training. Advice is sought from appropriate health staff when making decisions about the need for medical examinations.
- Where required, medical examinations are carried out by appropriately trained staff in a suitable child-friendly environment (i.e. not in a police station or in families' own homes). Medical examinations pay attention to the child's wider welfare and health needs, including trauma recovery, as well as forensic evidence.
- Appropriate action is taken to ensure the child's safety. There is a clear process of decision-making about the actions required during, and as a consequence of, any investigations.
- Children and families are given helpful information about any concerns and actions taken, where appropriate.
- Initial assessments always include consideration of a referral to the Children's Reporter.
- Timely decisions about children and young people becoming looked after are made using high-quality assessments about the risk of harm or actual harm to them and the likelihood of change in their family.

are occasions when a single service takes a course of action without fully considering the holistic needs of the child.

- Children and families do not always receive enough helpful information about any concerns or action taken.
- Referral to the Children's reporter is not always thoroughly considered.
- There can be some delay in making decisions about whether a child or young person needs to become looked after. Poorer quality initial assessments sometimes delay decision making.
- Staff raising the initial concern do not always receive feedback on the outcome of this.

Quality Indicator 5.2	Assessing risk and need	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which effective processes are in place to: • Ensure purposeful risk assessments are completed within appropriate timescales. • Enable thorough needs assessment. • Support effective assessment of future needs to inform pathway planning for care leavers.	• Staff properly understand the nature and assessment of risk and make sound judgements • Staff have a good understanding of their need to finely balance risk and need. They carefully quantify risk and identify how to best meet assessed needs. • Assessments are based on up to date, recognised frameworks such as the national practice model and the risk assessment framework. • Chronologies are used to identify patterns of significant events or experiences. • Children, young people and parents get a good quality assessment within a reasonable timescale. • All relevant staff, including those who work primarily with adults fully contribute to assessments. • Assessments are used to make to informed judgements about the risk to and needs of each child or young person. This includes assessment of parental capability and capacity to change.	• Results of previous scrutiny • Review and audit of case records including scrutiny of risk assessment practice • Relevant performance management information • Feedback from children and families • Staff surveys • Observed practice • Relevant policy and procedures • Supervision • Significant case reviews • Evidence of learning from adverse outcomes and 'near misses' • Feedback from quality assurance activity

	• When comprehensive or specialist assessments are required they are arranged and completed without delay. • Assessments are kept up to date in response to any significant changes. • Dynamic assessments with a focus on future needs are ensuring appropriate pathway plans are in place for care leavers.	

Very good illustration	Weak illustration
• When reviewing records most assessments are good or better. • Services share an agreed approach to assessment, which is child-centred and ensures that all aspects of risk and need are covered. • Assessments consistently contain full, concise, relevant and accurate information. They include a chronology and/or family and social history. They make good use of information from different services and sources. They include analysis that makes clear links between the recorded information and plans for intervention or decisions to take further action. • Chronologies are regularly reviewed and analysed to identify concerns or an accumulation of experiences which may adversely affect the child or young person • Staff use clear risk assessment methods which they use consistently. This includes recognised evidence based frameworks. • Pathway planning (including transition planning for looked after children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities)	• When reviewing records most records are weak or worse. • There is no agreed approach to assessment across services. • There is not a consistently high standard of assessments. Too many have gaps and inaccuracies in the information and consist largely of description rather than analysis of the information presented. • Too many assessments rely heavily on self report which is not explored thoroughly enough to inform accurate assessment. • Chronologies for individual children and young people are not helpful enough in identifying events or an accumulation of experiences which may adversely affect the child or young person's wellbeing. • Pathway planning for care leavers is not properly addressing all the young people's needs • Managers do not regularly scrutinise assessments of risk and need • There are no agreed practice standards from which to measure the quality of assessments

is informed by a thorough assessment addressing all the young people's needs and this is updated as circumstances change. • Managers regularly scrutinise assessments of risk and need and review procedures and protocols as a result of this.		

Quality Indicator 5.3	Care planning, managing risk and effective intervention	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which effective processes are in place to support practice in: • Developing plans to meet needs and reduce risk. • Reviewing progress, joint planning and decision-making. • Providing timely and effective intervention to reduce risk, meet need and improve wellbeing. • Securing stable and caring environments for children and young people. • Enabling care leavers to succeed in their transition to greater independence and adulthood at a time that is right for them.	• Comprehensive assessments are well used to develop plans which reduce risk and meet needs. • Carefully compiled chronologies of significant events are supporting effective risk management. • Care and risk management plans are reviewed at appropriate intervals • Children and young people receive help that is proportionate to risk and need • More specialist interventions are available for children and young people when they need them. • Timely decision making in the lives of children and young people becoming looked after ensures they live in a	• Results of previous scrutiny • Review and audit of case records including scrutiny of risk assessment practice • Relevant performance management information • Feedback from children and families • Staff surveys • Observed practice • Relevant policy and procedures • Supervision • Significant case reviews • Evidence of learning from adverse outcomes and 'near misses'

	stable and caring environment. • Staying put and continuing care are successful in enabling care leavers to experience graduated and extended transitions.	

Very good illustration	Weak illustration
• Plans are of a consistently high quality and there is an individual and unique plan for every child in a family. • Most plans are carefully linked to assessments of risk and need. • Staff have a very clear focus on risk of significant harm as central to effective management of risk, and this is evident in the quality of the plans. • Plans clearly set out clearly what difference the identified actions are expected to make to the child or young person's circumstances in both the short and longer term. • There are clear goals and outcomes for the intervention provided • Statutory guidance on planning and review is almost always adhered to. • There is sufficient independent challenge to drive progress forwards within timescales appropriate to the individual child or young person. • Meetings and decisions are recorded appropriately and the record made available to all relevant staff. This ensures they	• The quality of plans is variable and there is not always an individual and unique plan for every child in a family. • Many care plans do not thoroughly address risk and need. • Most risk assessments do not meaningfully inform risk management plans or staff do not adequately connect the results of risk assessment work to the process of risk management. • There are weak case recording standards in high risk cases, for example, many case records lack useful chronologies. • Plans often include actions which are too vague and timescales can be left open ended. Plans are not always explicit about what needs to change to improve the child or young person's circumstances and wellbeing. • Plans are not always clear about what will happen if the circumstances of children and young people do not improve quickly enough. • Timescales for reviewing plans are often not met. Meetings do not always take place on time or involve all relevant staff. They are frequently cancelled or rearranged at short notice.

are well-informed about progress and any significant changes.	• Staff are not held to account when actions have not been carried out as agreed, timescales have not been met or there has been insufficient progress.
• Relevant staff take responsibility and contribute effectively to planning for the child/young person. Each service has a clear understanding of their role in the plan and provides up to date information if the plan requires to be changed/amended.	• Meetings are not always recorded well or communicated promptly to all relevant staff.
• Timely and effective intervention, including therapeutic help, is available for children and young people when they need them for as long as they need them.	• Appropriate interventions are not always available for children and young people when they need them.
• Plans for children and young people who are looked after have a strong focus on securing nurturing and stable environments.	• Plans do not focus enough on securing nurturing and stable environments for individual children and young people.
• Plans are effective in minimising periods of uncertainty for children and young people placed in temporary care placements,	• There are occasions when a child or young person's plan continues to be managed in an environment which is no longer conducive to their safety or wellbeing.
• Appropriate and timely support is provided to reduce the risk of placement breakdown including post adoption support services.	• Some children experience poorer outcomes because they are accommodated too far away from their families, schools and communities.
• Plans for care leavers reflect the highest ambitions and aspirations for their futures. In particular thoroughly addressing all the 6 pillars of the care leavers covenant namely; health and wellbeing, housing and accommodation, education and training, employment, youth and criminal justice, and rights and participation.	• Plans are not always effective in minimising periods of uncertainty or in reducing the length of time children and young people live in temporary care arrangements.
• Care leavers are enabled to stay in positive care placements until they are ready to move on.	• There is not always an appropriate and prompt response to prevent placement breakdown.
• Partners actively promote and facilitate extended and graduated transitions to give looked after young people the opportunity and support to prepare for greater levels of independence while remaining in their care setting.	• Plans for care leavers are not always ambitious and aspirational and do not adequately cover the range of areas which address their identified needs.
	• Full and meaningful implementation of 'Staying Put' and 'Continuing Care' have not yet been realised resulting in few opportunities for looked after young people to plan extended and graduated transitions.

Quality Indicator 5.4	Involving individual children, young people and families	
Key Factors	To what extent can we demonstrate	Possible evidence to consider
The extent to which: • The views, wishes and expectations of children, young people and families are listened to and taken into account • Children, young people and families participate in key processes • Information sharing procedures are in place • Systems are in place to enable and support children, young people and families to give feedback and make formal complaints	• All children, young people and families views are recorded and taken into account in their assessments, plans and decision making. • All children, young people and families are given the opportunity regularly to update their views. • All children, young people and families are treated in a fair and inclusive manner. • Information which is provided about services is helpful and transparent. • Service users know what information is held about them and understand that some information will need to be shared without their consent if it concerns safety • Children and young people are offered independent advocacy and any supports they need to fully participate in processes about their lives • Complaints and feedback are encouraged and welcomed by the service and are acted upon within agreed timescales with the outcome being shared.	• Children and young people's records • Processes and procedures • Participation Strategy and Annual report • Complaints Policy and communication of the procedures • Records of complaints and responses • Information and leaflets for children, young people and families including accessible online content • Buildings – how do they give a welcome, and how does the layout, interview rooms facilities, available technology help to provide an inclusive environment • Service level agreements with advocacy services • Feedback from children and young people to advocacy

		services
		• Advocacy annual reports
		• Inspection reports

Very Good illustration	**Weak illustration**
The partnership:	**The partnership:**
• Listens carefully to children, young people and families and has a thorough understanding of their views, wishes and expectations • Provides helpful information about services which is transparent and easy to understand. • Ensures that systems are in place for people with communication difficulties and non-English speakers to express their views fully • Views are recorded and are taken into account in assessments • Revises and updates the views and expectations of children, young people and families • Children, young people and families are treated fairly and inclusively with a respect for difference. • Information is shared by consent of the service user and is managed and recorded to reflect discussion which have taken place to explain this and any exceptions • Includes children, young people and families in processes and indecisions about their lives • Provides timely information about advocacy services in a manner which enables participation • Encourages children, young people and families to share their views about the services they receive	• Listens to the views of children, young people and families but any understanding of the views, wishes and expectations are limited • Does not give enough support to those with communication needs • Does not accurately record what children, young people and families say or take their views into account when decisions are made • Does not revisit service users views to check they are still accurate and relevant for their current needs • Does not fully recognise difference • Is not consistent in how it gathers consent to share information • Does not consider the needs of service users in planning venues for meetings • Doe not take full account of the need to involve children, young people and families in assessments • The contribution of dependent advocacy is not valued and is not routinely offered to children, young people and families • Does not use feedback in a systematic way to gather views form service users • Provides limited information about how to express

- Acts on information received from service users to improve their individual experiences - Creates an environment where service users feel enabled to provide feedback - Responds quickly to complaints and provides feedback on the outcome and any actions which have been taken.	- dissatisfaction, making complaints or representations - Does not respond in a timely way to children, young people or families when they have made a complaint

How good is our management?

Key area 6

Policy, service development and legal measures

This section is about operational and strategic management of services for children, young people and families. It considers the extent to which policies, procedures and the use of legal measures link to the vision, values and aims and support effective joint working. It looks at the effectiveness of children's services planning, the corporate parenting board and the child protection committee in improving outcomes for children and young people. It focuses on how well children, young people, families and other stakeholders are involved in service planning and development. It gives attention to how well children's rights are promoted. It relates to the effectiveness of performance management and quality assurance to ensure high standards of service delivery. It takes account of how well self-evaluation is informing improvement and service development.

Quality Indicator 6.1	Policies, procedures and legal measures	

Key Factors	To what extent can we demonstrate	Possible evidence to consider
The extent to which: • Shared policies reflect the vision, values and aims of the partnership, making them visible in day to day practice. • Policies and procedures reflect national standards and guidance. • Coherent policies and procedures reflect the strategic objectives and operational requirements. • Legal measures to protect children and young people, keep them safe and secure their future are appropriately considered and promptly pursued. • All policies comply with current equality and human rights legislation.	• Policies and procedures are consistent with the strategic vision • Policies and procedures carefully consider and reflect local partnership arrangements to ensure cohesion across structural boundaries Policies and procedures are equality impact assessed, effectively implemented and regularly evaluated and reviewed • A cohesive suite of policies are in place to ensure we have no significant gaps That policies and procedures reflect a focus on outcomes • Effective communication and management systems are in place to ensure employees understand and implement policies and procedures • Single and multi-agency policies and procedures fit well together and enhance partnership working • That best practice is promoted through the development of new policies and procedures • Legal measures always appropriately considered when making decisions about the care of children and young people	• Strategic and operational plans • Committee reports and board papers • Procedures manuals • Guidance for employees • Guidance/handbooks for carers • Employee newsletters, bulletins and other communications • Individual records of children and young people subject to legal measures. • Minutes of case conferences, reviews and other decision making meetings for children and young people • Equality impact assessments • Disability equality duty policy Other equality policies

Very good illustration	Weak illustration
Partnerships:	**Partnerships:**

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- Have shared policies which strongly reflect the vision, values and aims.
- Have comprehensive policies setting high standards for all services, reflecting local and national guidance and enhancing effective joint working.
- Ensure every policy is clearly dated and unambiguous as to whether it is a draft or not.
- Develop policy and procedures from the basis of achieving good outcomes and do so taking full account of evidence based principles.
- Have policies that reflect local and national priorities.
- Have procedures which set expectations for effective service delivery and implementation of getting it right for every child.
- Have a readily accessible suite of multi-agency procedures to guide practitioners in working together resulting in high levels of consistency in practice.
- Routinely review and update multi-agency policies and procedures.
- Ensure practitioners are kept fully informed about any changes to policies and procedures.
- Achieve a high level of compliance with implementation of new procedures.
- Monitor the timely and effective use of legal measures.
- Fully consider equality and human rights issues when developing policy and procedures.
- Examine in detail a range of legislative options when considering how best to meet the needs of children with significant mental health issues or older young people.

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- Have policies of variable quality which do not always link well to the vision, values and aims.
- Have out of date policies and policies where it is not clear about whether they are in draft or fully implemented.
- Do not have policies that fully reflect local and national priorities.
- Develop policies as a reaction to untoward events rather than as a planned process.
- Do not have procedures which clearly set expectations for effective service delivery and implementation of getting it right for every child.
- Do not have a systematic approach to reviewing and updating our procedures and communicating changes effectively to staff. As a result implementation is inconsistent.
- Meet their statutory duties to a minimum standard. There are weaknesses and inconsistencies in the ways legislation and guidance are implemented.
- Are inconsistent in their application of legal measures to protect children and young people, keep them safe and secure their future.
- Fail to properly consider equality and human rights issues in developing policy and procedure.
- Do not give sufficient consideration to all relevant strands of legislation when considering complex cases

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Quality Indicator 6.2	Planning and improving services	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which: • Children's services planning arrangements, including child protection committee business planning and corporate parenting planning are leading to improved outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and care leavers • Plans reflect the partnerships strategic priorities Partnerships manage and mitigate emerging or potential risk	• Effective mechanisms are in place for developing, implementing, reviewing and evaluating strategic and operational plans; • Governance and reporting arrangements are clear and reflect local partnership arrangements • A robust service planning process ensures that strategic and operational plans are coherent with each other; • Plans are informed by strategic assessment of need, comprehensive data and performance information; • Plans reflect arrangements for corporate parenting and are produced with this assumption; • Plans are fully reflective of the rights of children and young people and uphold the PANEL[3] principles; • Plans are informed by consultation with the public, service users and staff and reflect principles of participation and inclusion; • Plans are accessible to the public and	• LOIP • Strategic needs assessment • Local/community profiles • Children's services plan and progress updates (including corporate parenting plan and children's rights plan) • Child protection committee annual report and business plan • Governance arrangements/terms of reference from relevant strategic planning groups and committees • Minutes from strategic planning groups • Individual service action plans, minutes of team planning events and team • Risk registers; • Performance reports and end of year reports • Council/CPC websites • Communication strategy • Participation/engagement strategy • Equality impact assessments Key papers to CPP, Chief officers,

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[3] PANEL - Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination and Equality, Empowerment and Legality

	are presented in a range of user-friendly formats; • All plans have undergone equality impact assessments Plans lead to tangible improvement in the lives of vulnerable children, young people and care leavers	Elected members

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
Partnerships: • Ensure that partners from all relevant services are meaningfully involved in the co-ordination, development and implementation of children's services plans; • Can demonstrate a systematic approach[4] to the development of children's services plans, • Develop plans based on comprehensive and dynamic assessment of need. They demonstrate a sound relationship between universal, targeted and specialist services; • Take account of the GIRFEC principles when developing plans, recognising fully the specific steps needed to implement these in practice; • Ensure plans specify SMART[5] objectives and measurable success criteria, based on a manageable number of key priorities • Have in place clear lines of accountability to ensure that actions are achieved and progress is reported publicly;	**Partnerships:** • Commitment amongst the partners to children's services planning is uneven; • Have not prioritised strategic needs assessment, and as a result, plans are not well-matched to the changing needs of vulnerable children, young people and care leavers • Have plans which do not reflect shared priority objectives, and consist of mainly single service initiatives • Are unclear about their progress in implementing key actions, making it difficult to report publicly on achievements • Are unsure what measurable difference children's services planning arrangements are making to the protection and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people and care leavers. • Are unable to demonstrate the impact and outcomes of improvements in performance for vulnerable children • Have not yet developed a level of maturity to enable effective

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[4] 10 steps to effective children's services planning – Scottish Government
[5] SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound

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- Effectively engage staff in the development and implementation of plans so that understand fully how their work contributes to achievement of key strategic priorities
- Ensure plans promote equalities and demonstrate commitment to narrow the outcome gap by addressing poverty and deprivation;
- Demonstrate effective joint working to improve services to vulnerable children and young people;
- Have in place robust systems for monitoring performance, measuring improvement; and regular reporting of progress to strategic groups
- Reflect a learning environment to creatively develop and improve practice;
- Have effective approaches in place to jointly identify emerging or potential risk and take timely, proportionate action to mitigate this.

  Adhere to national guidance and legislative requirements

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- challenge when the pace of progress against agreed actions is too slow
- Do not have a systematic approach to managing risk and is not sufficiently well informed about potential or emerging risks;

- Do not comply fully with national guidance or legislative requirements

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Quality Indicator 6.3	Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders	

Key Factors	To what extent can we demonstrate	Possible evidence to consider
The extent to which: • Vulnerable children, young people, families and other stakeholders are involved in and their views influence policy, planning and service development • Approaches to communication and consultation with children, young people and families and other stakeholders are effective • The rights of children and young people are promoted, respected and guide all aspects of children's services planning and delivery	• The rights and involvement of children, young people, families and other stakeholders is central to planning and development • A children's rights plan is in place and informs the approach • Stakeholders know how they can share their views and the methods in which they can do so are easy to locate and use • Stakeholders views are reflected in planning and policy • Feedback is gathered at all levels of service user involvement and is used to inform the development of service delivery • Communication methods and Information technology and are appropriate to stakeholder's needs • Communication with children and young people, families and stakeholders is done in a way which enables their participation, engagement and elicits their trust • Children and young people's rights are being promoted by services. Complaints are used to inform areas for service improvement	• Children's Services Plan • Children's Rights Plan • Participation strategy • Engagement with the third sector, faith groups and other communities of interest • Policy and procedures • Strategic consultation framework and service implementation • Feedback from children, young people, families and stakeholders • Information/data from engagement activities and consultations • Staff surveys • Agendas and minutes of meetings – • Evidence of service user feedback in performance reporting • Inspection reports including Regulatory feedback

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration

Partnerships:	Partnerships:
- Can demonstrate that policies, planning arrangements and service developments fully reflect the views of vulnerable children, young people, and care leavers and their families - Engage in a meaningful way with a range of stakeholders to ensure they are active participants in all aspects of children's services planning - Ensure the voice of vulnerable children, young people and families comes across strongly within the children's services plan, corporate parenting strategy and all policy making and planning processes - Ensure that care-experienced children and young people have meaningful opportunities for engagement with their corporate parents and direct access to elected members, community planning partners and senior officers - Develop creative approaches to engage vulnerable children, young people and care leavers to help them inform and influence the way services are designed and delivered - Engagement with vulnerable children, young people and families and other stakeholders is used positively to shape policies and inform plans - Have in place effective consultation and feedback methods which minimise duplication for stakeholders - User-friendly communication helps ensure meaningful engagement - Recognise and compensate for power imbalances between different stakeholders and engage harder to reach groups successfully - Facilitate very effective participation of children with additional needs, including communication needs - Can demonstrate how the views of vulnerable children, young people and care leavers have influenced policies and service	- Do not have an agreed strategy or clear framework for consultation and involvement - Do not routinely seek the views of all stakeholders on the range of services - Do not include the views of vulnerable children, young people and families in key strategic plans such as the children's services plan and the corporate parenting strategy - Provide few opportunities for children, young people and families to discuss plans, policies and services directly with corporate parents, or elected members, community planning partners and senior officers - Are at an early stage of developing joint policies and strategies to communicate with children, young people and other stakeholders - Make varied and inconsistent attempts to reduce barriers to communication and involvement - Are tokenistic in their approach to engagement and consultation with vulnerable children, young people, care leavers and families - Too often consult with the same stakeholders, excluding other key groups - Do not routinely provide feedback to those involved in the consultation process, leaving them unsure if their views were taken seriously or made a difference - Raise awareness of children's rights through a range of activities however lack a coherent strategy to underpin this - Are unclear about what they are trying to achieve through promotion of children's rights - Do not have mechanisms in place to review or report on the effectiveness of approaches to embed children's rights in their

developments	work
• Ensure children's rights guide and underpin all policies, planning and service development • Establish successful strategies for furthering understanding of children's rights among children and young people, staff and communities • Ensure children, young people and families know and understand their rights, and are helped to exercise these • Report annually on progress in promoting children's rights	

Quality Indicator 6.4	Performance Management and Quality Assurance	
Key Factors	To what extent can we demonstrate	Possible evidence to consider
The extent to which: • Performance management and quality assurance ensures high standards of service delivery and improved outcomes for vulnerable children and young people • Quality assurance arrangements enable staff at every level to take responsibility for the quality of services • Inconsistent or poor practice is identified and addressed	• Performance measures and standards are established and regularly reviewed. • Standards are set to reflect aspirations to deliver services of the highest quality • Baseline management information is reported, monitored and reviewed • Improvement targets are used against national, local and virtual comparators • Targets are reviewed regularly and used to monitor trends over time • Performance management systems are well established and used to inform service delivery and workforce requirements	• Performance management framework • Quality assurance framework • Data sets and how they are used within the organisation • Data reports from a range of multi-agency groups • Processes and procedures for quality assurance • Reports to and from quality assurance groups • Case records • Supervision records • Performance appraisals • Team plans

		Annual reports
	- Management information informs quality assurance and self-evaluation activities - Key processes are routinely quality assured and the findings are communicated with staff - Strategic groups oversee multi-agency performance and hold services accountable - Practice management and supervision is informed by the learning from activities such as quality assurance, audits, and significant case reviews - A robust supervision framework which quality assures practice and provides oversight of decision making	

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
Partnerships:	**Partnerships:**
- Have an up to date performance framework with an agreed set of standards and outcome indicators. Progress is overseen by accountable senior leaders and elected members who provide appropriate levels of scrutiny and challenge - Analyse data from a range of sources and use this effectively to inform planning and service development - Regularly monitor performance against stretching targets, taking corrective action when necessary to achieve goals. - Report publicly on the quality of services for vulnerable	- Have yet to develop or implement a performance and quality assurance framework - Lack oversight of quality assurance and performance information and are not clear how performance has improved over time - Do not have efficient and reliable systems from which to gather timely and accurate performance data - Review a limited range of data which does not provide the level of detail needed to identify where gaps or inconsistencies in performance exist

children and young people • Achieve consistently high standards and consistency in the quality of operational practice as a result of robust quality assurance arrangements • Utilise performance information and quality assurance approaches to continually strive to improve the quality of work and improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people • Support operational managers and staff to make effective use of performance data to support continuous improvement. • Create a safe learning culture which is enquiring and aspirational and based on performance and self-evaluation • Successfully communicate to staff expectations and aspirations to deliver services of the highest quality • Provide high quality, reflective supervision which supports, challenges and quality assures practice and decision making	• Focus too much on quantitative measures without giving sufficient consideration to the quality of work • Monitor some key processes but the measures used are not collated systematically • Have yet to develop systems which enable staff to utilise performance data on a day to day basis to identify where improvement is needed • Have made limited progress in developing a culture among all staff of high aspirations and continuous improvement • Do not effectively challenge poor or inconsistent practice, or engage staff sufficiently well to improve standards of practice • Place limited value on the importance of robust quality assurance and supervision processes to improve standards of practice • Have significant gaps in how quality assurance work is undertaken

Quality Indicator 6.5	Self evaluation	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which self-evaluation: • Is prioritised, planned and coordinated	• Commitment to delivering excellence in services for vulnerable children and their families • The approach to self-evaluation is guided by relevant and accredited	• Key strategies like the local outcome improvement plan, children's services plan, child protection committee plan and corporate parenting plan

- Involves and takes account of the experiences of children, young people and their families - Informs and leads to improvement and service development	frameworks - A programme of self-evaluation is in place and has been jointly agreed by partners - Self-evaluation priorities link to the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and identified priorities in the children's services plan - Performance information and quality assurance information is used to inform self-evaluation activity - Improved outcomes as a result of self-evaluation activity - Stakeholders are informed about the quality of services - We analyse evidence from a range of sources to support findings of self-evaluation Peer reviews are undertaken and evaluations stand up to scrutiny	- Findings reports arising from significant case reviews, learning reviews, - Reports on analysis and findings of any self-evaluation activity - Reports on analysis and findings of any commissioned studies - Improvement plans and progress updates following self-evaluation - Committee/Board reports - Self-evaluation framework - Benchmarking activity - Inspection and scrutiny reports - Learning from PDSA[6] tests of change

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
Partnerships:	**Partnerships:**
- Strive to deliver excellence in services for vulnerable children, young people and their families. - Have a shared approach to self-evaluation and improvement, underpinned by relevant and accredited frameworks	- Have low aspirations and are content for services to meet minimum standards - Do not plan or co-ordinate self-evaluation together - Have not developed a level of maturity in partnership working

[6] Plan, Do, Study, Act

- Use accurate performance information to identify and agree key priority areas for self-evaluation
- Carefully plan and coordinate a cycle of single agency and joint self-evaluation based on a manageable number of priorities
- Gather robust evidence by comparing findings from a number of different activities
- Support and encourage staff to carry out self-evaluation as an integral part of their work, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to do this well
- Routinely gather views and information about the experiences of vulnerable children, young people and families to inform self-evaluation
- Have well-established and creative approaches which promote service user involvement in self-evaluation
- Regularly provide feedback to vulnerable children, young people and families when their views have been sought, and can demonstrate how their views are influencing improvements
- Self-evaluation focusses on outcomes and can demonstrate notable and tangible improvements in performance and the protection and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people and families.
- Communicate clearly improvement priorities so that staff understand fully what they need to do to improve the quality of their work
  Successfully build capacity of staff to secure change and improvement through self-evaluation

to enable a culture of support and challenge
- Does not have a good understanding of what is done well and what needs to improve. There is a reliance on external scrutiny to inform what improvements are required
- Improvement plans have an unrealistic and unmanageable number of actions and frequently changing priorities Performance information is of limited value in identifying areas where performance is poor or inconsistent
- Have made limited progress in developing a culture among all staff of high aspirations and continuous improvement through self-evaluation. Staff are not involved in reviewing their work systematically
- Gather the views of individual children, young people and families but do not do this systematically enough, or as part of a self-evaluation. Are unable to demonstrate a clear link between the views of service users and the improvements needed
- Self-evaluation continually identifies the same areas for improvement and plans to move forward are generally ineffective
- Can demonstrate a few improvements in the quality and consistency of systems and processes, however have limited evidence of improvements in the protection or wellbeing of vulnerable children and their families

Key area 7

Management and support of staff

This section is about how well partners support, manage and develop the workforce. It focuses on the extent to which staff across services are deployed effectively to protect children and young people, keep them safe and secure their future, within the context of getting it right for every child. It looks at how well a workforce development strategy supports the workforce to carry out their duties competently and confidently.

Quality Indicator 7.1	Recruitment, deployment and joint working	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which: • Partners clearly identify their human resource requirements to provide a high quality service to vulnerable children, young people and families. • A joint workforce strategy ensures there are sufficient staff in place. • Principles of equality and fairness underpin recruitment and retention practices. • Strictly applied safer recruitment practices are in place • Staff are deployed effectively, taking into account their skills and experience.	• There are sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified staff to deliver the agreed outcomes. • The workforce plan addresses issues of recruitment and retention. • Recruitment problems in specific areas are identified and addressed. • Staffing levels are monitored and reviewed in line with changing needs over time. • There are effective procedures in place to ensure equality and fairness in recruitment and promotion. • Safer recruitment procedures are consistently followed.	• Recruitment and retention strategies • Reviews of HR policies, job descriptions, specifications • Workforce strategy • Staff surveys • Senior management meetings with staff • Policies for safer recruitment and their implementation • Grievance procedures and analysis of its use by staff • Evidence from relevant quality model e.g. IIP. • Evidence of special bonus scheme or other incentives for excellent staff.

• Multi-disciplinary working and teamwork is thoroughly established in day to day practice with vulnerable children and young people.	• Staff in all setting are clear about their roles and responsibilities. • Job descriptions are regularly reviewed and updated to support improving practice. • Staff are effectively deployed to meet planned priorities. • Staff across services work collaboratively to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. • Multi-disciplinary teams have the right mix of employees to deliver good quality services to vulnerable children and young people.	

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
Partners: • Have established a joint workforce strategy and have sufficient staff to provide consistently high quality services to vulnerable children, young people and families. • Individually and collectively, have established appropriate staffing standards to ensure the effective delivery of priorities identified for child protection and corporate parenting plans. • Have very effective human resource management frameworks. • Recruit in an open, fair and competitive manner aligning skills, aptitudes and experiences of applicants to clearly defined selection criteria. • Recruit staff with appropriate input from children, young people and families.	**Partners:** • Do not have sufficient staffing levels, across services, to provide consistently high quality services to vulnerable children, young people and families. • Have human resource policies and procedures in place, but there are gaps in staffing in key areas. • Individually and collectively, have established some staffing standards but these are not comprehensive enough to ensure the effective delivery of the priorities identified for child protection and corporate parenting plans. • Recruitment practice is variable and does not always recognise or align the skills, aptitudes and experience of applicants to clearly defined selection criteria. • Policies and practices are ineffective in recruiting and

- Within and across services, have safer recruitment procedures in place, including vetting of staff who have contact with children. There are robust arrangements in place to ensure that these are applied consistently. - Have effective procedures for investigating alleged abuse by staff and this link explicitly to disciplinary procedures. - Ensure their multi-disciplinary teams have the necessary range of skills and professional expertise. - Carefully deploy their staff and enable them to work well together in achieving priorities, targets and outcomes in the context of getting it right for every child	- retaining staff leading to unfilled vacancies. - Are aware of the need to apply safer recruitment procedures, but do not have arrangements in place to ensure that we do so consistently. - Have procedures in place for investigating alleged abuse by staff but these do not link explicitly to disciplinary procedures and are not applied consistently. - Have yet to develop a culture of mutual support and recognition of the contribution staff make across services and in multi-disciplinary teams. - Have not given enough attention to ensuring multi-disciplinary teams have the necessary skills and professional expertise.

Quality Indicator 7.2	Workforce development and support	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which: - Staff are confident and can undertake their duties competently; - A workforce planning and development strategy is in place which outlines a commitment to workforce planning, training and development for staff at all levels in line with national priorities and local targets; - Staff are enabled to reflect upon and	- A sufficient, local workforces that is skilled and appropriately trained to support a partnership approach to the delivery of local priorities; - Learning opportunities are provided and designed to equip the workforce to undertake their roles safely and competently; - The workforce has skills and confidence in the use of tools that promote common values, shared	- Workforce planning and development strategies across services in the partnership and commissioned services; - Records of meetings at strategic and team level which reflect workforce planning and development; - Training evaluations and evidence of using the learning they provide to review training delivery; - Staff surveys;

improve their practice through advice, guidance and supervision.	principles and integrated working practices to improve outcomes for children, young people and families; • Staff training needs are audited including those who do not work directly with children and young people; • Appraisals are undertaken annually and are reviewed in order to ensure that staff's development needs are addressed and align with local priorities; • Staff are enabled to exercise appropriate initiative and professional judgement; • Staff supervision at all levels enables staff to reflect on their practice and to receive appropriate challenge to develop their skills and experience;	• Communication strategies; • Minutes of workforce planning and development CPC sub group • Evidence of actively sourcing the best training available; • Staff appraisal policy and procedure; • Staff supervision policy and procedure; • Staff training records; • Audits of supervision.

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
The partnership: • Demonstrate a clear strategy and commitment to developing and retaining staff; • New staff have a comprehensive induction incorporating organisational and role-specific information; • Make the workforce aware of the standards expected of them and are clear about lines of accountability in their work. • Training programmes are comprehensive and targeted to	**The partnership:** • Do not have a strategic approach to workforce planning and development; • Do not have a robust training needs analysis; • The workforce has varying levels of confidence and competence which are not addressed or supported; • Are unclear about the impact of training and development on staff or service users;

need and local priorities; • Multi- agency training is provided on a regular basis; • Ensure that trainings delivered by competent trainers; • Evaluations show very positive impact and added value of training and development. • Can demonstrate improvements in skills and working practices enhance the experiences of children, young people and their families. • Ensure that staff are supported, supervised and accountable in their work with children, young people and families; • Has supervision agreements in place and records of supervision are made and reviewed in each meeting. Supervision records are regularly audited. • Provide staff with help, advice and de-briefing when they need it and encourage staff to use their initiative and professional judgement; • Ensures staff appraisal is done systematically and is used effectively to develop the skills and competence of the workforce; • Provides a learning culture which is lead and role modelled by leaders; • Support reflective learning and encourage staff to use alternative ways to support their learning;	• Do not hold staff accountable for their work or equip them to fulfil their responsibilities; • Do not value or facilitate access to regular and effective support, challenge and appraisal; • Have not clear supervision policy therefore the frequency and quality of supervision is inconsistent; • Do not provide staff with appraisal or feedback on their performance; • Have difficulty retaining staff and working environments do not promote professional autonomy and accountability.

Key area 8

Resources and capacity building

This section focuses on the joint management of resources to deliver better outcomes for children and young people. It considers how effectively partners are working together to make joint decisions about

the deployment of resources to meet agreed priorities. It relates to how well partners work together to commission services to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Quality Indicator 8.1	Management of resources	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which: • Partners ensure transparency of financial planning and spend • Partners make joint decisions about the deployment of finance and resources to meet agreed priorities • Partners maximise opportunities for achieving best value through sharing resources and integrating service delivery • Resources are deployed effectively to promote equalities and address outcome gaps	• Financial planning delivers statutory priorities and is based on a joint assessment of need; • The partnership systematically shares an up to date knowledge about financial resources; • Financial planning and commissioning strategies are aligned; • Priorities and long term planning reflect a direction towards prevention and earlier intervention; • Savings are quantified and the impact on service delivery has been assessed; • Resources are balanced between reducing the need for specialist services and enabling existing specialist services to provide effective, efficient interventions; • Resources are deployed effectively to promote equalities and address	• Overarching plans and governance strategies • Reports to key partnership strategic groups • Joint Needs Assessment; • Public and internal consultations on reduction management; • Service delivery plans • Departmental budgetary management records; • Public communication • Staff communication

outcome gaps; • The partnership deploys resources jointly and budgets are aligned where appropriate; • Invest/spend to save opportunities are proactively sought; • Partnerships appraise all possible options for change and demonstrate a rigorous and collaborative approach to implementing best value;	

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
Partnerships: • Have a competent overview of all financial spend in services across the partnership for children and young people; • Are fully cognisant of the capital and revenue budgets, pooled budgets, asset management and human resources; • Target current and projected spend effectively to meet agreed priorities; • Have a framework that promotes equalities within financial planning and can demonstrate connectivity to an Equalities Policy; • Financial management is reported in the children's service plan and all relevant plans and reports; • The balance of short term and long term planning is clearly demonstrated and is linked to service improvement and transformational change; • Are able to demonstrate a clear link to prevention and early intervention services and projected contingency savings in	**Partnerships:** • Cannot demonstrate an overview of spend and how it relates to planning for services for children and young people; • Strategic planning and allocation of resources are not systematically or sufficiently linked; • Limited information about financial planning is available to partners, staff or the public; • Budgets are not aligned; • Budget managers at strategic level are not well enough informed to make best use of resources; • The deployment of resources has not positively impacted upon the quality and effectiveness of services to children and young people; • Services are not reviewed regularly in order ensure that best value is being achieved; • The partnership does not consult with the public or if they do the feedback is not taken into account;

budget and human resource; • Can demonstrate a sustainability strategy which anticipates any changes in policy and local priorities; • Have aligned their workforce planning strategy to financial planning and have an eye on succession and redundancy planning; • Demonstrates a rigorous and collaborative approach, including consultation, to implementing best value; • Reviews and maximises opportunities to reduce costs and avoid duplication.	• Financial planning is not visionary regarding efficiencies and focuses overly on ticking along; • The partnership does not consider workforce planning as part of financial management and is not proactively planning contingencies.

Quality Indicator 8.2	Commissioning arrangements	
Key Factors	To what extent can we demonstrate	Possible evidence to consider
The extent to which: • Joint commissioning strategies are coherent with the partnership's vision for keeping children safe and meeting their corporate parenting responsibilities; • Commissioning analysis is supported by a Joint Needs Assessment; • Implementation plans clearly outline	• Strategic commissioning planning across the partnership is collated and presented in one plan which is aligned to the Children's Service Plan; • Legislation and guidance are used to underpin a joint commissioning analysis; • Current service provision is reviewed to provide a gap analysis: • Business case options have been appraised and procurement channels	• Resource allocation exercises and rationale for decisions to alternative providers; • Joint needs assessment • Provider analysis • Strategic commissioning plan • Specifications, contracts and service level agreements, purchasing plans and procurement processes; • Contracts and contract management procedures;

how the strategic commissioning plan will be delivered; • Partners review and evaluate the quality of commissioned services in partnership with providers and children, young people and families.	have been used appropriately to ensure quality assurance of the application process and equality of opportunity; • Work has been carried out to influence the market to ensure the right providers have been made aware of the commissioning opportunity; • Capacity has been built to provide the service and to manage the contract; • Capacity is in place to manage provider relationships; • Commissioned services are assessed against the initial outcomes contained in the service level agreement including performance against agreed indicators: • Services are evaluated and feedback is provided in a systematic way to enable providers within the timeframe of annual commissioning cycles including commissioning standards and guidance.	• Reviews, meeting with contract manager and recording of outcomes against indicators;

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
The Partnership: • Can provide a coherent link between commissioning strategies and planning and overall financial planning across	**The Partnership:** • Is at an early stage of developing a commissioning approach to service delivery and does not have a strategic approach to

the partnership;

- Analyses current and future needs routinely across the partnership;
- Takes an evidence based approach to inform selection of the range of service provision;
- Can demonstrate a clear rationale behind commissioning decisions which meets the need to deliver universal, targeted and specialist services with a focus on prevention and early intervention;
- Ensures commissioning processes are open and transparent and has a shared set of commissioning standards and guidelines;
- Can demonstrate that commissioning is increasingly done on a joint basis within the partnership;
- Ensures commissioned services are able to demonstrate effectiveness against appropriate priorities and targets in our children's service plan and this information is used in the contract management process;
- Works closely with providers and service users to ensure that commissioned services are delivered effectively, safely and efficiently;
- Has high expectations about the quality of services and have systems for quality assurance to provide confidence that the needs of children and young people are met;
- Ensures services are monitored and evaluated and necessary changes are made accordingly
- Has an open and transparent commissioning process which takes into account views of service users and whilst market based, provides equal opportunities across the relevant sector;
- Monitors and evaluates how well commissioned services are improving the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and

commissioning;

- Is not sufficiently informed about needs, resources, gaps and capacity;
- Does not yet have a joint needs assessment;
- Demonstrates inconsistent approaches to commissioning and provides limited quality assurance of the commissioning process;
- Undertakes commissioning to fill current gaps without undertaking a thorough gap analysis;
- Cannot evidence how services align with the priorities set out in the children's services plan;
- Has not prioritised relationships with providers and as a result these relationships are under-developed.
- Focuses too heavily on commissioning costs and this is detracting from whether outcomes for children and young people are delivered;
- Is slow to take appropriate action when commissioned services fail to perform well.

young people.	

How good is our leadership?

Key area 9

Leadership and direction

This section is about the commitment and effectiveness of leaders in striving for excellence in the quality of services to keep children safe and achieve sustained improvements in the lives of the most vulnerable children, young people and families.   It focuses on collaborative leadership to plan and direct the delivery of services for vulnerable children and young people linked to the shared vision, values and aims. It also examines how well leaders are driving forward improvement and change. It takes account of how well leaders are adapting to new environments and negotiating complex partnerships.

Quality Indicator 9.1	**Vision, values and aims**	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which partners: • Share a coherent vision to achieve the best possible outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. • Ensure children, young people, families and other stakeholders have been involved in developing the vision, values and aims.	• Partners place improving outcomes for people using services at the heart of their vision. • There is a shared vision and sense of purpose for protecting children which is ambitious and challenging. • Partners are fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities. They are	• Plans including the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Children's Services Plan, Corporate Parenting Plan • Senior managers communication with the workforce about professional standards • Examples of how senior managers have communicated their vision for vulnerable children and young people

• Promote equality and inclusion.	active, strong and committed parents. • Corporate parents have the highest ambitions and aspirations for care leaver's futures. • There is collective ownership of the ambitions and aspirations of the partnership. • Partners understand and demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity.	• Employee surveys that demonstrate employees understand the vision • Communication from children, young people and families demonstrating that they have been involved in developing the vision, values and aims. • Feedback from engagement with children, young people, families, staff and community members.

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
• There are clear links between the vision, values and aims of the partnership and national priorities and aspirations. • A shared vision connects key plans including the local outcome improvement plan, children's services plan and corporate parenting plan. • Vision, values and aims in relation to protecting children are shared and clearly stated. • Corporate parents share high aspirations for all care experienced children and young people and are successfully fulfilling their parenting responsibilities. • Leaders ensure children, young people, families and other stakeholders are fully involved in developing the vision and shaping the values of partners. • Partners have a strong collective ownership of ambitions and aspirations. • Partners regularly revisit and take action to reinforce their vision, values and aims. • The work of the partnership is underpinned by a common	• The partnership's vision for vulnerable children and young people lacks collective ownership and does not focus sufficiently on improving outcomes. • Key plans are not well enough connected to an overall vision. The separate aims of partners are reflected in the local outcome improvement plan and children's services plan but there is not yet agreement about shared aims. • Joint operational plans, policies and procedures are not yet developed. • Partners do not always demonstrate the same level of commitment to agreed priorities in relation to keeping children safe. • Partners are still at an early stage in determining how best to meet their responsibilities as corporate parents. • Vision, values and aims have limited relevance to practice. • Leaders provide too few opportunities for children, young people, families and staff to become involved in developing the vision and shaping the values of the

purpose, shared values and high expectations. • All relevant plans set out clear expectations for promoting equality and inclusion. • Leaders ensure staff promote equality and inclusion in their day to day practice.	partnership. • Partners seldom refer to the vision, values and aims or refresh these to ensure that they remain central to the overall purpose. • Partners recognise the importance of their role in leading on equality and inclusion. However, this is not reflected clearly enough in an appropriate range of plans, policies and procedures. • While leaders are committed to promoting equality and inclusion this is not always evident in day to day practice across services.

Quality Indicator 9.2	Leadership of strategy and direction	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which: • Leaders collaborate to plan and direct service delivery for vulnerable children and young people linked to the vision, values and aims. • Leaders set demanding but realistic targets and provide a high level of support to achieve these. • Leaders sustain services which deliver positive outcomes at the same time as securing ongoing improvement through realigning children's services. • Leaders jointly deploy resources to the areas of greatest need.	• Partnerships include all the right people to meet the identified objectives of protecting children and meeting corporate parenting responsibilities. • Working in partnership with others is actively considered where this could add value to existing or planned services. • Leaders have a clear understanding of the local and national priorities which drive child protection and corporate parenting services. • Leaders take a long term view in setting the strategic direction. • There has been wide enough consultation about future options and risks and the best	• Plans including the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Children's Services Plan, Corporate Parenting Plan • Child protection committee plan • Staff surveys • Committee reports and board papers • Minutes of partnership planning meetings • Stakeholder surveys • Third sector feedback • Independent sector feedback • Focus groups

	way forward for child protection and corporate parenting services. • Plans contain a proper analysis of needs and gaps and what needs to change. • There is purposeful leadership of strategy and commissioning with sound implementation and monitoring arrangements. • There is clarity about the resource contribution that each partner makes to the partnership and about governance.	• Consultations

Very Good illustration	**Weak illustration**
• There is a coherent strategy and clear direction for child protection and corporate parenting services. • All relevant partners are involved in setting the direction of children's services with shared responsibility and accountability. • Partners jointly monitor the effectiveness of the approach and prioritise activities which are successful in delivering and sustaining measurable outcomes. • Leaders, senior managers, elected members and board members have a clear understanding of the local and national context and provide strong leadership and direction in developing child protection and corporate parenting services. • There are clear lines of accountability within and across organisations and planning arrangements give high priority to the most vulnerable children. • Partners identify and share resources and make transparent and evidence-based decisions on the allocation of resources to protect children and fulfil corporate parenting responsibilities.	• The current strategy lacks clarity and focus and is not fully representative of all relevant interests. • Accountability for leading and directing work does not represent the full range of relevant partners. • Collective accountability and responsibility for leading child protection and corporate parenting services is not well developed. • Partners have not achieved levels of trust that allow for quick and binding decision making which undermines shared determination and approach to drive improvement. • Leaders emphasise the need to protect children and fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities in their strategic and operational plans. However, resources are still not targeted well enough to support work in this area. • Decisions about strategic deployment of resources are not transparent and do not match national guidance. • Partners do not always take opportunities to share budgets and as a result do not always have sufficient resources to deliver positive outcomes to vulnerable children and young

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- Third sector organisations, including those who work with adults, are fully involved in the planning, development and delivery of services.
- Partners demonstrate sound cost benefit analysis alongside a clear rationale for what needs to change and what should remain the same.
- Leaders successfully steer services through the challenges associated with achieving the right balance between stability and change.
- Partners sustain what is working well for vulnerable children, young people and families while leading change for improvement.

</td><td>

- people.
- Partnerships with third sector organisations are not well enough developed to maximise the support available to children and families.
- There is limited analysis of the risks and benefits of change.
- Leaders lose focus on improving outcomes when faced with difficult decisions about reducing costs.
- Leadership is focused more on making changes within individual organisations than on delivery change through working together.

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Quality Indicator	Leadership of people and partnerships	
Key Factors	To what extent can we demonstrate	Possible evidence to consider
The extent to which: - Services have built leadership capacity across the workforce, secured positive working relationships and developed successful partnerships. - A positive ethos and culture enhances key partnerships and enhances a supportive working environment for all staff. - Work is appropriately delegated and staff are successfully empowered to work effectively together to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and	- Partners model an effective approach to developing leaders and future leaders. - Leaders help people retain their focus on delivering key objectives and targets. - Leaders regularly review the health of their partnerships. - Leaders promote shared responsibility for outcomes at all levels. - Leaders, senior managers, elected members and board members are visible to the workforce. - Leaders communicate well with stakeholders and staff at all levels.	- Communication with staff and stakeholders - Staff surveys - Stakeholder surveys - Staff focus groups - Quality and standards reports - National outcomes - Inspection reports - Partnership improvement objectives. - Progress reports on improvement objectives - Learning and development

• young people. • Collaborative working is promoted to achieve high levels of performance.	• Managers identify and promote talent. • Managers empower practitioners to work creatively to improve the outcomes of the most vulnerable children and young people. • Decision making is carefully delegated and managers understand the limits of their delegated authority. • Leaders ensure staff at all levels are successfully supported to work collaboratively across services, sharing their knowledge and skills for the benefit of vulnerable children and young people.	plans

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
• Leaders adopt appropriate leadership styles and demonstrate strong leadership across partner organisations to motivate staff to provide the best child protection and corporate parenting services. • Leaders foster a culture of collaborative working where management teams work closely and purposefully with each other. • Leaders promote an empowering culture where staff at all levels in all partner organisations understand their contribution to protecting children and fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities. • Leaders make very good use of their collective knowledge and skills to make a positive impact for the most vulnerable children and young people. • Leaders enable staff to be confident in exercising their initiative, taking responsibility and adopting lead roles. • Leaders are visible and have a high personal profile with staff	• There are gaps in the range of skills within leadership teams which impact on their overall effectiveness. • Leaders, senior managers, elected members and board members do not demonstrate a consistently clear view of their leadership role. • Leaders are not always successful in gaining the full commitment of stakeholders to protect children and fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities. • There is not a sufficient commitment to collaborative working despite an emphasis on the importance of effective working relationships. • There are important gaps in leadership to motivate others and there is a culture of dependency which inhibits staff at all levels from exercising initiative. • Leaders are reluctant to be open about the challenges they face and to problem solve together. • Leaders have very limited direct contact with staff

across services. • Leaders employ a range of very effective methods to communicate directly with staff. • Leaders are accessible and responsive when challenged and held in high regard by stakeholders. • Leaders ensure that staff have opportunities to jointly develop skills and learn from each other. • Leaders value and encourage staff and recognise and celebrate their achievements. • Leaders exemplify the high performance expected from staff in delivering high quality services through strong and purposeful teamwork. • Leaders promote an ethos of teamwork and have established a climate of professional collaboration at all levels. • Leaders ensure that staff understand the positive benefits of multi-agency team working and demonstrate this in their practice. • Leaders recognise achievements and celebrate success.	• Leaders' communication methods fail to engage staff or energise them to take on new ways of working together. • Leaders are seen as distant and resistant to challenge. • Leaders have not done enough to emphasise the importance of effective working relationships or to promote collective responsibility for protecting children and fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities. • Although leaders emphasise the importance of team working they have not yet done enough to ensure consistency in the quality of collaborative working. • The effectiveness of working relationships at all levels is variable. • Team working often lacks focus and has limited impact on improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. • Leaders have not yet established a culture which is conducive to feedback on performance. • Leaders do not fully recognise and celebrate the achievements of staff.

Quality Indicator 9.4	Leadership of improvement and change	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**	**Possible evidence to consider**
The extent to which leaders: • Are maintaining high levels of quality and promoting continuous improvement and excellence in child protection and	• Reliable evidence about performance, outcomes and effective practice guides strategic direction.	• Meeting with leaders, senior managers, elected members and board members.

corporate parenting services. • Use a wide range of different learning opportunities to drive change and improvement. • Embrace whole system change to redesign services in response to the rapidly changing external environment. • Are adapting to new environments and skilfully negotiating complex partnerships in order to deliver better outcomes for the most vulnerable children.	• Chief Officers, senior managers, elected members and board members drive change for improvement in service quality and efficiency. • Senior managers ensure change and improvement are supported by sufficient resources. • Change is managed well across services. • Managers properly scrutinise performance and provide challenge. • Local and national evidence about effective practice drives change for improvement. • Practice is sustainably improved by feedback. • Radical change in service models, structure, culture and management is delivering improvements in outcomes for the most vulnerable children.	• Inspection reports • Service progress reviews on improvement objectives • Action plans following inspections, SCRs and learning reviews • Quality assurance policy • Standards and quality reports • Nationally and locally reported statistics • Stakeholder questionnaires • Staff surveys • Staff focus groups

Very Good illustration	Weak illustration
• Leaders demonstrate a commitment to and focus on improving the quality of child protection and corporate parenting services. • Leaders have created a culture of reviewing services and planning improvements. • Leaders constantly explore ways of driving up capacity for improvement through self-evaluation. • Leaders have an acute awareness of how well services are performing. • Leaders conscientiously evaluate whether or not changes to systems and practices are delivering the required results.	• Leaders do not demonstrate a sufficiently strong focus on improving the quality of child protection and corporate parenting services. • Self-evaluation is of limited value in helping partners know how well their services are performing. • Leaders' approach to improvement is not sufficiently detailed or systematic to demonstrate whether planned improvements are achieved. • Partners do not readily understand when systems and practices need to be adjusted or changed. • Partners are slow to take corrective action.

• Leaders make sure successes act as a catalyst to implement further improvements in the quality of services and outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people. • Leaders explore new ways of working through applying findings from research, service redesign, scrutiny reports, recommendations from significant case reviews and deaths of looked after children. • Partners are confident in adapting and embedding good practice from elsewhere. • Partners use proven models and promote evidence-based approaches to change management. • Partners continually challenge themselves about traditional ways of delivering services and use their collective resources effectively. • Partners have applied recognised outcome-focused models of service redesign with success. • Partners have made notable leaps forward and are escalating the pace of change as their success in improving the lives of vulnerable children and young people becomes more evident. • Ambitious but achievable targets form the basis of close collaboration and joint effort between leaders across the various partnerships. • Where necessary, partners make financial savings on the basis of agreed priorities, strategic needs assessment and Best Value.	• Leaders and managers are aware of good practice in individual services but are not fully sighted on good practice through integrated or partnership working. • Partners rarely look outside their own services to learn from elsewhere. • Partners do not ensure the identification and dissemination of good practice. • Leaders have put in place a number of successful but time limited initiatives. However, the learning from these is not embedded in practice change more widely. • Changes made through joint working absorb a great deal of time and effort yet result in limited progress. • Leaders do not have an agreed joint approach to successfully delivering change. • Often, the primary focus for leaders is on the need to make financial savings rather than improving outcomes for children and young people. • Partners do not always communicate clearly the rationale for change and do not ensure they take staff with them. • Leaders across services do not work closely together to enhance capacity for improvement. • The pace of change is slow and progress is not always sustained.

What is our capacity for improvement?

Key area 10

Capacity for improvement?

This section presents an opportunity to evaluate capacity for improvement based on individual levers for improvement. It can be used as part of self-evaluation or as a basis for an improvement plan. Central to this indicator is the partnerships confidence in how capacity for change can be reliably demonstrated. It presents an opportunity for partners to come to a shared judgement and overall statement about their capacity for continued improvement which is based on the evidence and evaluations across the quality indicator framework.

Partners will need to take account of contextual issues which might influence this judgement - budgetary pressures; political change; significant structural changes; policy changes; a reorganisation of service boundaries. Partners will also need to consider their collective ability to anticipate change, to manage risk and contingency plans and to maintain their commitment to delivering excellent outcomes for children, young people and families.

What each partnership is able to demonstrate will vary across the key factors and this will be useful in establishing a baseline for improvement. Evidence will also vary and will be evident in the quality indicators completed as part of the self evaluation. Partnerships may use this to identify gaps in evidence and include this in their evidence for change.

Quality Indicator 10	
Key Factors	**To what extent can we demonstrate**
• Evaluation across the quality indicators • Capacity for improvement and response to change based in confidence and readiness; • Contextual challenges	• How well partnership intelligence is used to inform capacity for change and improvement; • Effective leadership and management; • Effective approaches to quality improvement and previous responses to areas for improvement;

	• Improvements to the outcomes for children, young people and families

Appendix 1

Illustrations for Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included

VERY GOOD ILLUSTRATION	WEAK ILLUSTRATION
SAFE Children and young people are well protected from abuse and neglect at home, at school and in the community. They report feeling safe and knowing how to assert their right to be safe. Children and young people stay in appropriate, secure and well-maintained housing. They enjoy safe places to play outside and meet up with their friends. Children and young people are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves safe and prevent accidents from occurring. They are able to guard against risks associated with using communication technology and are free from all forms of exploitation.	**SAFE** Children and young people are not sufficiently well protected from abuse and neglect. They say they are unsure who to speak to if they have concerns about their safety. They may be exposed unnecessarily risks at home or in the community and do not feel police are available to help them. They say that incidents of bullying are dealt with inconsistently. They have insufficient awareness of the risks of child sexual exploitation. Young people do not always get timely and appropriate help when their behaviour is potentially harmful to themselves or others. They experience homelessness or frequent changes of accommodation.

HEALTHY	**HEALTHY**
Children and young people say they enjoy high standards of health and wellbeing. They experience accessible health services designed to meet their needs. Children at risk of developmental delay are benefit from timely help to catch up. Children and young people enjoy healthy diets and are free of tooth decay. They are supported to make well-informed choices and to lead healthier lifestyles. Children affected by a long term illness, condition or disability enjoy as full a life as possible. Children and young people are mentally resilient and well-equipped to cope with everyday stresses. They have a positive outlook on life.	Children and young people's access to health care is constrained in some way. They are not well enough supported to attend appointments or complete courses of treatment. They do not always receive help at an early enough stage to progress towards optimal physical and mental wellbeing. Approaches to changing behaviours adversely affecting their health and to prevent substance misuse are limited. There is restricted access to services supporting their recovery from trauma, abuse and neglect. Transitions to adult health services are problematic, adversely affecting young people who have left school, including care leavers up to 25 years of age.
ACHIEVING	**ACHIEVING**
Children get appropriate help at key stages of transition. Children and young people are equipped with the necessary skills to be successful learners. The encouragement they receive enables them to grow in confidence. Whenever possible, they experience continuity of schooling and participate regularly in local amenities. They are inspired to fully develop their abilities and talents, gaining a wide range of qualifications and recognised awards. They are actively engaged in the curriculum and move to positive and sustained destinations when leaving school. As they grow up, they are supported to become increasingly independent and acquire the life skills they need.	Children and young people experience barriers to learning. The quality of early educational environments is variable. Insufficient attention is paid to developing communication, problem solving and social skills. They do not receive enough support to raise their self-esteem and become more resilient. Opportunities to participate in art, sport and cultural activities are limited. They fall behind and are increasingly disaffected. Patterns of poor school attendance and timekeeping become habitual. Some may be excluded from school. They do not benefit from positive role models, mentors or experiences of volunteering. There are insufficient choices and chances to ensure success as young citizens.

NURTURED	**NURTURED**
Children and young people thrive as a result of relationships with trusted adults. The importance of very young children developing secure attachments is recognised and promoted. A wide range of opportunities are provided in the early years and throughout childhood for children and young people to benefit from enhanced nurturing experiences. Children unable to live at home enjoy consistent and trusting relationships with carers and staff who know them well. The length of time that children and young people live with uncertainty about future care arrangements is kept to a minimum. Young people remain in care placements well into adulthood.	Children and young people form insecure or anxious attachments from carers who are emotionally unavailable to them or through too many changes of care giver. They do not benefit from daily routines or stable living arrangements. Help is not readily available when they experience separation and loss for example, through bereavement or divorce. Too often they experience low levels of emotional warmth and high levels of criticism. Children and young people are separated unnecessarily from family members who are important to them. Contact arrangements do not meet their needs sufficiently well. Care experienced young people become parents before reaching maturity.
ACTIVE	**ACTIVE**
Young children are encouraged to be curious and explore the world around them. Children and young people regularly spend time with parents and carers enjoying leisure activities together. They are helped to develop their co-ordination skills through opportunities to play both inside and outdoors. Children and young people learn through play and recreation with their peers to assess and manage hazards and challenges in the environment. They learn how to take turns and co-operate, developing a sense of fairness. Young people learn new skills in their chosen sport and leisure pursuits. They are frequently praised and their successes are celebrated.	Young children do not experience the positive stimulation they need. Grown-ups do not show interest and pleasure in playing and interacting with them. They spend too much time indoors. Children and young people's interests and talents are not cultivated and they have insufficient opportunities to try out new experiences. Young people often develop sedentary lifestyles and spend too much of their time watching television or on-line. Opportunities to meet up with their peers are limited by the availability or cost of transport. Vulnerable children and young people are not well supported to join in and succeed in completing recognised awards.

RESPECTED	**RESPECTED**
Every child is recognised for their own unique personality, individual needs and aspirations. They learn about their rights and demonstrate confidence in exercising these. They experience a rights based approach from staff as such values are well embedded in our educational and care establishments. Children and young people have a positive view of their identity and self-worth. They feel that their views are taken seriously when decisions are being made about them. They benefit from readily available independent advocacy and are well supported to have their say. They are provided with all the information they need to make informed choices.	Children and young people have limited awareness of their rights. These are seldom discussed explicitly or actively promoted. Children and young people growing up as part of sibling groups are not sufficiently well differentiated. Children say more time should be spent listening to them and finding ways to help them express their views. Young people are not routinely asked to provide consent to personal information being shared or sufficiently well involved in decision-making about matters affecting their lives. When they disagree with a course of action to be taken on their behalf, the reasons for this are not fully explained.
RESPONSIBLE	**RESPONSIBLE**
Children and young people benefit from appropriate roles and responsibilities. They increasingly show regard and compassion for others. They learn to develop a moral code and to consider the consequences of their behaviour before they act. Young people at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour or offending are successfully diverted through involvement in other more rewarding activities. Children and young people play a significant part in democratic processes through school councils, communities of interest and youth councils. They are regularly asked for their views on the services they receive and can identify improvements that have happened as a result.	Some children and young people, including young carers, have too much responsibility for their age and are not sufficiently well supported. Children and young people do not always benefit from clear boundaries or have enough opportunities to make amends when they do something wrong. The extent of their involvement in crime prevention and community safety is limited. They do not consider their school council, community of interest or youth forum is influential in the planning and delivery of services. Communication technology is not used to maximum effect in overcoming barriers to participation. They are discouraged from taking a moral stand.

INCLUDED	**INCLUDED**
Children and young people are valued contributors to the communities in which they live and learn. Their circumstances are understood in the contest of their families and communities. They have a strong sense of identity and feel they belong. They learn to appreciate their peers for who they are and not what they possess. They are well supported when they experience discrimination on the basis of their age, gender, race, religion, language, culture, disability or sexual orientation. They are helped to become resilient and to overcome barriers to their wellbeing and life chances. Mutual benefits are derived from inter-generational activities.	Children and young people sometimes find their basic need for food, clothing, shelter, heating and hot food is compromised. Fulfilment of educational goals is adversely affected by lack of school uniforms, space to study and financial barriers to staying on at school. Help and support is unevenly spread in a way that does not reflect levels of need. Those living in more remote areas experience barriers to accessing help and support. Children and young people experience inter-generational intolerance and hostility towards them. They do not have sufficient opportunities to benefit from being part of wider communities locally, nationally and internationally.