

## Multi-Agency Audit Guidance

### 1. The Audit Process and Pathway

1. Scope and tool agreed by QA Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Case criteria and case type agreed by QA group for Audit - QA group agrees arrangements for audit analysis either at QA group or a task and finish group.</li> </ul>
2. Audit and challenge day invite sent out to agencies SPOC specifying date for returns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Challenge Day timing confirmed on audit notification</li> <li>•SPOC to confirm with QA Coordinindator attendee's for Challenge Day</li> </ul>
3. Within 15 working days Audit returned to LSCB QA coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•At 10 working days LSCB QA coordinator will send out reminders of deadline</li> </ul>
4. Analysis of audits at QA Group to assess key themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•QA Group analyse audits and themese emerging</li> <li>•Challenge day chair nominated</li> <li>•Agenda for challenge day sendt out 2 days before event</li> </ul>
5. Challenge Day held within 15 working days of final audit submission date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Challenge day attended by Auditors, Manager, Case Holders and QA Group Members - (According to schedule of case audit order)</li> </ul>
6. Analysis from Challenge Day, Draft Report & outline action plan prepared by QA coordinator and Strategic Safeguarding Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QA Sub gruop members draft audit overview report</li> <li>• Propose action plan and plan for agency feedback and learning events.</li> </ul>
7. Draft Report to LSCB Operational Board QA Coordinador & Strategic Safeguarding Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Feedback to agencies agreed by board, draft report endorsed, lead person and timescale for dissemination agreed</li> </ul>
8. Report received by LSCB Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Report and action plans finalised and signed off</li> <li>•LSCB chair sends out letters to recognise good practice</li> </ul>
9. Final action plan completed by QA Coordinator in consultation with relevant partners managers and QA Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Action plan to be disseminated to all LSCB partners</li> </ul>
10. Monitoring of Action Plans at QA Subgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Action plans to be monitored by LSCB QA Coordinator, progress on action plans to be reported to QA subgropup , via designated leads and fed into LSCB Boards via QA score card .</li> </ul>

*\*NB If you or your agency has had no involvement historically, previously or currently you will be expected to inform the LSCB Quality Assurance (QA) Coordinator and submit a nil return.*

## 2. Statutory Context

Under Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 and under Section 14 of the Children Act 2004, the LSCB has a duty to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the Authority and their Board Partners, individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise the authority on ways in which it can improve practice and outcomes for children.

In order to fulfil its statutory functions under regulation 5, each LSCB should use data, and as a minimum should;

- Assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families including 'Early Help'
- Assess whether LSCB partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations as set out in Chapter 2 of Working Together 2015
- Quality Assure practice, including joint case audits of files involving practitioners and identifying lessons learned; and
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of training, including multi agency training to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Local Authorities and Board partners should provide the LSCB with data to enable it to fulfil its statutory functions effectively. (pg. 66-67 Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015)

## 3. Local Context

Within North East Lincolnshire, the Audit process is part of the LSCB Quality Assurance arrangements and as such fulfils an important element of the NEL LSCB statutory functions. The collated findings of audits will be used to:

- Highlight good and excellent practice, identify themes and deficits in practice
- Identify and address areas where we need to develop and improve practice
- Assess how well partners work together to improve outcomes for children.
- Assess how well partners work together to safeguard children
- Assess our impact on improving outcomes for Children and Young People
- Improve practice through continuous learning
- Monitor the effectiveness of training, inform training calendars and strategies
- Assess how effectively all agencies engage and work in partnership with children and families.

## 4. Completing The Audit Tool

The themed multi-agency audit tool has been developed by the LSCB and is a generic tool that can be modified easily to be applied to most practice audits. The tool is consistent with the key elements of the Ofsted Inspection Audit Framework and will be used by all partners involved with North East Lincolnshire children who are subject to multi-agency safeguarding audits. A programme of generic and themed audits developed by the QA sub group will be commissioned by the LSCB and coordinated by the Quality Assurance coordinator. The selection of themes will be driven both by LSCB priorities and emerging needs for example arising out of learning from Serious Case Reviews.

The NEL Quality Assurance group will notify and send out audit requests to managers/ child protection leads, and relevant service managers who should respond by confirming whether or not they are working with the child (or family), giving the name of the case worker and if known, the name of the person who is or will be conducting the audit.

Audits will be underpinned by clear timescales and deadlines for completion. Dates for submission of audits form part of the annual audit calendar, a copy of which can be found at the end of this document.

The audit calendar has been developed to take into account school holidays and other public holidays but may be subject to change throughout the year dependent on themes emerging, national drivers or local need.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, extensions to deadlines will not be routinely granted. Both the auditors and practitioners/case-holders will be expected to attend Audit Challenge Days and will be notified of these at the commencement of each audit process. All audits will be underpinned at the point of request by the following explanation and guidance for completion:

- This is a multi-agency audit, the same questions have been sent out to each agency and each agency audit will focus on the named child as the subject.
- You should answer the questions from your own agency's perspective, using **only your own records** of the case.
- You should include all relevant information, for example referrals you made, reports written.
- You should make reference to where your information is from in the evidence box, you might want to for example attach a danger statement or make reference to a case conference report you submitted.
- Please answer each section as fully as possible, analysed from your own agencies perspective.
- Please make sure you use dates so that the information can be cross referenced with the other agencies audit forms.

- You should answer **every** question, and where you do not hold any information or do not have access to that information, you should clearly state this on the form as opposed to leaving any section blank.
- If you have additional information that you think is relevant (E.g. another sibling or relevant other family member) and would like to provide this within your audit return, please do this in the evidence box, and clearly indicate that it is not about the subject, although is relevant to the audit.
- Please do not use policy statements or information on the context of your evidence e.g. a practitioner did not visit and nobody attended the scheduled core group due to heavy caseloads or annual leave in the main body of the audit. This can be added in the evidence box if you think it is relevant.
- The audit tool asks open questions, to enable you to answer questions fully and provide your observations and evidence as required i.e. questions should not be simply responded to with 'yes' or 'no'.
- Any immediate safeguarding concerns identified by the auditor should be addressed swiftly or immediately dependent on urgency and procedure and actions clearly recorded on the audit form.
- Evidence of impact of interventions on improving outcomes for children and young people should be given.

*NB If you have any queries or would like further guidance then please contact the NE LSB QA Coordinator sooner rather than later.*

## 5. Challenge Day

The managers, auditors and practitioners will be invited to and expected to attend the Challenge day as per the dates are set out in the audit calendar. The purpose of the Challenge Days are to consider the findings of the audits and to bring together those involved to be able to consider the whole audit and maximise multi-agency learning.

## 6. Feedback and Reporting

- The audit report, including findings, recommendations and proposed action plans will be fed back to the QA subgroup, contributing agencies and the NEL LSB Operational Board.
- Action plans to address learning points will be agreed by the QA subgroup and relevant sub-group leads will be responsible for monitoring implementation and reporting back to the QA coordinator.
- NEL LSB Operational Board will receive final audit reports and will monitor progress against the action plan within the overall performance framework.

- NEL LSB Board will receive collated reports and has the mandate to call in any report, audit or auditor in to scrutiny.
- Where good or excellent practice has been identified through audit, the LSCB will note this and acknowledge achievement via the Leadership board
- Audits completed throughout the year will be collated by the QA coordinator and will inform an annual audit overview report.

## 7. The Audit Calendar

Name of audit	Tool sent out	Deadline for completion	QA Sub Group	Challenge Day	QA Sub Group	Action Plan sent out	Monitoring of action plan	Actions completed by
Safeguarding Disabled Children	18 <sup>th</sup> January	8 <sup>th</sup> February	16 <sup>th</sup> February	1 <sup>st</sup> March	22 <sup>nd</sup> March	31 <sup>st</sup> March	Quarterly from June 2016	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2017
Children who go missing	14 <sup>th</sup> March	4 <sup>th</sup> April	19 <sup>th</sup> April	4 <sup>th</sup> May	10 <sup>th</sup> May	31 <sup>st</sup> May	Quarterly from October 2016	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2017
Neglect - including evaluation of use of the tool	16 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> June	14 <sup>th</sup> June	28 <sup>th</sup> June	19 <sup>th</sup> July	31 <sup>st</sup> July	Quarterly from October 2016	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2017
Sexual Harm (to include CSE & HSB)	12 <sup>th</sup> September	3 <sup>rd</sup> October	18 <sup>th</sup> October	1 <sup>st</sup> November	15 <sup>th</sup> November	30 <sup>th</sup> November	Quarterly from Jan 2017	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2017
Children who are involved in youth justice	14 <sup>th</sup> November	5 <sup>th</sup> December	13 <sup>th</sup> December	20 <sup>th</sup> December	Jan 2017	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2017	Quarterly from March 2017	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2018

In addition 10 Single Assessment quality audits a session will be done at the Quality Assurance and Best Practice Sub Group