

# Southampton City Council

Children and Learning Service

Quality Assurance Unit



Monthly Analysis Report of Practice Managers'  
Audits

September 2023

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# September 2023 - Audit Overview

**34 Audits allocated  
across 9 service  
areas**

(Adoption:1, BIT:5, SWF:6,  
C&FF:6, CWD:4, Fostering:2,  
ICAS:4, PTC:5 & YPS:2)

**27  
audits  
completed**

**7  
audits not  
completed**

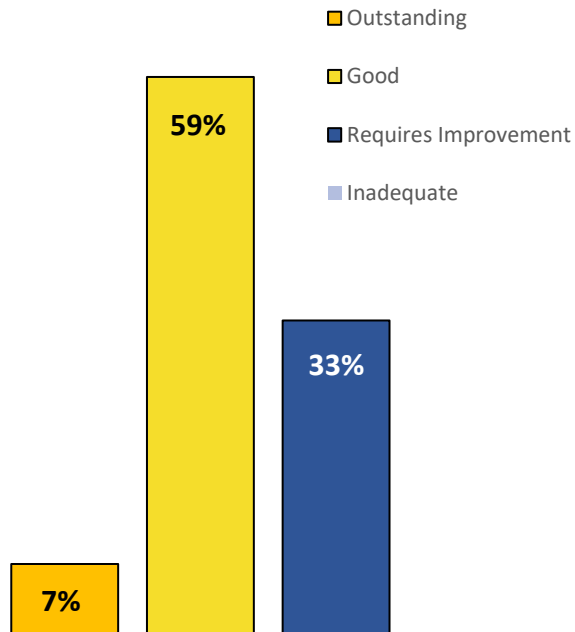
**79% completion rate**  
(similar to previous month, 6%  
down on July)

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**70% of auditors held  
discussions with  
practitioners/case  
managers as part of the  
audit process**  
(7% increase on the figure for  
previous month)

# Overall Audit Outcome

## September Audit Grades



➤ Outstanding	2
➤ Good	16
➤ Requires Improvement	9
➤ Inadequate	0

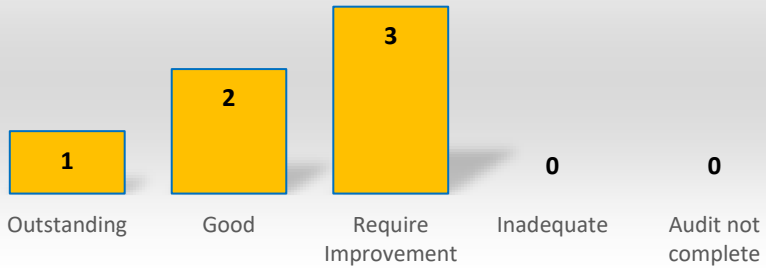
Over 50% of the audits have been graded 'Good' for the last 2 months (August 55% and September 59%). Prior to this (since January 2023) 'Good' graded audits ranged from 39% - 47%.

The 'audits graded as 'requiring improvement' are reducing & at their lowest this year, with only 33% this month requiring improvement. There are two audits graded 'outstanding' this month (two up on last month). There were no inadequate audits again this month, there have been no inadequate audits in the last 3 months.

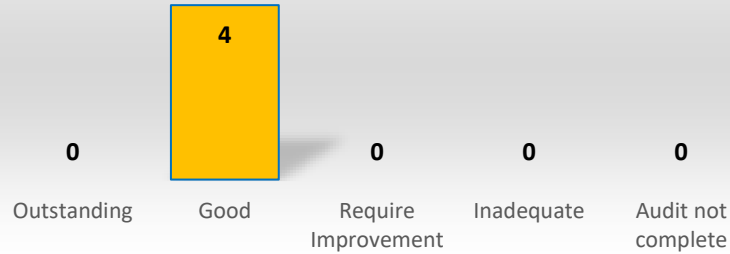
This data continues to suggest the quality of work is on an upward trajectory.

# Audit Grades by Service Area

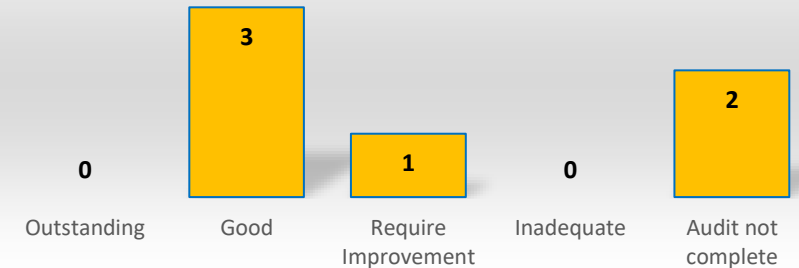
## C&FF



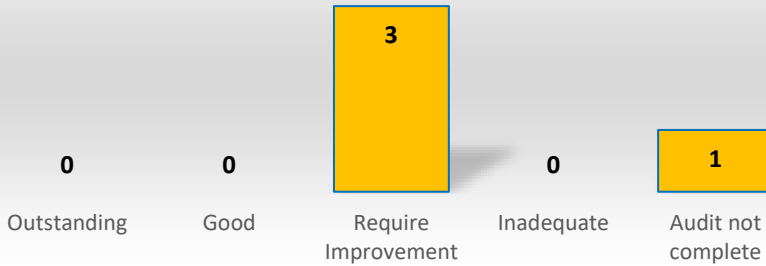
## BIT



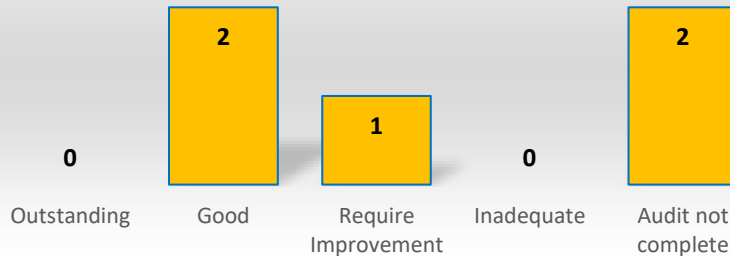
## SWF



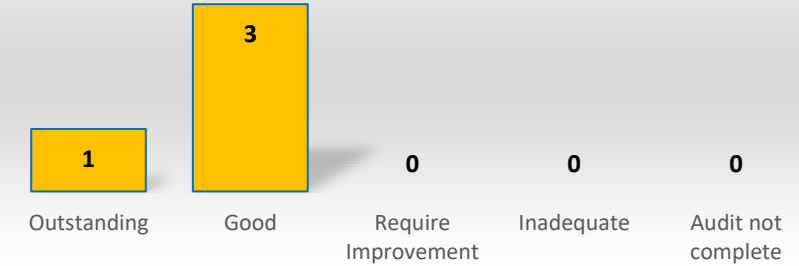
## CWD



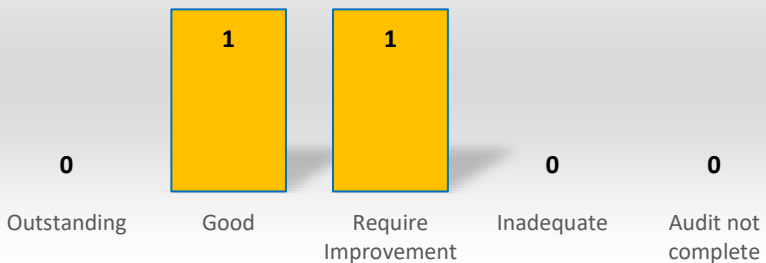
## PTC



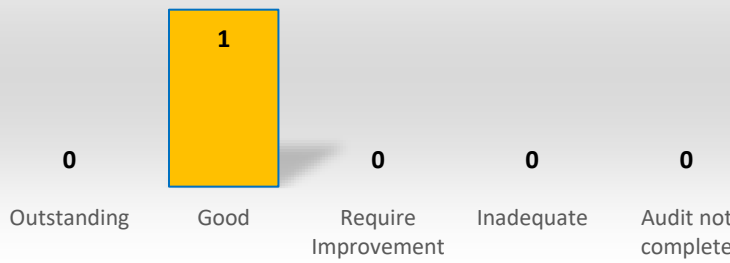
## ICAS



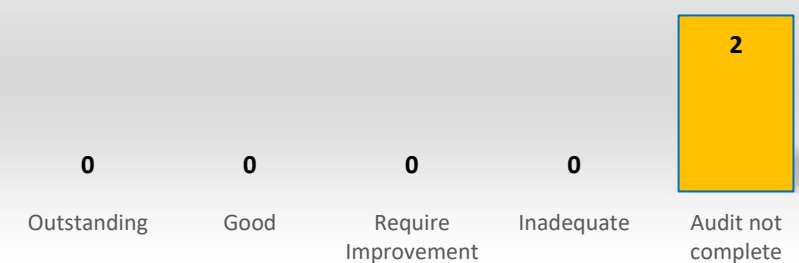
## Fostering



## Adoption



## YPS



# Children & Families First (C&FF)

## Areas of good practice

- 100% of cases in this audit sample (6), confirmed intervention offered was evidence based & bespoke to match child/family's needs
- Majority of cases audited evidenced children were spoken to alone during visits
- Majority of cases evidenced direct work with the child
- For 83% of assessments young people were seen (slight increase on last month), & for the majority, the child's voice informed the assessment

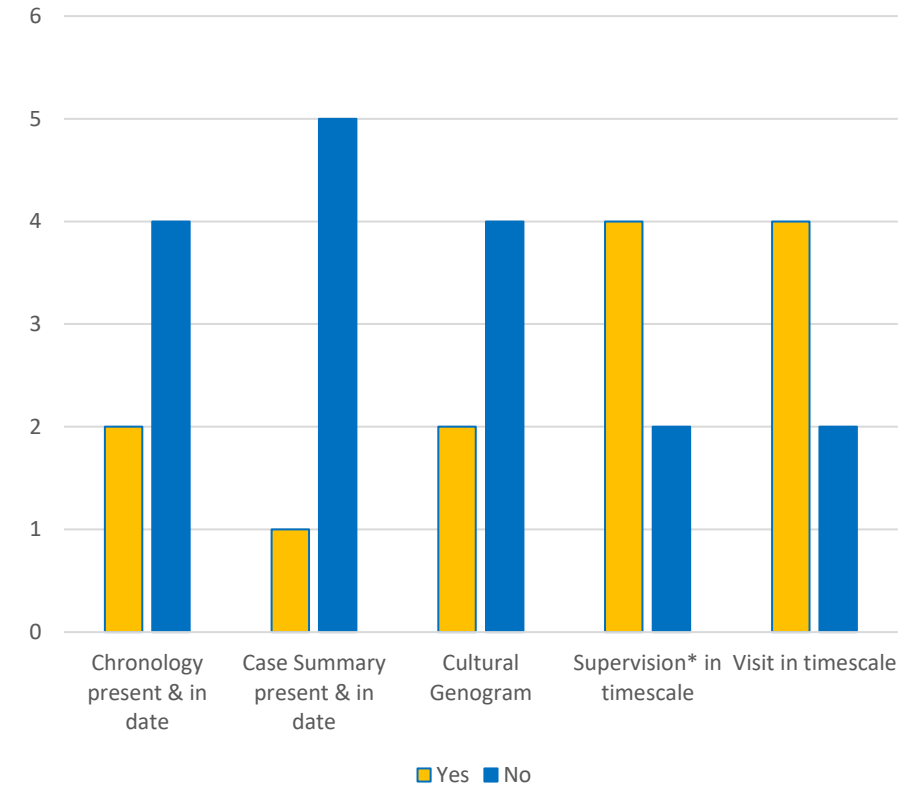
Other areas of good practice included;

- Very good assessment, no drift, direct work, exploring areas of concern, demonstrating strengths-based approach, clear plan & clear impact on family (CD490004)
- Demonstrates good understanding of case & child's experience, offering targeted input & involving the right services (CD347435)
- Clear timely management oversight evidenced (CD347435 & CD218467)
- Clear case recordings, timely EHA, decisions have been made swiftly at time of case allocation & evidenced in management oversight (CD442278)
- Delivered on agreed targets/actions to achieve positive outcomes for family, using good case knowledge & family's needs & strengths (CD218467)
- Evidence of excellent recording skills & positive engagement & relationship building skills (CD218467)
- Direct work tools were used to engage the children (CD392322)
- Persistent communication & clear consistent messages given to parent, still supportive but also challenging the behaviours whilst trying to resolve some of the challenges & stabilising the family living arrangements (CD611237)

## Areas for improvement

- Prioritise timely updating of chronologies, case summaries, cultural genograms & focus on writing to child
- Ensure records are updated to reflect delay in allocation, family decline of service involvement & give clarity of C&FF involvement
- Management oversight to give summary and direction - what has been done, what are we doing now and next steps, for example: explain reason for lack of visits
- Focus on timely reviews of EHA, EHP & TAF meetings to reflect progress or reasons for lack of progress

C&FF Focus 5



# Brief Intervention Team (BIT)

## Areas of good practice

- In 100% of this audit sample (4), supervision took place in timescale
- Evidence of supervision & management oversight giving clear direction (CD256230, CD304480)
- The majority of assessments were completed within timescale, evidencing a chronology
- 75% of visits were in timescale & evidenced strengths, risks & robust analysis
- 75% captured the voice of the child & the voice of the parent/carer
- 75% of cases evidenced professionals' contributions in the assessment

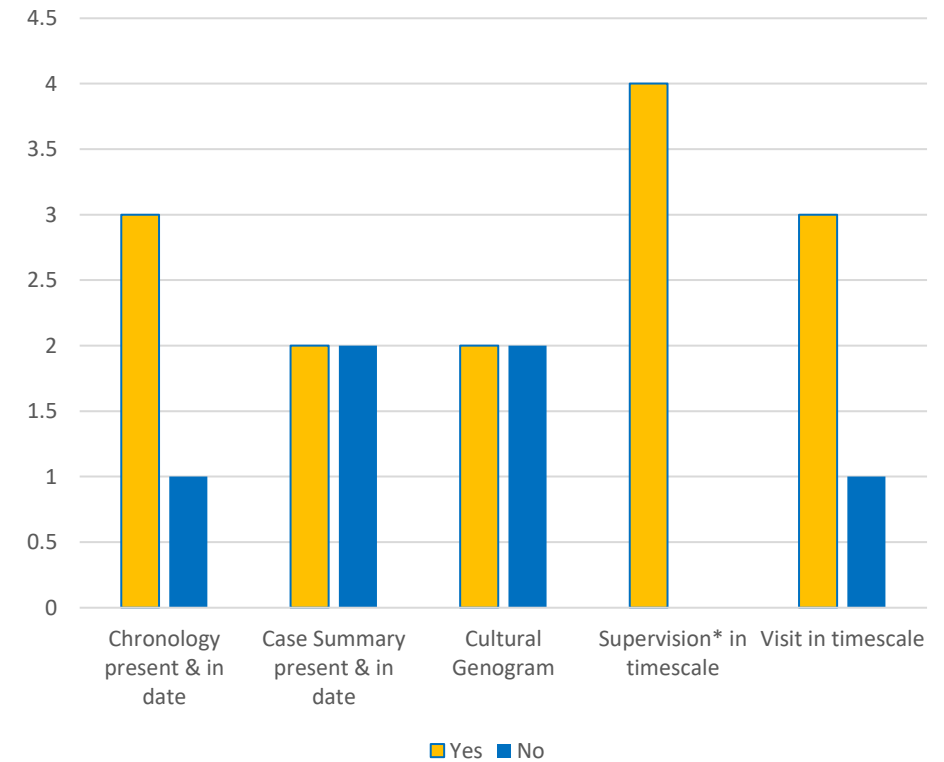
## Other areas of good practice included;

- Very good recording of visit, the young person engaged very well with social worker who showed understanding & compassion, the SW & FEW worked hard to engage the young person alongside the police with management oversight & supervision centred around the child (CD304480)
- Significant attempts were made to engage the family who were not happy for children's services involvement (CD346547)
- Great quality assessment with section titled, "views of the children" to ensure they are capture, alongside timely visits & evidence of management oversight (CD256230)
- Good assessment written to the family (CD216633)

## Areas for improvement

- Direct work with children to continue to be consistent across service
- Concentrate on detail in visit recordings
- Ensure recording of attempted visits & communications prior to the initial visit
- More focus on reflective supervision consistent across all audits
- Focus on consistency with case summaries
- Cultural Genogram improvements in quality and consistency

BIT Focus 5



# Social Work with Families (SWF)

## Areas of good practice

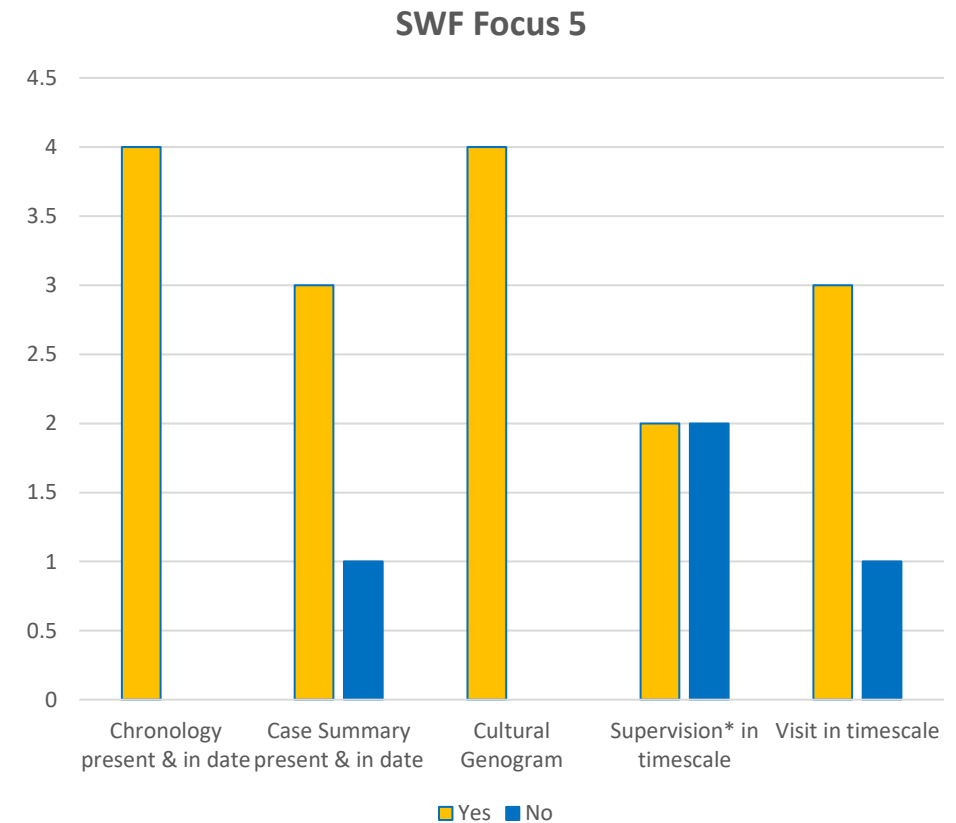
- 100% of cases have chronologies & cultural genograms on file
- The majority of cases have case summaries
- 100% of children (if not too young) were seen within timescale (3 days) & alone
- In most cases audited, the voice of the child & the voice of the parent/carer informed the assessment
- 100% of cases had input from involved professionals
- 100% of cases evidenced clear strengths, risks & evidenced robust analysis
- Some evidence of direct work with the child

## Other areas of good practice included;

- Evidence of good interventions with both parents, lots of support given & good outcome with baby staying with Mother (CD605779)
- The worker evidenced excellent understanding of case, setting boundaries to support YP to move into a safer place. This YP has now returned to her Mother. This was a process which involved professional support with consideration given to culture differences (CD608566)
- Good relationship built between worker & child & child's view sought, alongside good working relationship with key adult's child's life (CD376399)
- Care plan reflects progress & child's voice, alongside updated case summary & chronology (CD340427)

## Areas requiring improvement

- Focus on improving supervision taking place in timescale
- Maintain timely frequency of visits with children
- Consistently use SMART plans that with timely and specific actions
- Ensure correct forms are used to evidence focused plan for child & ensure forms are uploaded & meetings are recorded on CD
- Increase analysis & reflection, what this means for the child, their identity & impact on their progress
- Focus on carrying out direct work & life story work with children & record clearly
- Timely review of level on contact to help with child's understanding of long-term plans decisions
- Case Summaries, chronologies & cultural genograms still need work on updating, quality & consistency





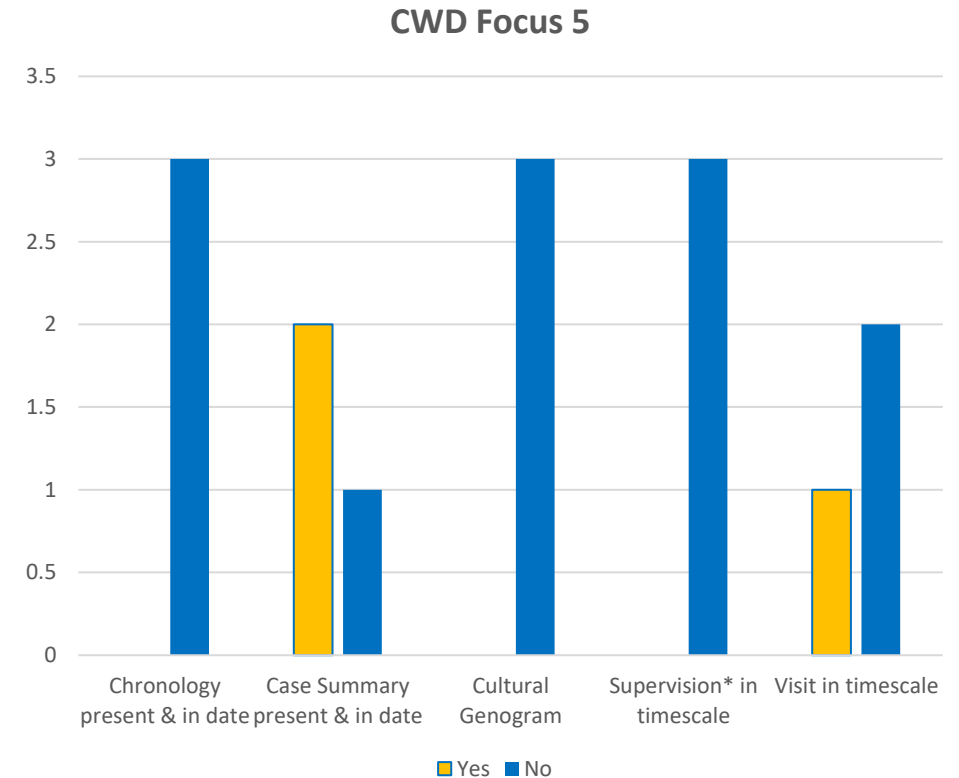
# Children with Disabilities (CWD)

## Areas of good practice

- Evidence of an in depth understanding of child's support needs, health & disability related needs, clearly documented within the assessment, includes impact on parents & their capacity to provide care, with parents' views clearly recorded (CD308158)
- Evidence of management oversight with clear work plan (CD308158)
- Visits give clear, detailed view of what life is like for the child, capturing a child-focused view on their views/wishes & how parents interact with them (CD308158)
- Plan demonstrates progress & visits were timely (CD489833)
- Evidence of assessment providing a thorough overview of the child's developmental needs, giving a good understanding of the child and his family. Risks are identified alongside strategies & plans for managing the risks, for example, in order to maintain his safety, identifying interventions (CD364888)
- Interactions in visit resulted in positive experience for child (CD364888)

## Areas for improvement

- Prioritise completion of chronologies, cultural genograms & updated case summaries, to provide clear insight into children's journeys and key arrangements in place for children
- Ensure visits are in timescale with timely recording on child's file
- Focus on direct work - wishes, views & feelings of the child to be evidenced
- Timely review in CIN plans & ensure SMART objectives are used, giving clear timeframe to prioritise & identify how the child's needs can best be met
- Evidence direct work undertaken with child
- More focus on reflective discussions between SW & line Manager
- Improvement to minimise delay & overdue tasks to reduce impact for child/family, for example, when the delays are a consequence of when workers leave the team
- Consider processes for SW's leaving service in absence of line Manager to ensure necessary actions are taken



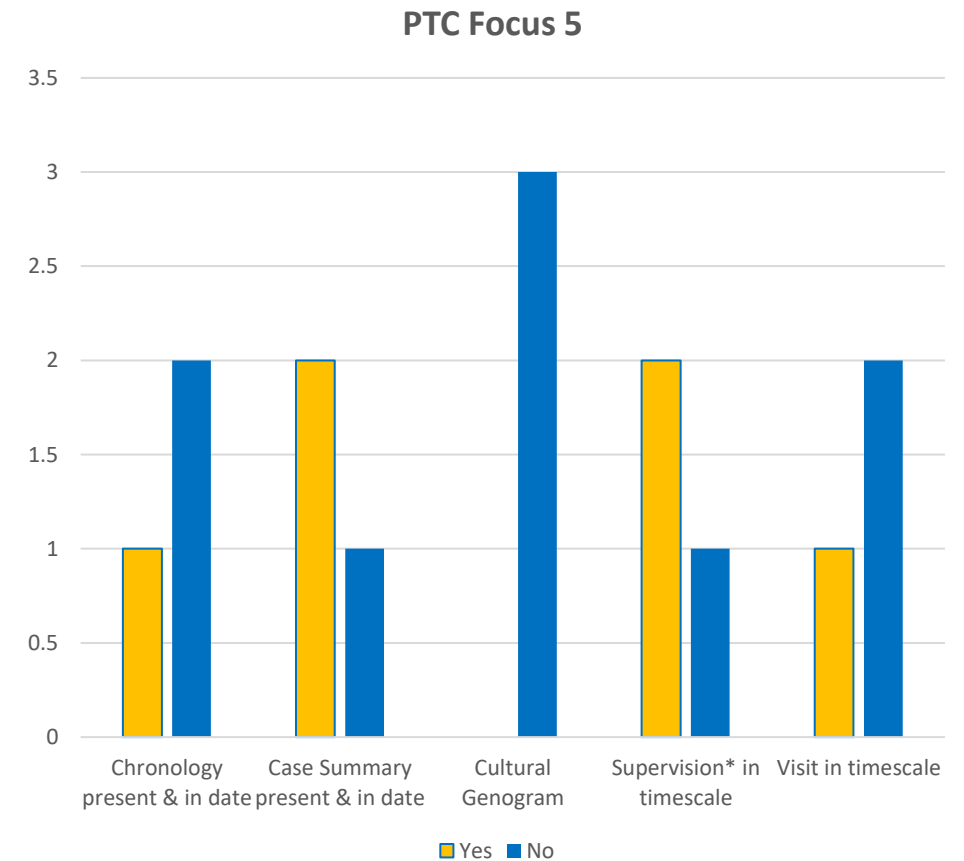
# Pathways Through Care (PTC)

## Areas of good practice

- Care plan and case summary in timescale & evidences good detail, management oversight is evidenced in care plan (CD255980)
- Visits have been more frequent than plan, very detailed, recorded on correct template & most include detail of direct work (CD255980)
- Young person has overnight stays with family members with future plan for YP to return to Father's care (CD255980)
- Good communication, support and management oversight relating to YP's accommodation needs & assessments in process. PA has offered support despite YP declining at this time (CD229862)
- Supervision is reflective & focused and in timescales for care leavers (CD229862)
- Records evidence this YP is clearly much happier at home than they were in residential care (CD337778)

## Areas for improvement

- Prioritise completion of chronologies & cultural genograms, to provide clear insight into children's journeys
- Focus on case summaries being present & in date to evidence key detail for children
- Prioritise visits in timescale
- Regular & timely supervision to take place with reflective discussions evidenced
- Work on supervision discussions including the views of the YP & timely visits to YP
- Improve on evidence of life story work
- Evidence of accommodation risk assessment & authorisation to be clearly evidenced on file
- Consider when cases would benefit from earlier planning around transitions, particularly when reunification breakdown. Timely allocation of PA's would enable better understanding of adult services role & contingency planning for accommodation



# Intervention & Complex Assessment Service (ICAS)

## Areas of good practice

- Clear Evidence of good management oversight & timely supervision taking place across the cases (4) audited, tracking progress of the intervention & review work undertaken
- Clear work plan on the referrals
- case notes with evidence of work undertaken are evident in the cases audited
- Outstanding, timely allocation, goal setting, writing to child, clear evidence of interventions being completed with family & excellent closure summary (CD461973)
- Informative case notes and ensure that the conversations with the parents always link back to the children & use of many visual tools to support parents potential learning needs (CD411647)
- Consideration of parent's heritage & impact on assessment process & application of the social graces and consideration given to learning needs/interpreters (CD436572)
- Reunification assessment includes detailed & in-depth work undertaken, theory to support analysis & recommendations for the family, alongside reflection on extensive history in terms of health, domestic abuse, neglect & impact this had on child's needs (CD436572)
- Regular reunification meetings involving the network & clear case notes with evidence of work undertaken (CD384905)

## Areas for improvement

- **Ensure clear analysis for the reader to understand the concerns from a professional perspective**
- **Supervision notes & closure summary to be written to the child, adding Managers comment**
- **Ensure all case notes are put onto CD, use specific ICAS case notes to structure recordings**
- **Timely authorisation of case notes & assessment sessions**
- **Early involvement/views of the IRO at the beginning of assessment**
- **Practise consistently writing to the child in all areas of the case note, not just the observations of the child**
- **Timely allocations**

# Fostering, Adoption & Placements Teams

## Areas of good practice

- Review has taken place in last 12 months with both carers attending, presented to panel in timescales & visits were held in timescale (CD350282)
- Personal development plan, mandatory training & supervision all in date (CD350282)
- Supervision evidences a good amount of detail to enable reader to gain an overall view of the placement for the child (CD350282)
- Safer caring training has taken place & safer caring plan was updated in the last 12 months or in accordance with change in circumstance
- Foster carers have received regular support by FEW & a cover SSW, in absence of the allocated SSW (CD350282)
- Assessment clearly written & timescales met (CD20852)

## Areas for improvement

- Timely completion & updating of case summary & chronology
- Timely recording of supervision & management oversight
- Consistency in supervision, to focus on strengths/weakness/ concerns and the impact for the children in placement, with analysis reflecting the outcome for the child
- Ensure necessary foster carer agreements are completed

## Adoption:

**The case (CD396511) demonstrates “Good social work practice... including lots of lovely examples of direct work.” The case audited evidences a clear plan of case progression & next steps & additional management oversight during the S.47.**

**The Court's decision caused unnecessary delay for the child; however, this has given time to form a good relationship. Matches are currently being explored.**

**There is evidence of timely, effective monthly supervision, with case summaries and chronology updated 3 monthly. The child's profile is to be added to CD from the family finding event.**

# Service Overview – ‘Reunifications’

September’s audit focus theme was ‘Reunifications’.

## Areas of good practice

Several interventions within the teams evidenced detail on how they were supporting the young people with ‘reunification’ to family members.

Here are a few of the examples from different services highlighting the good work that is taking place with young people on a day-to-day basis:

- ICAS have evidenced reunification assessment detail, recording in-depth work that has been undertaken, theory to support analysis & recommendations for the family, alongside reflection on extensive history in terms of health, domestic abuse, neglect & listening to the YP’s views/concerns & the impact this had on the YP’s needs (CD436572, ICAS)
- There is clear evidence of direct work with the YP through discussions, this young person has now returned to their Mother. This was a process which involved professional support with consideration given to culture differences, the worker was able to set boundaries with YP & support moving into a safer place with regular communication. ICAS have supported with the reunification plan for this YP and have continued to offer support around sustaining this relationship. The MET hub have also offered support (CD608566, SWF)
- Clear multi agency working in the best interest of the young person, the SW managed initial concerns very well, young person was refusing to return home and the SW managed to support return to parents successfully to keep them safe at home (CD304480, BIT)
- Reunification assessment was undertaken during proceedings while mother & child were together living in a parent and child foster placement. Direct work undertaken with families and carers & there has been multi-agency support in this reunification with both parents. Support for family's post-reunification recorded on file (CD605779, SWF)

## Areas for improvement

- Cases would have benefited from earlier planning around transitions after unsuccessful reunification
- Early allocation of worker would have enabled a better understanding of the role of adult services and contingency planning for accommodation for the young person
- To ensure management oversight and IRO oversight are recorded on CD

YP is much happier at home than they were in residential care (CD337778, PTC)

SW – “It was lovely to work with this YP; he was really clear on his views and motivation. They’ve had a really positive experience in care; the carers have offered lots of care and stability and now they have a life-plan/know what they want to achieve” (CD436572, ICAS)

“Clear targeted interventions based on the family’s needs, very strengths-based approach, clear impact on family” (CD490004, C&FF)