

GATHERING EVIDENCE OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL SERVICES TO IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Case Tracking

1. Purpose

The main purpose of case tracking is twofold: to assess

- the extent to which agreed referral, assessment, planning and review processes are followed in practice; and
- **most importantly**, the effectiveness of inter-agency working in achieving better outcomes for children and families with serious and complex needs.

2. Definition

Inspectors who are bound by confidentiality carry out case tracking. They do not report using the names or attributing the views expressed whereby the child or young person, the parent, carer, or the members of staff could be identified. Inspectors use the case tracking approach to identify how far the support has contributed to improving outcomes for children and young people.

3. Case tracking has the following components:

- case file reading - including social services and appropriate files from other agencies;
- questionnaire completed by the lead professional and up to 3 associate professionals from different agencies;
- interviews – lead professional; key staff from other agencies / services as appropriate; and
- an opportunity to meet and talk to the child or young person and their parent and/or carer.

4. The Process

Local authorities are asked to provide the lead inspector (LI) with a list of 100 cases on the provided spreadsheet by an agreed date.

The 100 cases should include:

- 35 looked after children or young people;
- 30 children or young people on the child protection register; and
- 35 children or young people with a learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The 35 Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities should be cases known to the Education Service. The nature of the case, if for example statemented and so on should be noted in the relevant column. In the additional information column please indicate if the case is known to Social care.

The following information is required completed on the spreadsheet:

- **Identifying Case number**
- **The date social care received the initial referral**
- **Contact details of the lead professional and team name/description**
- **Age of child to the nearest year**
- **Gender of child**
- **Ethnicity of the child**

Please use the following codes to indicate the ethnic origin of the child:

White:	(1)
Mixed origin:	(2)
Asian or Asian British:	(3)
Black or Black British:	(4)
Other Ethnic Groups:	(5)
Not stated:	(6)

(NB: This classification is derived from that used in the 2001 census)

Areas of involvement with social services:

- **For Looked After Children (LAC)**

Please identify the relevant number from 1 – 6 indicating whether the child or young person lives in:

- 1 - Residential Care
- 2 - Foster Care
- 3 - At home with parents
- 4 - With Family or Family Carers (kinship placements)
- 5 - Placed for adoption
- 6 - Other

- **For children on the Child Protection Register (CPR)**

Please identify the category of registration:

- 1 – Sexual Abuse
- 2 – Physical Abuse
- 3 – Emotional Abuse
- 4 - Neglect

- **For Children with a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability (LDD)**

Please identify the type of learning difficulty and/or disability. If the child or young person has more than one identified difficulty and/or disability please select the most prominent.

Identified significant issues: for all of the 100 cases please indicate if the child has: -

- **Special Educational Needs**

Please indicate if the child or young person has Special Educational Needs (school action plus and statemented only)

- **10 – 19 year olds who have offended**

Please indicate if this is the case

- **CAMHS**

Please indicate if the child or young person is receiving or has been referred for mental health services

- **CAFCASS Involvement**

Please indicate if this is the case

- **Involvement by other sectors**

Please indicate if there has been any involvement in the case by the voluntary, community, or independent sectors

- **Child or young person has required prolonged, repeated and extensive health care support (excluding CAMHS)**

- **Excluded from school and/or not attending formal education provision**

Please indicate if this is the case

- **10 – 19 year olds not in employment, education or training**

Please indicate if this is the case

Additional Information

- Please indicate if the child or young person has any other significant issues that we should be aware of e.g. communication difficulties, placed outside local authority or court proceedings.

5. Selection of cases and questionnaires

On receipt of the spreadsheet the lead inspector (LI) and deputy lead inspector (DLI) will:

- i. select 10 cases from the 100 to be tracked; 4 LAC, 4 LDD and 2 CP cases.
- ii. request that for the selected 10 cases, the information leaflets and consent forms are sent/delivered by the local authority, to parents, carers and children and young people. These are required in order for inspectors to have consent to read health service records.
- iii. request that the lead professional and other agency questionnaires are completed and returned **within three weeks to the LI**. The agency profiles/questionnaires should be completed by up to three other local agencies which support the child and his/her family. The social care questionnaire should be completed for all cases.

6. Access to case files

The LI, within a week of receiving the questionnaires/profiles, will notify the local authority, which files of the ten cases the team will want to read during the analysis week. The social care file(s) will always be requested.

The local authority should arrange for the files to be available on the Wednesday and remainder of the analysis week, with suitable secure storage, at a central point (if access to the file is needed by the service, it will of course be returned).

Access to electronic case records may also be required depending on the case recording arrangements/practice within the Area. This will be discussed with the liaison person during the setting up arrangements.

7. Fieldwork interviews

The local area will be asked to arrange a programme of meetings with lead professionals and associate agencies; parents, carers and the children and young people, if possible to be conducted during the first week of the fieldwork.

Who the team wish to interview will be confirmed by the end of the analysis week. Parents, carers and young people may of course decline the invitation to be interviewed.

It is **unlikely** that inspectors will wish to meet with all of the families but they will wish to hear directly from service users about their experiences of receiving services. Interviews should be arranged to accommodate needs

and circumstances e.g. involving an interpreter or meeting outside of school/working hours.

It is also unlikely that inspectors will wish to interview all of the professionals working with the family or child. The interviews will however address not only questions arising from the case file reading but a range of aspects covered within the JAR.

8. Duty visits/observation

In addition to tracking the ten selected cases, a visit or visits, depending on the local arrangements, will be undertaken to the social care duty/referral points. Random files will be selected and looked at during this part of the JAR.