

This is an excerpt of the Q4Ctoolkit which is guidance for managers on assessing and assuring the work of Cafcass staff. It is not intended as a stand alone document however is reproduced here for the purposes of transparency.

Practitioner role: Safeguarding		
Level	Examples of quality of work at this level	Evidence
Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No follow-up to screening enquiries • No risk identification • No evidence of analysis of risk • No safety planning for the child or vulnerable adult carer/s during the life of the case or after it has ended • No referral where needed or no follow-up • Child's own perception of risk not ascertained • Safeguarding issues, including domestic violence, not recognised or assessed • 	Case file CMS log of initial safeguarding checks
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of safe practice within the court setting e.g. being alert to immediate safeguarding issues • Basic screening checks followed up • Risk identification completed • Limited cross reference to risk factors in the case plan • Child welfare (protection) referrals made and followed up • Some evidence of referral for needs • Evidence that child's perception of risk understood • Some evidence of learning from child protection research and serious case reviews • Response to risk and safety planning fully embedded within the case plan • 	
Good	<p>As for satisfactory, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructive multi-agency engagement building on referrals where needed • Creative solutions within the safety assessment • Application of learning from recent training in risk assessment • 	

Outstanding	As for good, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of multi-agency engagement which maintains constructive ongoing relationships with relevant agencies and that benefits the individual child • Evidenced based assessment • Use of research • 	
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Practitioner role: Case planning		
Level	Examples of quality of work at each level	Evidence
Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No case plan or case plan incomplete • Case plan not adhered to • A plan to address the meaning of diversity for the child and family not included • Enquiries to be undertaken unclear and not followed up • No consideration of how risk and safety issues will be addressed • Adult Service users not involved in contributing to the case plan • Children of sufficient age and developmental understanding not involved in contributing to the case plan 	Case files
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case plan on all files but not always completed 'in timescale stipulated by policy' • Child's views, risk factors and diversity issues included • Case plans specify the key issues, the steps to address those issues, the outcome to be achieved and how the plan will be reviewed • Key enquiries listed • Some evidence of practice reflection and analysis • Case plans signed off as satisfactory by the Service manager • Potential for the involvement of Family Support worker has been actively considered • 	

Good	<p>As in satisfactory, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case plan routinely provides reflection and a clear analysis of the work to be undertaken • Identified desired outcomes for the child at the centre of the plan • Clear language • Plan regularly reviewed and amended in response to new information, including service user feedback • 	
Outstanding	<p>As in good, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of research and theory to inform planning • Creative use of other resources beyond the individual worker to benefit the child • Planning takes place for content of individual interviews • Case plans written for sharing with service users including children • Case plan specifies key issues/questions to be pursued • 	

Practitioner role: Analysis & Reporting		
Level	Examples of quality of work at this level	Evidence
Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct templates not used • Where A&R templates used, Initial & Interim A&Rs not produced, Final A&R not referring to earlier reports • Inaccuracies in personal information re: service user e.g. child's name misspelt, wrong date of birth • Information included in reports which is not relevant to the child's needs, parenting capacity or the issues before the court • Recommendations do not flow from analysis • Practitioner fails to analyse information to facilitate decision making in the best interests of the child • Report shows no understanding of the child's individual needs including diversity issues such as identity • Reports not filed on time • 	Case file, including the case plan and previous A&Rs

Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct templates used • Where A&R templates used Initial & interim A&Rs produced in line with guidance • Reports provide clear and succinct assessments which enable the court to make child centred decisions • Evidence of pro-active case planning which minimises delay • Verbal reports to court and intervention at directions hearings and in final evidence contribute to the court's ability to deliver effective case management and child centred decisions. • Where A&R templates used, analysis in Interim and Final A&Rs flows from previous reports • Practitioners analyses information to facilitate decision making in the best interests of the child • Report shows an understanding of the child's individual needs • Recommendations, including interim case management recommendations flow from analysis • Recommendations shared with service users • 	
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each report adds significantly to the court's ability to make decisions which lead to improved outcomes for children • Verbal reports to court, intervention at directions hearings and final verbal evidence in court is of high calibre and influences outcomes significantly. • In complex cases the practitioner presents a number of options to the court, discussing coherently the benefits and disadvantages of each and arriving at a reasoned conclusion • Report contents as well as recommendations shared with service users including children • 	
Outstanding	<p>As in good plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioner routinely uses or refers to validated research to support the recommendations in reports • Adds value to the organisation by promoting/disseminating good practice. • 	

Practitioner role: Engaging with children		
Level	Examples of quality of work at this level	Evidence
Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child routinely not being seen, no direct work with children • Children not being informed of court process • No evidence of the child's overall needs, wishes and feelings in case file or details of younger children's needs identified through observations • The diversity needs of the child not identified and considered in case planning or analysis • Children not informed about the HearNow feedback system or Complaints Procedure • 	Case file Observation of direct work
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children routinely being seen, direct work with children part of standard approach, including sensitive communication facilitated through play and other appropriate tools in line with child's developmental stage • Children informed of court process, information leaflets given and purpose of Cafcass worker role explained • Evidence of the child's overall needs, wishes and feelings in case file • Details of younger children's needs identified through observations • The diversity needs of the child are identified and considered in the case plan or analysis. • Child (of sufficient age and developmental understanding) informed about HearNow feedback opportunity and complaints procedure explained to the child • Information shared by the child is acted upon in accordance with the child's Needs Wishes and Feelings • Safe and sensitive management of the child's information according to record keeping policy and any specific risks to the individual child • Welfare checklist reflects the child's perspective • Child is informed that the work is complete • My Family Court Life Record offered for completion with the parent/carer. • Child's ongoing support needs are assessed • In care proceedings contact with the Independent Reviewing Officer is always made at the end of the court proceedings • 	

<p>Good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate child participation throughout the life of the case, including evidence that information about the court process and the progress of the case is shared with the child, discussing the plan as well as how the outcomes of the proceedings will be shared, meeting with the child to explain the outcome at court, etc. • Explaining the young Peer Mentor Service to the child (based on age and developmental understanding) • Use of a wide range of methods to promote the child to express their views and feelings about their situation • Evidence of interview planning prior to meeting, and purposeful meetings with the child, using the Needs Wishes and Feelings Practitioner Guidance. • Full analysis of the child 's situation as described in the Child Analysis Model in Needs, Wishes and Feelings Pack Resource Guidance Page 9 • In consultation with the child and their carers, offer/broker support to the child from external agencies. • Facilitating contact on child's behalf with relevant parties if it is in their best interest • Promotes relationships with important family members and relatives to sustain the child's long-term wellbeing, including sibling contact. • Need for advocacy or separate legal representation considered, in partnership with the child • Records shared with child where they directly relate to them and where this accords with their age and understanding. • In care proceedings constructive contact with the IRO throughout the life of the case • 	
<p>Outstanding</p>	<p>As in good, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of practice in response to service user feedback • Inform the child on how they can get involved in positive activities to promote consultation in local service developments; local recruitment and selection and focus groups on specific subject areas to inform practice • Involvement in development of child engagement policy & practice • Creative work with individual children • 	

Practitioner role: <i>Record keeping</i>		
Level	Examples of quality of work at this level	Evidence
Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact log incomplete – no clear record of actions in the case • Entries in records illegible to reader • Material not listed in date order, or clearly classified in line with policy • Key documents missing e.g. information back from screening checks • Data protection and security procedures not followed, file whereabouts not known • • 	Case file
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact log complete and chronology of case can be traced easily • Content of each meeting provided in case record • Child's views and diversity issues included • Records are clear and succinct • 	
Good	<p>As in satisfactory, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of meetings provide evidence of purposeful activity and practitioner analysing information on an ongoing basis • All calls logged fully • Records including case plans written for sharing with service users • 	
Outstanding	<p>As in good, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child's own words clearly distinguished • Notes show structure, planning and purpose of each meeting • Progress of case easy to see • Child's needs come alive through the case file • 	

Practitioner role: Professional behaviour		
Level	Examples of quality of work at this level	Evidence
Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of service users treated with disrespect • Pattern of complaints from service users about the worker's behaviour and attitudes • Breaches of confidentiality • No interest in training or development • Fails to attend training either mandatory or identified as part of Professional Development Plan • Negative comments about the organisation to other agencies • Colleagues treated with disrespect • Acting in a discriminatory way or condoning this in others • Lack of courtesy, respect and professionalism in verbal, written and other forms of communication between FCA and managers • Bringing the organisation into potential disrepute • Wilful refusal to follow reasonable management instruction • Makes no effort to ensure practice is up to date with developments in social work • <p>Note: some of these behaviours could be sufficiently serious to invoke Performance and conduct or Dignity at Work procedures</p>	Manager records 360° feedback Staff survey
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worker presents positively to external agencies • Confidentiality respected • Works openly and positively with colleagues • Respects diversity and different cultures and values • Attendance at required training but limited demonstrated interest in wider learning and development • Worker accepts feedback from complaints • The ability to reflect on legitimate concerns raised about performance and work constructively to rectify these with appropriate support from management • Practice is up to date with developments in social work • 	

Good	<p>As in satisfactory, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from adults and young people on the worker's behaviour • Shows a positive willingness to learn from complaints and other feedback • 360° feedback demonstrates that the worker is supportive to colleagues • Worker seeks out learning opportunities • Positively challenges discriminatory behaviour in colleagues or other professionals • Showing leadership in promoting child engagement • 	
Outstanding	<p>As in good, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worker seen as "ambassador" by other agencies • Acts as positive mentor for colleagues/new staff • Worker seeks contact with other agencies to learn from others and contribute to their development • Worker seeks feedback from others and reviews their own performance • Actively promotes equal opportunities and diversity for service users • 	