

SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE
AUDIT OF SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN NEED
IN RESPONSE TO THE PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE VICTORIA CLIMBIÉ INQUIRY

FEBRUARY 2003

This framework is to be used by councils with social services responsibilities to audit their position in relation to the practice recommendations of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry report. It provides performance criteria against each of the recommendations linked to statutory requirements and guidance.

The council is expected to audit its current arrangements against the criteria and to address areas of weakness. In planning improvement activities you must take account of the time scales that Lord Laming set of three months and six months against each of the recommendations.

Chief Executives will need to be satisfied that their council has appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the quality of services to children in need, particularly those in need of protection. They should include quality assurance arrangements to identify any deterioration in services at an early stage and ensure that they are rectified.

SSI will evaluate the completed audit framework alongside the evidence already available on each council's children's services; previous inspections, performance indicators and the position statement and Quality Protects management action plan for 2002/03. This analysis of the audit return will be shared with the council.

SSI will check on the quality of the audit and the progress that councils are making in achieving improvements through:

- the ongoing performance assessment and improvement dialogue between the business link inspector and the council;
- planned children's services and child protection inspections;
- visits to verify the audit response in a sample of councils. This will include inspecting some aspects of service. If your council is selected for a follow-up inspection, this will take place between May and July;
- assessment of any additional assistance a council may need to improve its services.

The evaluation of the audit tool will be used as evidence in the star rating process later this year.

Health and police agencies are also being required to audit how their services are responding to the relevant recommendations of the report. You will need to consider how to link your self audit with the work being undertaken by partners in health and the police.

You should **not** complete and return this audit framework document. By the end of February you will receive an electronic form in spread sheet format. This will provide a scale against each of the criteria with a descriptor against each of the points on the scale. You will be able to use the scale to rate your current performance. Detailed guidance will be provided with this electronic collection form which should be returned to your local SSI office by 30 April 2003. If you have any questions regarding the audit framework, these should be addressed to the Business Link Inspector.

STANDARD 1 – REFERRAL

Referral and initial response, including those provided outside office hours, safeguard and promote the welfare of children and are convenient and user-friendly.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 39. All front line staff within local authorities must be trained to pass all calls about the safety of children through to the appropriate duty team without delay, having first recorded the name of the child, his or her address, and the nature of the concern. If the call cannot be put through immediately, further details from the referrer must be sought (including their name, address and contact number). The information must then be passed verbally and in writing to the duty team within the hour. (paragraph 5.169) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together - paragraphs 5.5, 5.7 Assessment Framework – paragraphs 3.2-3.6</p>	<p>1.1 Ensure that procedures for managing referrals regarding children about whom there are child welfare concerns are robust and effective.</p>
<p>Recommendation 19. Managers of duty teams must devise and operate a system which enables them immediately to establish how many children have been referred to their team, what action is required to be taken for each child, who is responsible for taking that action, and when that action must be completed. (paragraph 4.14) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework - paragraphs 6.12 – 6.13</p>	<p>1.2 Have established effective team workload management and information systems that clearly track how the Council has responded to each referral.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 29. Directors of social services must devise and implement a system which provides them with the following information about the work of the duty teams for which they are responsible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of children referred to the teams;• Number of those children who have been assessed as requiring a service;• Number of those children who have been provided with the service that they require; <p>Number of children referred who have identified needs which have yet to be met. (paragraph 5.24) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 6.15; 6.11-6.12</p>	<p>1.3 Have established effective management information systems to collect quantitative data on the work of referral and initial assessment teams.</p>
<p>Recommendation 21. When a professional makes a referral to social services concerning the well-being of a child, the fact of that referral must be confirmed in writing by the referrer within 48 hours. (paragraph 4.59) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 5.9</p>	<p>1.4 Have secured agreement through the local Area Child Protection Committee for common referral arrangements that apply to all agencies, including timely written confirmation of the referral if it relates to a child about whom there are child welfare concerns..</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 93. Whenever a joint investigation by police and social services is required into possible injury or harm to a child, a manager from each agency should always be involved at the referral stage and in any further strategy discussion. (paragraph 13.52) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 5.32</p>	<p>1.5 Ensure that whenever a joint investigation by social services and police may be required, a manager is involved in the decision making process.</p>
<p>Recommendation 98. The guideline set out at paragraph 5.8 of <i>Working Together</i> must be strictly adhered to: whenever social services receive a referral which may constitute a criminal offence against a child, they must inform the police at the earliest opportunity. (paragraph 14.46) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 5.8</p>	<p>1.6 Where social services staff receive a referral that may constitute a criminal offence against a child, the police are informed at the earliest opportunity.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 48. Directors of social services must ensure that when children and families are referred to other agencies for additional services, that referral is only made with the agreement of the allocated social worker and/or their manager. The purpose of the referral must be recorded contemporaneously on the case file. (paragraph 6.263) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 5.17; 7.47 – 7.49 Assessment Framework – paragraph 3.59</p>	<p>1.7 Ensure that there are clear lines of decision-making and accountability in respect of decisions to refer children and families to services provided by agencies other than social services. These should take account of the views of those professional and managerial staff most closely involved with the family. All referrals by social services should be recorded on the case file in a timely manner.</p>

STANDARD 2 – ASSESSMENT

Assessments of children in need, focus on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child by addressing their developmental needs and the capacity of the primary carers to respond to these needs within their environmental context.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 53. When allocating a case to a social worker, the manager must ensure that that the social worker is clear as to what has been allocated, what action is required and how that action will be reviewed and supervised. (paragraph 6.586) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 5.13 – 5.17 Assessment Framework – paragraphs 3.8; 3.37 – 3.40; 3.59</p>	<p>2.1 Ensure that case allocation processes always make explicit the purposes of intervention, and the expectations of the allocated social worker and any other staff working with the family.</p>
<p>Recommendation 53. When allocating a case to a social worker, the manager must ensure that that the social worker is clear as to what has been allocated, what action is required and how that action will be reviewed and supervised. (paragraph 6.586) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 5.17; 5.45 – 5.52; 5.90-5.95 Assessment Framework – paragraphs 3.13; 4.32 – 4.37</p>	<p>2.2 Ensure that at each stage of the assessment and actions taken, the social worker is clear about how these actions will be reviewed at the frequency required by legislation and guidance.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 34. Social workers must not undertake home visits without being clear about the purpose of the visit, the information to be gathered during the course of it, and the steps to be taken if no one is at home. No visits should be undertaken without the social worker concerned checking the information known about the child by other child protection agencies. All visits must be written up on the case file. (paragraphs 5.108 and 6.606) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 5.13 – 5.16; 5.29; 5.33 – 5.37; 7.47 – 7.51</p> <p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 2.1; 2.6; 2.10 - 2.11; 2.15 - 2.19; 2.23; 3.10 – 3.11</p>	<p>2.4 Ensure that all contacts by social services staff with service users are made with a clear understanding of the purpose of the intervention, the information to be gathered and the desired result from the contact, including contingencies if the contact proves unsuccessful for any reason .</p>

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<p>Recommendation 34. Social workers must not undertake home visits without being clear about the purpose of the visit, the information to be gathered during the course of it, and the steps to be taken if no one is at home. No visits should be undertaken without the social worker concerned checking the information known about the child by other child protection agencies. All visits must be written up on the case file. (paragraphs 5.108 and 6.606)</p> <p>Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 5.10</p>	<p>2.5 Ensure that social services records are checked and the Child Protection Register is consulted following each referral of a child where there are welfare concerns, and all decisions and outcomes from these checks are recorded on the child's notes/file.</p>
<p>Recommendation 18. When communication with a child is necessary for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting that child's welfare, and the first language of that child is not English, an interpreter must be used. In cases where the use of an interpreter is dispensed with, the reasons for so doing must be recorded in the child's notes/case file. (paragraph 6.251)</p> <p>Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 5.35; 5.40; 7.23</p> <p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 3.17; 3.41 – 3.42; 3.58 – 3rd bullet point</p>	<p>2.6 Ensure that children are communicated with effectively where the preferred language of the child is not English, or the child uses a non-verbal form of communication, through the use of an interpreter. If the services of an interpreter are not used, the reasons for this are recorded in the child's notes/file.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 35. Directors of social services must ensure that children who are the subject of allegations of deliberate harm are seen and spoken to within 24 hours of the allegation being communicated to social services. If this timescale is not met, the reason for the failure must be recorded on the case file. (paragraph 5.127) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 5.10</p>	<p>2.7 Ensure that responses to concerns about a child's welfare are made within the timescale set out in Chapter 5 of Working Together to Safeguard Children and all decisions and outcomes of actions taken are recorded on the child's notes/file.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22. If social services place a child in temporary accommodation, an assessment must be made of the suitability of that accommodation and the results of that assessment must be recorded on the child's case file. If the accommodation is unsuitable, this should be reported to a senior officer. (paragraph 4.77) Timescale: 3 months</p>		<p>2.8 Ensure that where children in need are in temporary accommodation that is not suitable, the senior officer with responsibility for housing services is notified and that this is recorded on the child's notes/file.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 24. Where, during the course of an assessment, social services establish that a child of school age is not attending school, they must alert the education authorities and satisfy themselves that, in the interim, the child is subject to adequate daycare arrangements. (paragraph 4.143) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 1.18; 2.3 – 2.4; 2.6</p>	<p>2.9 Ensure that the Assessment Framework is used for all assessments of children.</p>
<p>Recommendation 24. Where, during the course of an assessment, social services establish that a child of school age is not attending school, they must alert the education authorities and satisfy themselves that, in the interim, the child is subject to adequate daycare arrangements. (paragraph 4.143) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 5.41 – 5.43 Working Together – paragraphs 3.12; 3.14 – 8th bullet point</p>	<p>2.10 If during the course of an assessment it is discovered that a child of school age is not attending school the LEA should be contacted as soon as possible to establish the reason for this. Agencies should work together to ensure services are provided to appropriately meet the child's assessed needs.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 25. All social services assessments of children and families, and any action plans drawn up as a result, must be approved in writing by a manager. Before giving such approval, the manager must ensure that the child and the child's carer have been seen and spoken to. (paragraph 4.152) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 7.2 – 7.23</p> <p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 1.35; 1.44 – 1.47; 3.10</p>	<p>2.11 Ensure that assessments of children in need include direct communication with a child, as appropriate according to age and understanding, and with his/her carer and that their views are recorded.</p>
<p>Recommendation 25. All social services assessments of children and families, and any action plans drawn up as a result, must be approved in writing by a manager. Before giving such approval, the manager must ensure that the child and the child's carer have been seen and spoken to. (paragraph 4.152) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 5.17; 5.45</p> <p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 3.13; 4.36</p>	<p>2.12 Ensure that actions arising from an assessment are approved in writing at an appropriate level of seniority, and take proper account of the views and wishes of a child and his/her parent or carer.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 36. No emergency action on a case concerning an allegation of deliberate harm to a child should be taken without first obtaining legal advice. Local authorities must ensure that such legal advice is available 24 hours a day. (paragraph 5.128) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 5.24</p>	<p>2.13 Ensure that staff have access to legal advice and that it is normally sought before any emergency action is taken to safeguard a child. If legal advice is not sought, the reason for this should be noted on the case file.</p>
<p>Recommendation 64. Hospital social workers must always respond promptly to any referral of suspected deliberate harm to a child. They must see and talk to the child, to the child's carer and to those responsible for the care of the child in hospital, while avoiding the risk of appearing to coach the child. (paragraph 8.100) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 5.5 – 5.12 Assessment Framework – paragraphs 3.3; 3.8 – 3.10</p>	<p>2.14 Ensure that all parts of social services irrespective of whether they are physically located in other agencies, eg, hospital social work departments, are subject to the same procedures and guidance, in respect of the responses to a referral of concerns about a child's welfare.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 56. Directors of social services must ensure that no child known to social services who is an inpatient in a hospital and about whom there are child protection concerns is allowed to be taken home until it has been established by social services that the home environment is safe, the concerns of the medical staff have been fully addressed, and there is a social work plan in place for the ongoing promotion and safeguarding of that child's welfare. (paragraph 6.594) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 1.53; 3.9; 3.11; 3.15</p> <p>Working Together – paragraph 3.8</p>	<p>2.15 Ensure that children, about whom there are child welfare concerns, are subject to further assessment of their needs whenever their circumstances substantially change. For a child in hospital, social services should undertake an assessment and establish that it is safe for the child to return home before the child is discharged from hospital. This assessment should include discussions with the medical staff and result in decisions being agreed with the consultant responsible for the child's care in hospital and recorded. If necessary, a plan should be prepared to ensure the promotion and safeguarding of the child's best interests.</p>

STANDARD 3 – ALLOCATION, SERVICE PROVISION AND CLOSURE:

Where a child is identified as being in need councils provide a service appropriate to the level of assessed need. Closure is only considered following a full review of the child's needs and such action is deemed to be appropriate.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 58. Directors of social services must ensure that every child's case file includes, on the inside of the front cover, a properly maintained chronology. (paragraph 6.629) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 7.47; 7.50</p>	<p>3.1 Ensure that an up to date chronology is available on each child's case file.</p>
<p>Recommendation 54. Directors of social services must ensure that all cases of children assessed as needing a service have an allocated social worker. In cases where this proves to be impossible, arrangements must be made to maintain contact with the child. The number, nature and reasons for such unallocated cases must be reported to the social services committee on a monthly basis. (paragraph 6.589) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 3.6 Assessment Framework – paragraphs 1.28 – 1.32</p>	<p>3.2 Ensure that services and support provided are commensurate with the levels of assessed need including the allocation of a social worker where necessary. Where it is not possible to allocate a social worker Managers should make contingency plans for contact with the child and ensure that a system exists to monitor and report to senior managers and the responsible executive councillor(s).</p>
<p>Recommendation 55. Directors of social services must ensure that only those cases in which a social worker is actively engaged in work with a child and the child's family are deemed to be 'allocated'. (paragraph 6.590) Timescale: 3 months</p>		<p>3.3 Have clear definitions of work that is allocated, which should include a named social worker who is working with the child in a planned and purposeful way, on a regular basis and to a work plan that is endorsed by the line manager.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 26. Directors of social services must ensure that no case involving a vulnerable child is closed until the child and the child's carer have been seen and spoken to, and a plan for the ongoing promotion and safeguarding of the child's welfare has been agreed. (paragraph 4.183) Timescale: 3 months</p> <p>Recommendation 40. Directors of social services must ensure that no case that has been opened in response to allegations of deliberate harm to a child is closed until the following steps have been taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The child has been spoken to alone.• The child's carers have been seen and spoken to.• The accommodation in which the child is to live has been visited.• The views of all the professionals involved have been sought and considered. <p>A plan for the promotion and safeguarding of the child's welfare has been agreed. (paragraph 5.187) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 5.12; 5.17; 5.46; 5.67; 5.95</p> <p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 3.8; 3.13</p>	<p>3.4 Ensure that cases are only closed when children in need have undergone a full review of their circumstances that has determined that case closure is appropriate, and that the views and wishes of the child and his/her parents or carers are taken into account when making such decisions. Such decisions should always be formally recorded.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 52. Directors of social services must ensure that no case is allocated to a social worker unless and until his or her manager ensures that he or she has the necessary training, experience and time to deal with it properly. (paragraph 6.581) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework – paragraph 6.23 Working Together – paragraph 9.12 – 3rd bullet point</p>	<p>3.5 Ensure that cases are only allocated to suitably skilled and experienced social workers and that they have sufficient time to deliver the work planned.</p>
<p>Recommendation 61. Directors of social services must ensure that hospital social workers participate in all hospital meetings concerned with the safeguarding of children. (paragraph 8.27) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 3.8 Assessment Framework – paragraph 1.50</p>	<p>3.6 Ensure that planning and review meetings, for children where there are welfare concerns, including those in hospital, take full account of the inter-agency nature of child protection work, and include invitations to all relevant professionals.</p>
<p>Recommendation 38. Directors of social services must ensure that the transfer of responsibility of a case between local authority social services departments is always recorded on the case file of each authority, and is confirmed in writing by the authority to which responsibility for the case has been transferred. (paragraph 5.152) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 7.51</p>	<p>3.7 Have in place clear protocols and procedures that ensure recording the change in case responsibility between LAs when children move from one council area to another.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 23. If social services place a child in accommodation in another local authority area, they must notify that local authority's social services department of the placement. Unless specifically agreed in writing at team manager level by both authorities or above, the placing authority must retain responsibility for the child concerned. (paragraph 4.82) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 7.51</p>	<p>3.8 Retain full responsibility for the care and supervision of children placed outside its boundaries, until alternative and suitable arrangements are agreed by the receiving council.</p>
<p>Recommendation 42. Directors of social services must ensure that where the procedures of a social services department stipulate requirements for the transfer of a case between teams within the department, systems are in place to detect when such a transfer does not take place as required. (paragraph 6.7) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework – paragraph 6.13</p>	<p>3.9 Have in place monitoring arrangements that alert managers to situations involving individual children, where adherence to internal transfer protocols has not occurred.</p>

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Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 51. Directors of social services must ensure that all strategy meetings and discussions involve the following three basic steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A list of action points must be drawn up, each with an agreed timescale and the identity of the person responsible for carrying it out.• A clear record of the discussion or meeting must be circulated to all those present and all those with responsibility for an action point. <p>A mechanism for reviewing completion of the agreed actions must be specified. The date upon which the first such review is to take place is to be agreed and documented. (paragraph 6.575)</p> <p>Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paras 5.28 – 5.32</p>	<p>3.10 Ensure that clear guidance for the operation and recording of strategy discussions is in place in accordance with Working Together and check through routine monitoring and audit, that this guidance is followed.</p>

STANDARD 4 – GUIDANCE

Social services has effective policies and procedures in respect of children in need consistent with local ACPC arrangements and monitors the implementation of them.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 46. Directors of social services must ensure that the roles and responsibilities of child protection advisers (and those employed in similar posts) are clearly understood by all those working within children's services. (paragraph 6.71) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 3.14 – 3.19</p> <p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 5.9 – 5.15</p>	<p>4.1 Set out clear accountability arrangements for all staff working with children in need, including advisory staff such as Child Protection Advisers, and ensure these are understood throughout the organisation.</p>
<p>Recommendation 57. Directors of social services must ensure that social work staff are made aware of how to access effectively information concerning vulnerable children which may be held in other countries. (paragraph 6.619) Timescale: 6 months</p>		<p>4.2 Have established, via the Area Child Protection Committee, effective interagency guidance for obtaining information about children in need who come to the UK from other countries.</p>
<p>Recommendation 59. Directors of social services must ensure that staff working with vulnerable children and families are provided with up-to-date procedures, protocols and guidance. Such practice guidance must be located in a single-source document. The work should be monitored so as to ensure procedures are followed. (paragraph 8.7) Timescale: 6 months</p>		<p>4.3 Ensure that staff working with children and families have effective access to up to date procedures, protocols and guidance which accord with the ACPC procedures and that staff's compliance with these procedures is routinely monitored.</p>

STANDARD 4 – GUIDANCE

Social services has effective policies and procedures in respect of children in need consistent with local ACPC arrangements and monitors the implementation of them.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 38. Directors of social services must ensure that the transfer of responsibility of a case between local authority social services departments is always recorded on the case file of each authority, and is confirmed in writing by the authority to which responsibility for the case has been transferred. (paragraph 5.152) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 7.51</p>	<p>4.4 Ensure that procedures provide clear guidance on the management and recording of transfers of children in need cases between different council areas, in line with requirements contained in Working Together to Safeguard Children and including recording the transfer on the case file and a written confirmation that responsibility has been accepted by the receiving council.</p>

STANDARD 5 – TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:

Social services ensure that all staff working with children in need are suitably skilled and qualified and undertake appropriate continuing professional development.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 20. Directors of Social Services must ensure that staff in their children and families' intake teams are experienced in working with children and families, and that they have received appropriate training. (paragraph 4.16) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 9.12 Assessment Framework – paragraphs 6.23 – 6.25; 6.29 – 6.33</p>	<p>5.1 Ensure that all staff working with children in need and their families are suitably skilled and qualified and have access to continuing professional development.</p>
<p>Recommendation 31. Directors of social services must ensure that all staff who work with children have received appropriate vocational training, receive a thorough induction in local procedures and are obliged to participate in regular continuing training so as to ensure that their practice is kept up to date. (paragraph 5.30) Timescale: 6 months</p>		<p>5.2 Ensure that the training needs of all staff working with children are assessed through staff appraisal and personal development planning and that they have access to appropriate skills training, according to assessed need and experience.</p>
<p>Recommendation 31. Directors of social services must ensure that all staff who work with children have received appropriate vocational training, receive a thorough induction in local procedures and are obliged to participate in regular continuing training so as to ensure that their practice is kept up to date. (paragraph 5.30) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 9.12</p>	<p>5.3 Have effective arrangements in place for the induction of all new staff including ACPC child protection requirements.</p>

STANDARD 5 – TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:

Social services ensure that all staff working with children in need are suitably skilled and qualified and undertake appropriate continuing professional development.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 37. The training of social workers must equip them with the confidence to question the opinion of professionals in other agencies when conducting their own assessment of the needs of the child. (paragraph 5.138) Timescale: 6 months</p>		<p>5.4 Offer appropriate training and management support to promote professional confidence and encourage and support social workers to express their professional views assertively in all settings.</p>
<p>Recommendation 43. No social worker should undertake section 47 inquiries unless he or she has been trained to do so. Directors of social services must undertake an audit of staff currently carrying out section 47 inquiries to identify gaps in training and experience. These must be addressed immediately. (paragraph 6.12) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 9.12 Assessment Framework – paragraphs 6.23; 6.37</p>	<p>5.5 Ensure that staff only undertake initial assessments, Section 47 enquiries and core assessments if they are trained and competent to do so and have in place a system to identify gaps in skills or knowledge and to provide urgent training to address any gaps.</p>

STANDARD 6 – ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

Social services has performance management arrangements within which all staff understand their responsibilities for delivering the services supported by regular supervision and appraisal.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 60. Directors of social services must ensure that hospital social workers working with children and families are line managed by the children and families' section of their social services department. (paragraph 8.19) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework – paragraphs 6.26 – 6.28</p>	<p>6.1 Ensure that hospital social workers working with children and families who are employed by the council, receive support and supervision from line managers who have experience and expertise in child care work, and who are fully conversant with child care procedures, including those of the Area Child Protection Committee and relevant children's legislation.</p>
<p>Recommendation 50. Directors of social services must ensure that when staff are absent from work, systems are in place to ensure that post, e-mails and telephone contacts are checked and actioned as necessary. (paragraph 6.318) Timescale: 3 months</p>		<p>6.2 Have in place adequate cover arrangements that allow continuity of response, on behalf of a child, in the absence of the key worker.</p>
<p>Recommendation 45. Directors of social services must ensure that the work of staff working directly with children is regularly supervised. This must include the supervisor reading, reviewing and signing the case file at regular intervals. (paragraph 6.59) Timescale: 3 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraphs 7.52-7.54 Assessment Framework – paragraphs 6.26 – 6.28</p>	<p>6.3 Ensure that, as part of regular supervision, managers scrutinise the work of child care practitioners, including reviewing case files. The manager's observations and any recommended actions should be recorded on the child's notes/file.</p>
<p>Recommendation 44. When staff are temporarily promoted to fill vacancies, directors of social services must subject such arrangements to six-monthly reviews and record the outcome. (paragraph 6.29) Timescale: 3 months</p>		<p>6.4 Ensure that the impact on service delivery of filling vacancies on a temporary basis is regularly reviewed by senior managers and that the competence of temporary staff is reviewed through regular supervision and appraisal.</p>

STANDARD 6 – ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

Social services has performance management arrangements within which all staff understand their responsibilities for delivering the services supported by regular supervision and appraisal.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
Recommendation 30. Directors of social services must ensure that senior managers inspect, at least once every three months, a random selection of case files and supervision notes. (paragraph 5.27) Timescale: 3 months		6.5 Ensure that senior managers are routinely involved in audits of professional practice and supervision.

STANDARD 7 – GOVERNANCE

Councillors and Chief Executives have clear accountabilities for the provision of social services to children in need, including arrangements for the review of policy and practice and strong scrutiny arrangements.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 27. Chief executives and lead members of local authorities with social services responsibilities must ensure that children's services are explicitly included in their authority's list of priorities and operational plans. (paragraph 5.4) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>The Local Authority Social Services Act 1970</p> <p>Paragraph 1A Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989</p> <p>Working Together – paragraph 3.2</p> <p>Assessment Framework – paragraph 6.6</p>	<p>7.1 Ensure that children's services priorities are included in overall council plans and service objectives.</p>
<p>Recommendation 27. Chief executives and lead members of local authorities with social services responsibilities must ensure that children's services are explicitly included in their authority's list of priorities and operational plans. (paragraph 5.4) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>CI (2003)1</p>	<p>7.2 Ensure that adequate staffing and other resources are allocated to social services to enable it to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children in its area. Ensure that where there are significant changes in resourcing levels or organisational structures, the associated risks are assessed and addressed.</p>
<p>Recommendation 27. Chief executives and lead members of local authorities with social services responsibilities must ensure that children's services are explicitly included in their authority's list of priorities and operational plans. (paragraph 5.4) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>CI (2003)1</p>	<p>7.3 Ensure that the role and position of the Director of Social Services is compliant with guidance and that there are clear lines of accountability throughout the organisation.</p>

STANDARD 7 – GOVERNANCE

Councillors and Chief Executives have clear accountabilities for the provision of social services to children in need, including arrangements for the review of policy and practice and strong scrutiny arrangements.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 30. Directors of social services must ensure that senior managers inspect, at least once every three months, a random selection of case files and supervision notes. (paragraph 5.27) Timescale: 3 months</p>		<p>7.4 Ensure that a robust quality assurance system exists across all the council's services to children in need and that the Chief Executive and councillors receive regular and comprehensive performance reports.</p>
<p>Recommendation 49. When a professional from another agency expresses concern to social services about their handling of a particular case, the file must be read and reviewed, the professional concerned must be met and spoken to, and the outcome of this discussion must be recorded on the case file. (paragraph 6.289) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Working Together – paragraph 5.51</p>	<p>7.5 Have established a robust process for dealing with concerns originating from another agency about any aspect of service delivery that is the responsibility of the council and ensure that the outcomes of such representations are properly recorded and communicated to the originator of the concern.</p>
<p>Recommendation 28. The Department of Health should require chief executives of local authorities with social services responsibilities to prepare a position statement on the true picture of the current strengths and weaknesses of their 'front door' duty systems for children and families. This must be accompanied by an action plan setting out the timescales for remedying any weaknesses identified. (paragraph 5.9) Timescale: 6 months</p>	<p>Assessment Framework - paragraph 6.14</p>	<p>7.6 Review the effectiveness of referral and initial assessment systems, including those provided outside office hours, to establish whether they are safe, responsive and provide services in accordance with council policies and statutory requirements. Findings should be reported to councillors and an action plan with timescales and arrangements to review progress, that address identified areas for development produced.</p>

STANDARD 7 – GOVERNANCE

Councillors and Chief Executives have clear accountabilities for the provision of social services to children in need, including arrangements for the review of policy and practice and strong scrutiny arrangements.

Inquiry Recommendation	Statutory Guidance	What is expected of councils:
<p>Recommendation 41. Chief executives of local authorities with social services responsibilities must make arrangements for senior managers and councillors to regularly visit intake teams in their children's services department, and to report their findings to the chief executive and social services committee. (paragraph 5.193) Timescale: 6 months</p>		<p>7.7 Ensure that systems exist to inform senior managers and responsible executive councillor(s) including from first-hand experience, of important issues affecting teams that provide direct services to children and families.</p>
<p>Recommendation 54. Directors of social services must ensure that all cases of children assessed as needing a service have an allocated social worker. In cases where this proves to be impossible, arrangements must be made to maintain contact with the child. The number, nature and reasons for such unallocated cases must be reported to the social services committee on a monthly basis. (paragraph 6.589) Timescale: 6 months</p>		<p>7.8 Ensure that responsible executive councillor(s) are kept fully informed, through regular reports, regarding shortfalls in services and any unallocated cases, including the reasons behind the inability to allocate.</p>