

Getting the basics right for Camden's children

Camden Model of Social Work Rucksack

USE OF SELF

What would you like to know about me. To help build trust, tell me as?

What would be a cheeky question you would like to ask me?

How would you like me to be with you? What would you like me to do or not do when I am with you?

What do you think I need to know about you and your family culture?

What is special about your family?

Tell me a story that is proud about or of the family.

Can you think of a story or a saying that gets told in your family?

APPRECIATION

What do you see, your strengths? What are you good at and what do you enjoy?

If I asked a family member or friend what they think about you, what would they say? Sister, friend, saying like about you and what makes you special?

What keeps you going in life - your relationships? What's important to you?

Since working with you I have really noticed that... and I appreciate that because... and really like that because...

SAFE UNCERTAINTY

What would you like to know about me? What do you think I need to know about you? If something important or worrying was happening, what would you tell me?

What can we do together to help?

What do you think we need to do to measure, see and make me feel safe and happy?

COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

How do you feel about the fact that I have been told that you think about me?

What do you think about me coming to see you? What is your understanding of my role? Do you know what I do?

How would you like me to be with you? Do you have any things that you think I should do or not do when you think of you doing the work?

How will you know if you think I have been helpful? How will you know if you think I have been helpful?

What has worked for you in the past? What has worked for you in the past?

REFLEXIVITY

What can we do together that will make a difference to your life?

What can we do that will make things better right now?

How will it show if things are going well and who will notice?

What will you be doing if things are better and who will notice?

How can we work together in a respectful way?

How can we work together in a way you enjoy?

How can we hold in mind your hopes and dreams for the future?

What are your dreams and how can we help you to go in the right direction?

How can I help you become the parent/family/child you hope to be?

How can I help you at the moment?

EXPLORING DIFFERENCE

How do the GGGRRRAACEESSS (hopes and) impact on your life and relationships?

How do you think the GGGRRRAACEESSS (choose one) makes a difference to you?

What are the differences or similarities between us and how might that help or hinder our work together?

What do you think is the same or different about us?

What are the differences or similarities between us and how might that help or hinder our work together?

What do you think is the same or different about us?

How can we work together in a respectful way?

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HOLDING THINGS LIGHTLY

ASKING QUESTIONS TENTATIVELY

MAKING THE QUESTIONS YOUR OWN

BEING TRUE TO YOUR VALUES

TAILORING YOUR QUESTIONS TO THE FAMILY

USING FEEDBACK TO INFORM THE QUESTION

AVOIDING MARRYING YOUR HYPOTHESIS

GETTING TO KNOW THE CHILD/FAMILY APART FROM THE PROBLEM

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning." Albert Einstein

"Ask the right questions and the answers will always reveal themselves." Oprah Winfrey

Getting the basics right for Camden's children

Recording is essential for professional accountability and to support effective decision making, records are also of vital importance for the children and families we work with so making sure we get the basics right by recording accurate, up-to-date information on children's case records is at the heart of good social work practice. Good quality records provide evidence of the work that is being undertaken by the local authority. A good record tells the child's story, shows that the work is purposeful and how it is guided and supported by high quality supervision. The child's voice and parents/carers perspectives should be evident in all recordings.

Top Tips for Recording (BASW 2020).

- Include the child throughout the recording.
- Write records as if writing to the child or family members.
- Make records purposeful and analytical.
- Include memory objects (e.g. photos) sensitively and critically.
- Make sure records reflect the whole of the child's story and why decisions were made.
- Chart the child's journey with a chronology supported by a genogram.
- Include different views and opinions.
- Make records easy to access.
- Make sure recording is balanced and meaningful.
- Avoid jargon and vague language, do not record every piece of communication.

For more details, please refer to the following document:

<https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/media/3292/recording-policy.pdf>

Case Record Essentials

1. Chronologies – telling a child's story clearly

Why does it matter?

A chronology gives the essential facts of the child's history clearly and succinctly so that their story is clear. It can offer an insight into emerging patterns, highlighting strengths and concerns. This can also be invaluable in helping a child, young person or parent / carer understand the reasons for social work involvement and to gain the child and family's perspective. Chronologies are key component of the social work record keeping. Capturing significant events in children and their families' lives are crucial to developing sophisticated analytical assessments and appropriate plans.

Camden's standard

A good quality chronology on every case file allocated to a social worker / practitioner. The chronology is updated when there is a significant incident or event and, at a minimum, every 90 days.

What Does A Good Chronology Look Like?

- The chronology provides a sequential list of events, recording significant facts and changes in a child or young person's life and the ways in which agencies responded to these events; this includes positive changes and achievements.
- The chronology should be a short, concise history of the family and their involvement with CSSW and partner agencies.
- Evidence how the chronology has been used to inform assessments, intervention and plans.
- The chronology does not provide detailed descriptions of what happened and should not duplicate case notes

For more details, please refer to the practice guidance:

<https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/media/3263/chronologies-practice-guidance.pdf>

2. Case summaries

Why does it matter?

A case summary gives a brief up-to-date picture of the reason we are working with the child / family, the progress of the work and any essential information in relation to the professional network and significant dates to note. The format of the case summary is similar to a case transfer or closing summary.

Camden's standard

A case summary should be recorded on case notes for every child allocated in Children's Safeguarding and Social Work (CSSW). It should be updated whenever there is a significant change in circumstances and at a minimum of every 90 days.

What Does A Good Case Summary Look Like?

- Provides a succinct summary of the work undertaken, specifically linking progress to the Recommendation/Outcomes of the Plan.
- Brings together the outcomes of all the information and actions with the child/family and reflects / analyses and evaluates progress of interventions, including the child and family's level of engagement with the intervention.
- Brings to life the child and the child's voice and reflects 'what is life like for this child.'
- Include outcomes of supervision on the case and consider appropriately the local authorities, and partner agencies, decision-making and the impact this may have had.

3. Visits

Why does it matter?

Spending time with children is at the heart of relationship-based practice. Good and timely case recording provides evidence that children are being seen and spoken to regularly and that there are observations of babies and pre-verbal children. This is essential evidence of the child's safety and wellbeing as well as understanding their world. Recording of visits support us to monitor and review intervention with families to ensure the work is meaningful and purposeful and having a positive impact on outcomes for children. If the intervention isn't

promoting change then recording visits helps us to think about what we need to do differently in terms of the children's plan.

Camden's standard

- Children should be visited by the allocated worker to the following minimum timescales:
- Children on a child protection plan – every 10 working days
- Children on a children in need (CIN) plan – every 28 working days
- Children looked after (CLA) – within one week of the child being placed (including any placement moves), then:
- For the first year of the placement, at least every six weeks
- After the first year, every three months if the child is in a settled, permanent placement and this is agreed at the CLA review. In all other circumstances, visits should continue to be at least every six weeks.

Recording should include where children are seen (family home / placement) and whether they are seen alone. Written records should be within five days of the visit and recording for child protection cases should be completed within two days.

What Does A Good Visit Look Like?

- Good preparation before the visit to ensure it is purposeful and aligned to the child's plan
- The purpose of the visit is clearly explained to children, young people, parents and carers.
- Visits allow creativity through using a range of direct work tools and communication methods.
- Visits are collaborative, relational and respectful
- Observations and feedback during visits support us to reassess need and risk and adjust plans in response.

For more details, please refer to following documents:

<https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/media/3668/home-visits-policy.pdf>

<https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/media/3690/placement-visits.pdf>

4. Assessment

Why does it matter?

Purposeful work depends on a clear plan that is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timebound. This should be developed from an updated assessment and agreed, or ideally co-produced, with the child, young person, parent or carer.

Camden's standard

A multi-agency assessment of need should be completed for every child receiving a service within the agreed timescale - a maximum of 45 days for a Child and Family Assessment. Plans should be recorded and reviewed to the timescale, according to the statutory framework. The service user should have a copy of their plan:

What does a Good assessment Look Like?

- Assessment clearly identifies strengths and areas of concern, provides a detailed analysis and includes all members of the household.
- Assessment is of a good quality and identifies a clear case plan with relevant analysis of strengths, needs and risk.
- Assessments are written in plain, jargon free language that is understandable to parents/carers with explicit explanations of worries/danger and strengths/safety.
- Assessment includes some analysis regarding multi-agency context and this information is used to inform decision making.
- Child seen alone (where appropriate), spoken to and their views recorded and reflected in assessment. Assessment demonstrates a sense of the child.
- There is evidence of direct work undertaken with the child to ascertain what life is like for them.

https://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/chapter_one.html#stat_req

5. Planning

Why does it matter?

The child's plan provides the overarching framework for bringing together information from the assessment process. The plan informs what support, services and interventions the child and parents/carers need to reduce vulnerabilities and to address risk. It clearly describes what actions professionals, and the parent/carers will take to keep the child safe, promote their health and development and support their family in caring for the child safely. All children known to CSSW must have a plan recorded on their case file, whether this is child in need, child protection or looked after child/pathway plan. The plan should be SMART and monitored and reviewed in line with relevant timescales. The child's voice and parents/carers must be integrated into the plan.

Camden's standards

Child in need plans will be reviewed held within 3 months of the initial meeting then every 6 months. However, a review meeting may be brought forward if it is thought that this is necessary to meet the child's needs.

Child protection plans will be reviewed and updated within 3 months of the ICPCC and then every 6 months.

Looked After Children care plans will be reviewed within 28 days of becoming looked after, 3 months then every 6 months.

What does a Good Plan Look Like?

- There is evidence to show that the Plan is making a positive difference to the child's life
- The plan is progressing and meeting the child's needs. Where there is evidence the plan is not meeting the child's needs, the reasons for this are explored and changes made if needed.
- The plan shows evidence of a good understanding of the child's needs and how these will be met, within clear timescales.
- The plan clearly outlines the day-to-day actions that parents and carers will undertake to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing (and is not a list of services to attend)

- There is strong evidence of the child and family involvement in the development of the plan. This should include family network meetings, outlining family and friend support with specific actions for supporting the child's safety and wellbeing.
- The plan is progressing and meeting the child's needs. Where there is evidence the plan is not meeting the child's needs, the reasons for this are explored and changes made if needed
- The case file recording tells the child's story and evidence progress.

[referral-assessment-planning-and-review-policy.pdf \(camden.gov.uk\)](#)

[CP plans | Children's Policy & Practice Hub \(camden.gov.uk\)](#)

[care-planning.pdf \(camden.gov.uk\)](#)

[preparing-for-independence-policy-16-18.pdf \(camden.gov.uk\)](#)

6. Supervision

Evidencing good quality reflective and analytical supervision that is held to timescale, supports the practitioner in their work with the child / family and tracks the progress of the plan. This can be supported by management oversight case records to evidence informal supervision and case direction.

Camden's standards

All cases allocated to the social worker must be discussed at the following minimum frequencies:

- Children on child protection plans - every month
- Children in need and looked after children - every two months
- Care leavers - every three months.

All social workers should be supervised monthly as a minimum and more frequently for newly qualified social workers.

What does Good Supervision Look Like?

- Supervision takes place in accordance with supervision policy and is responsive to social worker's needs.
- Supervision is reflective, analytical and evidence issues which have been raised. It sets clear parameters regarding required actions, contingencies, and outstanding work, addressing timescales effectively.
- Supervision reviews actions of previous supervision and these are completed. Records up to date and fit for purpose.
- There is evidence of reflective tools such as appreciative inquiry or case mapping.

For more details, please refer to following documents:

<https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/media/3285/social-worker-supervision-policy.pdf>

<https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/media/3741/cssw-scheme-of-delegation.pdf>