**Quality Assurance**

Within Children, Family and Safeguarding Service, the Quality Assurance Framework is in place. Regular themed audits are undertaken on a bi-monthly basis. The service has excellent management information available to inform reflection upon performance. This information is presented in a variety of forums to enable Senior Management, frontline managers and practitioners understand where practice lies in relation to our aspirations. The service has the culture and mechanisms to critically reflect upon its practice and seek to develop an effective improvement cycle which is owned at all levels.

The Participation Team have also undertaken consultation work in particularly with Looked After Children. Further work will need to be undertaken with Children on the Child Protection Register.

On a quarterly basis feedback is given to Teams around Audit, Participation and Performance information. These Quality Assurance Feedback days are attended by all Teams and Service Managers.

During the past twelve months the following audits have been undertaken:

* Engaging Fathers in Safeguarding Audit
* Missing Children Audits
* SERAF audit
* Child Protection/ Pre Proceedings Audit
* Core Assessment Audit
* Initial Assessment Audit
* Audit of Referrals

In relation to the Child Protection/ Pre Proceedings audit findings, the following key issues were identified:

1. Audit feedback highlighted that the quality of practice evident within the s47 process was good. Case Recording within the s47 documents was detailed and that staff had ensured that all children had been seen alone as part of the s47 investigation. It was also clear that wider family members had also been part of the process and that partner agencies had also been consulted
2. All auditors praised the quality of the conference process which included the quality of reports presented to conference. Child Protection plans were subject to appropriate level of scrutiny
3. The quality of core assessments within the service is improving. Social workers are making more reference to research as part of their analysis and clear recommendations are made at the end of the assessment process.
4. Improvements still need to be made in certain practice areas to ensure compliance with the pre- proceedings protocol. Apart from one case, auditors were unable to find examples of a completed genogram and ecomap. Also in cases which were heading towards proceedings, assessments of the wider family members had not started.
5. The quality of Family Intervention Team work within a number of cases was identified as having a positive impact on the well-being of the child and family.
6. Positive outcomes were evident within the audit in keeping children safe, improvements in Education and Health following the department’s intervention.

**Future**

The Quality Standards service are just in the process of integrating the Childrens and Adult Quality Assurance Framework documents into one overarching QA framework for Social Care.

Following the publication of the Social Services and Well-being Act the focus in Social Services is more than ever on achieving good quality social work practice; the updated Quality Assurance Framework has been developed to take account on the key messages from the SSWB act, in summary:

The need to achieving better outcomes for children/ adults, with less focus on about the pure measurement of processes, especially timescales;

The need to improve the quality of direct work and relationships with children/adults and their families;

The need to restore practitioners’ professional judgment;

An emphasis on achieving effective early help for families;

An emphasis on understanding the child/ adults experience of the child protection/ POVA system;

Reviewing performance indicators: less focus on process and more on outcomes;

The value of reflective practice and supervision and a learning culture