Quality Assurance Framework: Education, Health and Care Plans and SEND Support

Purpose

1. To ensure EHCPs are compliant across education, social care and health providers giving due regard to:
   - Sections 36-50 of the Children and Families Act
   - the SEND code of Practice
   - The Care Act 2014
   - Section 2 of the Chronically sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
   - Sections 17,20 and 47 of the Children's Act 1989
2. To ensure EHCPs provide a clear description of the child's special educational, health and social care needs and the provision required to meet those needs
3. To improve the experiences of children, young people with SEND and their parents/carers
4. To improve outcomes for children and young people based on the children/young people's needs and aspirations
5. To identify and share best practice identified from quality audits
6. To identify and provide training and development required by professionals contributing to/writing EHCPs and providing SEND support.

The four areas of quality assurance

The learning gathered from these four areas of assurance will support a holistic approach to ensuring EHCPs and SEND meet the purpose described above.
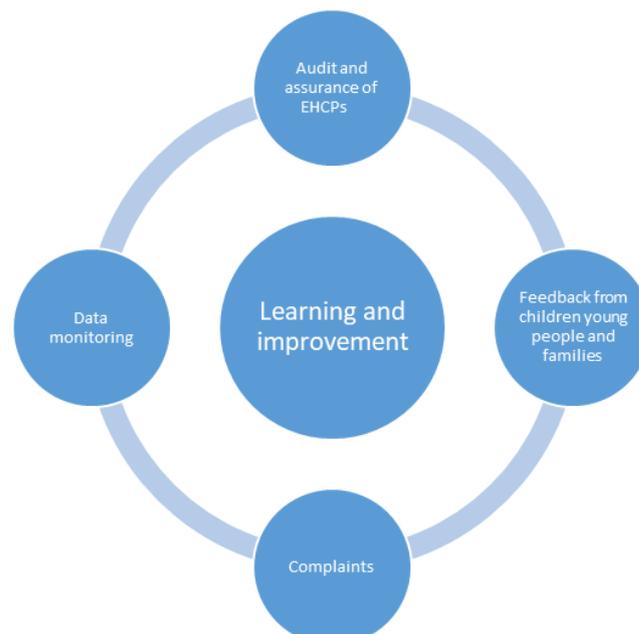
5 Levels of assurance

In order to ensure these standards are met, five levels of audit have been introduced which include quantitative, qualitative and impact approaches to Blackburn with Darwen's EHCP and SEND support quality assurance process.

Level 5
Governance

Level 4
Multi-agency assurance

Level 3 (Consent)
Impact and experience

Level 2
Compliance

Level 1
Individual service
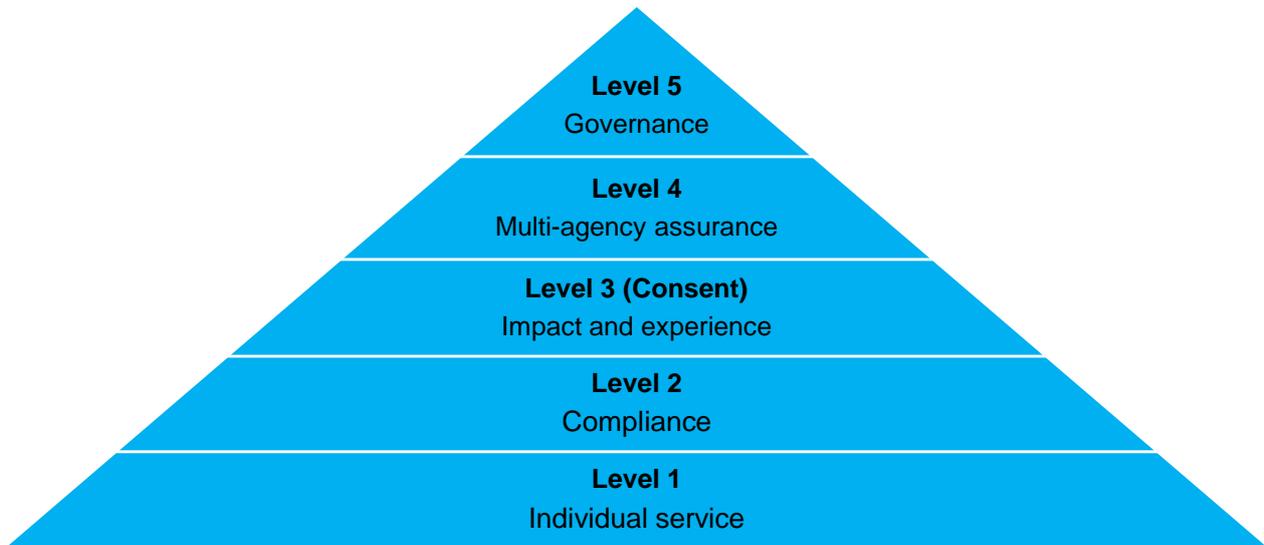
Themes

Thematic audits may focus on single or multiple themes. Areas include:

Vulnerable group	Broad area of need	Educational placement	Transition focus
• Looked after children • Care Leavers • Children in need • Educated at home • Educated otherwise than at school (EOTAS) • Children/young people in youth custody	• Social emotional and mental health • Communication and interaction • Cognition and learning • Sensory and/or physical	• In Borough/Out Borough • Mainstream/Special • Independent/Maintained • Alternative provision (AP) • Hospital provision	• Year 2 • Year 6 • Year 9 • Year 11 • Year 14

The assurance levels

Level 1:	Individual service
Focus:	Advice and guidance
Detail:	It is the expectation that all partners have their own quality assurance process to assure the quality of written advices prior to sending them to the Statutory Assessment Team for inclusion. Once the draft EHCP has been produced partners are responsible for assuring that the interpretation of that advice is accurate. Please refer to Appendix A for individual service detail.

Level 2:	Compliance
Focus:	EHC Plans
Frequency:	Termly

Sample:	Will consist of 20 new and/or recently amended transition phase plans and/or can be thematic.	
Participation:	Multi-agency	
Auditors:	• Deputy Director for Schools & Education • Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) • Designated Social Care Officer • Service Lead, SEND	• Statutory Assessment Team Manager • Principal Education Phycologist • SEND Support Services Manager • Advanced Practitioner Social Care • SEN Officers
Detail:	The multi-agency review panel, which include Parent Carer Forum representatives, utilises Invision 360's digital EHCP quality assurance tool which provides a systematic approach to auditing. Auditors follow a step-by-step process with built-in checklist criteria and example of 'what good looks like'. The tool has been based on national good practice documentation and the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice. It provides comparative data with other local areas and supports identification of areas for improvement and is used to support continual learning and development. Consensus meetings twice a year to ensure consistent decisions are reached on the level of quality.	

Level 3 (Consent):	Impact and experience	
Focus:	EHC Plans and SEND support	
Frequency:	Termly	
Sample:	100% of those selected to be audited at level 4 duplicating that series of audits' theme and focus (Subject to family/young person's consent).	
Participation:	Young person/family	
Auditors:	Coproduction & Engagement Lead	
Detail:	With the permission of the young person and/or family there will be a face to face or telephone discussion with the child and parent or carer, or young person to explore and understand their experiences of the process, whether the EHC plan or SEND support has made a difference to their lived experiences, their thoughts on what went well and what could have been better. Information shared will be incorporated into Level 4: Multi-agency assurance and will be formally analysed and included within the QA reporting framework. This will be used to improve services at both an operational and strategic level.	

Level 4:	Multi-agency assurance	
Focus:	EHC Plans and SEND support	
Frequency:	Termly	
Sample:	6 cases (2 x sessions of 3) will be selected with a mix of cases with EHCPs and SEND Support. These audits will be thematic and/or transition focussed.	
Participation:	Multi-agency	
Auditors:	• Service Lead for SEND Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) • Designated Social Care Officer • School Effectiveness Officer (SEND) • Principal EP	• Statutory Assessment Team Manager • SEND Support Team Manager • Relevant front-line professionals
Detail:	The purpose of the multi-agency assurance is to determine the level of progress and outcomes made by children and young people with EHCPs and those receiving SEND support. It also monitors whether professionals involved with the child/young person	

are involved sufficiently and whether the continuing/changing needs of children and young people are being met. Assurance findings will be used to inform service developments and support available to the individual.

Multi-agency assurance revolves around four key questions:
1. What is working well?
2. What difference have we made?
3. What are we worried about?
4. What needs to happen next?

Compliments and complaints
These will be taken into account as part of this Level 3 audit when selecting the thematic nature of the audit and to share best practice or determine areas for development.

Level 5:	Governance
Focus:	Reporting framework
Frequency:	Termly
Detail	An EHCP and SEND Support Quality Assurance Report will be produced termly as a minimum. This report will be routinely presented to the SEND Strategic Partnership Board and SEND Improvement Group and will be made available throughout the partnership's hierarchy as required. A family friendly version will be shared with participating families and highlights will be shared with the School Effectiveness Board.

Education

- SEND Support Service EHC advices are subject to a compliance audit and feedback is given to Advisory Teachers on areas for improvement and common themes for development.
- Education Psychology Team have introduced Invision 360 QEPA, a quality assurance tool specifically designed to quality assure education psychology advice provided for the EHCP process. The quality assurance exercise is scheduled to take place quarterly with areas identified as good practice or requiring improvement discussed with the Team.
- Invision 360 EHCP QA Tool is utilised by the Statutory Assessment Team on a quarterly basis to complete the multi-agency compliance detailed under level 2 of this framework.

Health

- Health advice is quality assured through NHS provider teams own internal processes. The DCO provide quality assurance workshops to support team's when implementing QA processes for statutory advices
- The DCO service undertakes a regular audit programme of health advice, specific to a particular professional discipline which results in the production of a themed feedback report shared with ICB SEND Lead, SEND Champions and the Service Leads on findings/improvements and developments. The audit now includes a check of the Local Offer page of the discipline being audited and feedback to the service with a reminder asking them to check and update their information

Children's Social Care

- The Quality of Social Care Advice is reviewed by the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) for SEND and the Advanced Practitioner for SEND. Social Care Advices are audited on a Monthly basis and feedback is given to the Social Care Practitioner on areas for development.
- The Regional DSCO Network complete Peer Audit Reviews of sample anonymised Social Care Advice to consider themes, trends and to share practice improvement across the DSCO network local authorities. Learning from practice is shared across the Social Care Practitioners in BwD.

Note: It is understood that this will be carried out as a face to face or telephone survey and as such the below is simply a proposed framework for the conversation. It is important to note focus needs to include information on what the family/young person feels is important to share.

What's working well?
- *Have your/your child's views, interests and aspirations been shared and acted on?*
- *Have the strengths and needs of you/your child been properly identified and well communicated?*
- *Do you feel the right support has been provided at the right time?*

What difference have we made?
- *How are you/ is your child/your family better off because of support/services provided?*
- *Has progress been made and/or goals updated because of this?*
- *Are you/is your child ready for their next steps/supported to take part within the community?*
- *Is there anything you are particularly happy with/proud of?*

What are you worried about?
- *What could we have done differently and why?*
- *What else could have helped?*

What would you like to happen next?
- *What, why, when and how?*