SESLIP Quality Assurance Leads Minutes

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| Date: Tuesday the 25th Of June 2024, 10:00 – 12:00 |

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| **ATTENDEES** |  | **APOLOGIES** |
| **Kent,** Kevin Kasaven – Chair |  | **Bracknell Forest,** Joanne Beaton |
| **Brighter Futures for Children,** Fiona Betts |  | **Bracknell Forest,** Kogie Perumall |
| **Brighton and Hove,** Justin Grantham |  | **Brighton & Hove,** Sharon Martin |
| **Brighton and Hove,** Tina James |  | **East Sussex,** Louise Carter |
| **Buckinghamshire,** Aman Sekhon-Gill |  | **Hampshire,** Amanda Meadows |
| **East Sussex,** Douglas Sinclair |  | **Hampshire,** Sophie Butt |
| **East Sussex,** Helena Wickens |  | **Isle of Wight,** Simon Dear |
| **Isle of Wight,** Anna Clarke |  | **Kent,** Gavin Swann |
| **Kent,** Hollie Brennan |  | **Milton Keynes,** Martin Clement |
| **Kent,** Leemya McKeown |  | **Milton Keynes,** Sophie Marshall |
| **Kent,** Lucie Osborn – Minute Taker |  | **Milton Keynes,** Melissa Small |
| **Medway,** Teresa Devito |  | **Slough,** Sandra Davies |
| **Oxfordshire,** Senay Nidai |  | **Southampton,** Stuart Webb |
| **West Berkshire,** Kirsty Benson-Allison |  | **Surrey,** Linde Webber |
| **West Sussex,** Beverly Berry |  | **Surrey,** Patricia Denney |
| **Wokingham,** Sara James |  | **Surrey,** Thomas Stevenson |
| **Portsmouth,** Kate Soutter |  | **West Berkshire,** Nicola Robertson |
| **Achieving for Children,** Shungu Chigocha |  | **West Sussex,** Laura Mallinson |
|  |  | **Wokingham,** Danielle McKenzie |

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| Next Meeting: Monday 16th September 2024 |

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| **AGENDA – 25.06.24** | | | | |
| **Item No.** | **Time** | **Item Description** | **Lead** | **Papers** |
|  | 10:00 – 10:10 | [Introduction and Apologies](#_Introduction_and_Apologies) | Chair |  |
|  | 10:10 – 10:30 | [QA Funding Request](#_QA_Funding_Request) | Chair |  |
| **3.** | 10:30 – 10:50 | [KCC’s Sector Led Improvement Programme](#_KCC’s_Sector_Led) | Leemya McKeown  Hollie Brennan |  |
| **4.** | 10:50 – 11:00 | [Southeast Region QA conference](#_Southeast_Region_QA) | Chair with input from group |  |
| **5.** | 11:00 – 11:10 | BREAK | All |  |
| **6.** | 11:10 – 11:30 | [Global Majority workforce retention and recruitment analysis](#_Global_Majority_workforce) | Chair |  |
| **7.** | 11:30 – 11:50 | [QA Updates from peers, lessons learned, QA related enquiries](#_QA_Updates_from) | All |  |
| **8.** | 11:50 – 12:00 | [AOB and information sharing](#_AOB_and_information) | All |  |

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| **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS** | | |
| **Action No.** | **Action Description** | **Lead** |
| **1a** | Update ToR and add “CP Chairs network” to September agenda. COMPLETE | Lucie Osborn |
| **1b** | Kevin to contact Mark Evans to arrange a meeting with the data lead for SESLIP to discuss updating the ToR with a standing agenda item from them. | Kevin Kasaven |
| **4a** | Kevin to present a timeline and suggested dates for the QA Conference at September’s meeting. | Kevin Kasaven |
| **7a** | Systems and processes for tracking actions to be added to September’s agenda. | Kevin Kasaven |
| **7b** | Tina to circulate an anonymised version of a social worker completing their own audit. | Tina James |

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| **MINUTES** |
| Introduction and Apologies |
| Kevin welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made. Kevin explained today’s meeting is the first time Kent County Council have chaired and asked if everyone had had the opportunity to review the Terms of Reference. The group read through the ToR.  Some members of the group were not aware of the CP Chairs network. It was confirmed Sharon Martin (Brighton Council) oversees both the CP network and the regional IRO network and normally has an item on the agenda.  **Action 1a – Update ToR Sponsor and Chair to KCC representatives. Reintroduce agenda item “CP Chairs network” to the September agenda.**  Tina discussed the information gathering exercise, explaining an extensive amount of time, involving other colleagues has been spent researching and collating information which is sometimes not discussed at future meetings or circulated / stored for reference. Aman agreed a lot of time was spent gathering and collating resources but commented she found the QA templates shared by other members helpful. Kevin suggested the SE data group analysis bring emerging themes to these meetings as a topic of discussion.  **Action 1b - Kevin will contact Mark Evans to arrange a meeting with the data lead for SESLIP to discuss updating the ToR with a standing agenda item from them.** |
| QA Funding Request |
| Kevin explained there is some SESLIP funding available for two projects involving peer-to-peer work. For funding to be approved a theme must be identified that everyone is experiencing. Kevin reviewed Ofsted reports for Local Authorities (LA) who experienced an ILACs inspection over the last 2 years and noted “management oversight” was mentioned consistently as an area of development for each LA.  Kent has its own analytics service, separate from the QA service, who were able to assist Kevin in producing a business case to the SESLIP board at the beginning of June asking for budget to lead on a management oversight project. Kent’s analytics team will be able to reach out to all SESLIP members to obtain data to complete a full analysis and develop lines of enquiry consistent across all 19 authorities. Data will be collated using various methods (surveys sent to QA colleagues (CP chairs, IRO's, LADO’s), plus service managers in addition to 1:1 interviews and group activities).  Following the data collection, Kent Analytics would analysis and produce Lines of Enquiry to be presented at a future SESLIP meeting for discussion and agreement. Further interviews, surveys and group discussions will take place with information collated and presented to this group, the SESLIP board and ADCS. Both a full report and executive summary highlighting the emerging themes will be made available.  Kevin proposes the group meets at a staff conference to discuss the learning from the analytical experience and the day’s sessions would create a tool which helps LA’s self-evaluate the quality of their management oversight. A published collective report would be available by April 2025.  Funding was signed off for one year with Kevin having to reapply for 2025/26 should the exercise be repeated. If repeated, Kent analytics would be able to identify data points, used to track improvements year on year.  Teresa reports Medway were recently doing work around management oversight, but fears data may appear misleading. Completion of Medway’s management oversight is in the 90 per cent range but the quality is hard to assess. Kevin explained audit activity would also be shared to help assess quality as well as quantity.  Aman approved of the idea and highlighted how two issues for her LA could potentially be woven into the process. The first is not about the task or quality but more the consistency across managers, especially within a large local authority. The second is around the balance between case supervision and personal supervision. One of their biggest workforce challenges is around resilience and the trauma social workers experience through working with families. Managers play a big part in providing personal supervision.  Kevin explained the analytics lead will be invited to this meeting in September to explain what is required from everyone and how you can be involved. Kevin asked if anyone had any reservations about the project.  Beverley asked for confirmation there would be no cost to Local Authorities taking part. Kevin confirmed the project is fully funded by the SESLIP funding. The only cost to participants would be their time. The SESLIP board, AD’s and DCS have given approval for this research to take place and they want full open transparency and engagement with the project.  Tina reported Brighton and Hove recently completed dip sampling on supervisions. Regular audits were telling her that 100% of the time management oversight and supervision was being graded as green. When reviewing the dip sample there was a difference in quality between the group supervision and the one-to-one supervision. Tina asked if the analysis would take into consideration all the different models of practice used across different LA’s. Kevin confirmed Kent analytics would use the initial scoping work to look at each of the LA’s individual quality assurance and practice frameworks which in turn would inform the lines of enquiries. |
| KCC’s Sector Led Improvement Programme/enquiries about peer reviews |
| Kevin reported Hampshire used to sit on the Sector Led Improvement Programme (SLIP), but they have now withdrawn, leaving Kent as the only representative for the Southeast.  Kevin reminded members SLIP is fully funded by DfE with Kent taking forward any areas of interest on behalf of this group.  Hollie Brennan, SLIP Project manager joined the meeting and shared the following presentation.    Sector-led improvement is about Local Authorities supporting each other to improve their children’s services. KCC have joined 19 other Las to provide peer support to other LA’s rated as *requires improvement* or *inadequate* or to LA’s rated as good but where there has been a significant decline in performance.  Six areas of practice have been identified as areas of support. Please refer to the slides for further detail.   1. Development and Implementation of a Quality Assurance Framework 2. Practitioner Core Skills Training 3. Children’s Outcome Analysis 4. Father Inclusive Practice 5. Services for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children 6. Social Connectivity   Hollie’s role will be to work with interested local authorities to help them build a business case to apply for funding from the DfE. Hollie has worked at KCC for seven years. Prior to this, Hollie worked in public health on the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Programme.  For further information about the SLIP programme, please email [SLIP@kent.gov.uk](mailto:SLIP@kent.gov.uk) |
| Southeast Region QA conference |
| Kevin asked if there was appetite to hold a Southeast region QA conference, inviting wider colleagues (CP chairs, IRO’s, LADO’s Practice Development colleagues etc.). A quest speaker will also be invited to give a presentation to inspire safeguarding work activity. Kevin hopes to be able to present the analytics findings referenced earlier, plus carry out some workshops.  The conference will be planned for March / April 2025 at a central location.  Members gave their endorsement.  **Action 4a - Kevin to present a timeline and suggested dates at September’s meeting.** |
| BREAK |
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| Global Majority workforce retention and recruitment analysis |
| In 2023, SESLIP undertook #thebiglisten research project. This research was conducted jointly with London and ascertained the views of over 100o social workers and managers. One key finding of the report is Black and Global Majority (BGM) social workers have a differential experience to their white counterparts.  The research suggests this is a very significant factor and influences BGM workers moving into agency social work, how they feel about progression opportunities and how they are affected by the cost-of-living crisis.  Following publication of the report, the SESLIP DCS group agreed (December 2023 meeting) the region would fund a project to identify practical ways to address negative experiences of BGM staff from across the region.  The proposal is to develop a regional network with a focus on improving the experiences of BGM social workers and managers. The initial project for this network will be to explore ways to improve experiences of leadership and management for BGM workers. We aim to develop a local authority diagnostic self-assessment tool to help authorities benchmark themselves against other authorities in the region. It will also employ a positive appreciation methodology to support authorities in developing an action plan.  The ToR for this group went to the SESLIP board on the 9th of June to approve its strategic direction. Kevin was approached to chair the group and all DCS were asked to identify individual representatives to sit on a steering group to review the findings and receive consultation support to consider the difficult questions to be posed.  KCC data analysis will receive data from all participating LA’s HR to understand numbers, for example, with respect to recruitment, numbers of GM to apply, shortlisted, interviewed and acquire a post. Numbers of HR processes experienced by GM staff. Staff survey and/or SW survey results for GM from each LA.  Analytics will collate everything and provide analysis on common gaps/areas of interests. LAs will be anonymized.  Analytics will create a positive practice survey for leaders and their staff to complete, like 360 feedback approach, to understand what works well and the challenges in landing messages to make the impact. Survey results will be anonymised similarly to above, so no LA is identified.  Consultants will complete preparation sessions with DCS and separately with ADs to support them in understanding the purpose of the research, to develop their willingness to be vulnerable to understand the impact of their leadership and that of the levels exercised beneath them.  Focus groups will be offered by Analytics to invite all SESLIP partners to encourage GM colleagues to participate. Questions posed will reflect learning from the surveys where further enquiries may be required. Consultants may provide guidance on the queries to be explored in the focus groups.  Analytics will publish a final report pulling together all the data, responses to the surveys and focus groups.  Aman asked if there would be an opportunity to review the report or would it be signed off and then shared? Kevin confirmed the report would be made available for comment from the 19 LA’s with a timeline provided to feedback, before publishing.  Kevin confirmed the report would emphasise good practice rather than humiliating bad practice.  Tina asked if representatives were selected yet. Kevin confirmed the ToR has only recently been sign off. Each of the LA’s DCS will be reaching out soon for reps. Once significant progress is made on the project, Kevin will bring back to this meeting to update. |
| QA Updates from peers, lessons learned, QA related enquiries |
| **Aman Sekhon-Gill – Buckinghamshire Council**  Aman reported John Coughlin from Hampshire recently completed an independent review of Buckinghamshire’s QA programme resulting in them moving into locality-based working. LADO dip sampling continues with separate CPA and IRO impact work. The challenge for Buckinghamshire remains family feedback. In September, auditors will begin doing that themselves with training taking place now.  Practice Methodology is the biggest piece of work influencing Buckinghamshire’s activity. A roll out program looking at strengthening families is currently being delivered by clinicians. Sessions include clinician training on trauma informed practice, motivational interviewing, reflective practice and lived experience.  Practitioners have already begun to change the way they write their analysis, focusing on writing to the child.  Diversity is an area which still requires work.  Sarah asked if there is a reginal appetite/agreement for writing to the child and if so, which areas of the child’s file is written directly to them?  Helena reported in East Sussex, writing to the child has been embedded approximately 60% of the time. A recent audit showed in some cases, where practitioners were framing their writing to be accessible to the child, the elements of risks started to get lost.  Kevin commented Kent have been writing to the child for some time now. A few cases have ended up in court where the judges have not liked the approach from an evidential perspective. Practitioners need to be mindful to continue to write the facts.  Senay stated Oxfordshire have had similar conversation about whether notes should be written to the child or whether they should carry on in a more traditional way. They ended up consulting young people who declared they did not have a preference. All they care about is people do what they say they are going to do. Oxfordshire have taken the decision to write *for* children and not *to* children. IRO minutes continue to be written to the child and have proven to be hugely powerful.  Aman confirmed Buckinghamshire have not taken a blanket approach. Their Champions group requested direct work and case summaries are written to the child but only by practitioners who have completed the training. The CPA also write their midway reviews to the child and are good practice examples to share with others.  **Tina James, Brighton and Hove Council**  Tina shared with the group, an Ofsted inspection was completed in March whereby Brighton and Hove were given Outstanding.  Eight cases were presented to the lead inspector along with their audit tools. He asked if they were “marking their own homework” due to social workers completing their own social work regular audits with their managers completing the moderation. Tina explained this is not the only way they audit. They also complete regular schematics, collaborative audits including multi-agency audits and thematic social work audits. Tina was able to evidence their active audit programme, however one of their weaknesses was the feedback from children and families and has been for several years. Tina welcomed any future discussions on how to improve children and family feedback.  Kevin reported marking our own homework was an area for improvement during Kent’s Ilacs inspection in 2022. Moderations were since changed to ensure moderators who know nothing about the case and are not within the line management of the allocated Team Manager are completing each of the 220 audits every two months within children’s social work and early help.  Senay reported they had similar feedback from their Ofsted inspection in February about their audit program and engagement from workers and families. Oxfordshire have built into the audit form a specific feedback section. As part of the audit, they ask the auditor to sit alongside the practitioner and contact the family so that they receive feedback in real time. At the end of the audit form is a reflective session for the practitioner to give further feedback.  **Helena Wickens, East Sussex**  Helena stated East Sussex had their Ofsted inspection back in December. Ofsted were impressed with their QA framework and case file auditing. The challenges East Sussex find is tracking actions and making sure the actions identified within the audits are making a difference at child level. East Sussex are in the process of developing different electronic tracking systems. Helena would welcome a discussion around tracking audits at a future meeting.  In East Sussex, the auditor is practice manager level, who work collaboratively with the allocated social workers. It is the auditor’s responsibility to separately contact the family for feedback. Feedback returns are low (around 30 to 40%) and this is mainly due to capacity.  **Action 7a: Systems and processes for tracking actions to be added to September’s agenda.**  **Action 7b: Helena asked if Tina was able to circulate an anonymised version of a social worker completing their own audit.**  Kevin reflected on a piece of work carried out by Kent’s analytics team, separate to quality assurance. Rather than reviewing each individual action, Kent reviews all audited cases over a one-year period to identify where children are in the pathway. They analyse how long after an audit took place, children CP / CHIN plans closed and whether there are any emerging patterns showing positive outcomes.  Aman explained once an audit is complete, it is shared with the relevant manager for them to review and add management oversight. It is the management oversight that is then tracked.  Regarding family feedback. Buckinghamshire have three ratings – 1. Does not meet good. 2. Meets good. 3. Exceeds good. The family feedback is cross-referenced with the audit feedback and where there are any discrepancies further analysis is undertaken to investigate.  **Fiona Betts, Brighter Futures for Children**  Fiona reported an area Ofsted recently explained requires improvement is the use of external auditors for both their routine quality audits and internal audits. Ofsted asked about Reading’s internal moderation of their external auditors.  Reading has the same struggle with family and young people feedback. This is embedded in their audit form, and they ask the auditors to collect the feedback with a strong focus on the service they receive.  Due to having smaller numbers, Reading use Mosaic to pull through recommendations from each audit into the next supervision session for that child. Reading also use a manual tracker showing each audit action for the responsible team manager which is checked weekly.  Fiona requested for an update on JTAI multi agency themed audits to be on the next agenda.  **Sara James, Wokingham**  Sara reported Wokingham have just introduced a new quality assurance framework for performance outcomes, looking at collaborative auditing with practitioners. They aim to provide the overall strengths and areas for development to sit with the team manager.  Sara explained Wokingham struggle with evidencing strategic actions that have been taken to tackle some of the repeated themes that emerge and welcomed hearing from others.  Kevin explained Kent’s COA (Children Outcome Analysis) programme.  In the run up to a COA taking place, the QA team will have several deep-dive meetings with senior leaders looking at data and audits to establish potential lines of enquiry. The QA team then spend up to a week in each area observing practice and providing real time reflection and feedback. During this week quality assurance will identify strengths and areas for practice and strategic development, helping to inform how district and area practice impacts the lived experiences of children to ensure their safety and well-being. The findings are presented back to the DCS, Directors and service leaders with recommendations. The business is held accountable with district leaders presenting back to our members their COA findings along with their next step plans.  Kevin welcomed delegates to contact Kent if they would like any support implementing their own COA process and suggested Leemya present the process in more detail at a future SESLIP meeting. |
| AOB and information sharing |
| Aman requested moderations to be added to the agenda.  All agreed today’s format worked well. Kevin welcomed any suggestions to how these meetings work.  Kevin thanked everyone for their time and closed the meeting. |

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| **SUGGESTED AGENDA – 16.09.24**  **Items in bold are standing items** | | | | |
| **Item No.** | **Time** | **Item Description** | **Lead** | **Papers** |
|  | 10:00 – 10:10 | **Introduction and Apologies** | Chair |  |
|  |  | **National Ofsted Issues** | Chair |  |
| **3.** |  | **CP Chair feedback from CP Chairs Subgroup** | Sharon Martin |  |
| **4.** |  | **Quality assurance and performance**   * **Area of challenge – all LAs investigate and report back on the area identified. Questions to consider could include:**   + **Process**   + **Performance**   + **What do you understand from this?**   + **How do you quality assure** * **Good practice as identified by QA Framework. Questions to be considered could include:**   + **What is it?**   + **How do they know?**   + **What makes this an area of good practice for this LA, what did they add to make it good practice.** |  |  |
| **5.** |  | **Topic for discussion – presented by participating LA or guest speaker.** |  |  |
| **6.** |  | How do you track actions to make sure they make a difference? |  |  |
| **7.** |  | How to improve feedback, any examples of good effective measures of acquiring feedback from family? |  |  |
| **8.** |  | JTAI - how are colleagues tackling this? |  |  |
| **9.** |  | Number of Moderations vs Number of Audits |  |  |
| **10.** |  | Kent COA process | Leemya McKeown |  |