SESLIP Quality Assurance Leads Minutes

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| Date: Friday 14th March 2025, 10:00 – 12:00 |

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| **ATTENDEES** |  | **APOLOGIES** |
| **Kent,** Kevin Kasaven – Chair  **Bracknell Forest,** Kogie Perumall  **East Sussex,** Douglas Sinclair  **East Sussex,** Michelle Hayman  **Hampshire,** Sarah Plummer  **Isle of White,** Fiona Bellamy  **Kent,** Leemya McKeown  **Medway,** Teresa Devito  **Milton Keynes**, Martin Clement  **Portsmouth,** Kate Soutter,  **Reading,** Otilia Broadhurst  **Slough,** Victor Mangwende  **Southampton,** Laura Trevett  **Surrey,** Linde Webber  **West Berkshire,** Nicola Robertson  **West Sussex,** Laura Mallinson  **West Sussex,** Vicky Richardson  **Windsor & Maidenhead**, Shungu Chigocha  **Wokingham**, Sara James |  | **Bracknell Forest,** Joanna Beaton  **Brighton & Hove,** Sharon Martin  **Brighton & Hove,** Justin Grantham  **Brighton & Hove,** Tina James  **Buckinghamshire,** Aman Sekon-Gill  **East Sussex,** Louise Carter  **Isle of White,** Simon Dear  **Isle of White,** Anna Clarke  **Isle of White,** Victoria Clottey  **Milton Keynes,** Sophie Marshall  **Oxfordshire,** Senay Nidai  **Reading,** Fiona Betts  **Southampton,** Stuart Webb  **Surrey,** Patricia Denney  **Surrey,** Tom Stevenson  **West Sussex,** Beverly Berry |
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| Next Meeting: Monday 16th June 2025 |

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| **AGENDA – 14.03.2025** | | | | |
| **Item No.** | **Time** | **Item Description** | **Lead** | **Papers** |
|  | 10:00 – 10:10 | **Introduction and Apologies** | Chair |  |
|  | 10:10 – 10:15 | **National Ofsted Issues** | Chair |  |
| **3.** | 10:15 – 10:30 | **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.** | Chair |  |
| **4.** | 10:30 – 11:00 | ToR Discussion | All |  |
| **5.** | 11:00 – 11:30 | Best way to obtain feedback from CP Chairs, IRO’s and LADO’s | All |  |
| **6.** | 11:30 – 12:00 | AOB | All |  |

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| **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS** | | |
| **Action No.** | **Action Description** | **Lead** |
| **2a** | Vicky to speak with the chair of the Quality Assurance Partnership group to see if the JTAI audit tool can be shared with this group. Vicky to then share this with Sian to circulate | Vicky Richardson |
| **3a.** | Invite Devika to the September meeting to share an update on the research. | Sian Fearn/Devika Menon |
| **4a** | Agenda Item – Ownership of audit actions | All |
| **4b** | Agenda item – Discuss a shared library of training and resources to help developing a baseline understanding of QA for staff. | All |

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| **MINUTES** |
| Introduction and Apologies |
| Kevin started the meeting with introductions made by all. |
| 1. **National Ofsted Issues** |
| Kevin asked the group if there have been any recent inspections,  Kate shared they had a recent focused visit on care leavers. It was an expected visit as it was an area graded “Requires Improvement” during the 2023 full inspection. It felt positive and they were prepared for it. Kate shared there was a focus on career progression for their PA’s and NEET for NEET, for the care experienced.  Kate highlighted the inspectors looked at early allocation of PAs. In Portsmouth, there is a focus for children to get their PA’s allocated at 16. Another area they focused on was how evident discussions with care experienced young people in their pathway plans.  In relation to P’s and career progression, Leemya questioned what Ofsted’s view on what is expected for this. Kate answered with what the internal structure looks like, it is acknowledged that most often, they are not qualified social workers and how they are then supported with training and opportunities. Kate shared there is not a career pathway however they have access to information regarding social work apprenticeships.  Leemya responded by asking if there was a key line of enquiry around the level of training for PAs as generally this area of work will not usually involve safeguarding issues due to them becoming adults. Kate responded there was a focus on MARMs (Multi Agency Risk Management) and how well these are embedded, although noted one of the inspectors did not know what this was. Kate shared there was a real focus on safeguarding, what this looks like in relation to partner buy in, the engagement with MARMs and what training has been provided to PAs. Kate highlighted in Portsmouth there is a Young Adult Safeguarding Transitions board, and inspectors were interested in how this supports young people moving into adulthood.  Kevin shared in Kent there is a struggle with getting Adult Social Care Services involved because the PA does everything. Kevin questioned Kate if she noticed Ofsted were critical about Adult Social Care, as they take the responsibility for Health. Kate shared she did not pick up on conversations regarding Adult Services. Kate noted although Ofsted were looking at early allocations of PAs, Ofsted were clear they were only looking at 18+ therefore they did not go back to look at the transition work and they did not look at involvement around Adult Services for the complex young people.  Kevin shared in Kent the overall transition strategy is becoming everybody’s responsibility. Kevin explained in Adult Services not everyone has been a looked after child or got an EHCP, therefore they are seeing many young adults coming through who do not have a history but high-cost care and support needs. Kevin questioned if there was a transition element that suggests PAs should be doing work from an earlier stage. Kate responded there was not a focus on this however noted the transition work starts at age 14, particularly for those who look as though they will require support for their complex needs. High-cost children are flagged at age 14 and referred in Adult Services for continuing health care and other elements.  Kevin shared most local authorities do not have this system in place at a young age and commented this is a good area of practice.  Linde shared it is an area of challenge. Surrey has a transitions team that link in with the disabilities team and other teams were there are children who might not necessarily meet the threshold for Adult Social Care because it’s so high. A mental health pathway is also being developed to help with the transition of safeguarding. Linde explained there is ongoing work with Adult Service colleagues to discuss complexities such as exploitation, adult consent and capacity. This work has mainly been driven forward by some learning reviews that linked in with child care-leavers.  Kevin encouraged the group to reflect on transition from aged 14.  Kate shared a main part of the learning is they picked up on elements that were already in place during the previous inspection but also the confidence in talking about care experienced and developing. Particularly with the PAs in them expressing pride in their work when they were meeting with inspectors.  Otilia shared there was a YJ inspection, which took place in the Autumn, felt very intense and was graded “Inadequate.” Ofsted focused on diversity and inclusion as they felt certain ethnicities were much more prevalent in the profiling of Youth Justice. Ofsted noted not enough was done to tackle this issue at a strategic level. Otilia shared another focus was on the link between YJ young people and EHCPs, SEND, part-time timetables, alternative provisions and exclusions. Otilia shared education colleagues were a lot more involved in this inspection.  Otilia highlighted there were recommendations in relation to victim support and multi-agency working where the YJ workers can work more closely with other services.  Otilia highlighted Ofsted met with IROs for the children in care who were known to the YJ service.  Otilia shared they are currently ending a JTAI regarding domestic abuse with a focus on 0–7-year-olds. Hertfordshire and Northumberland have had the same specific theme. Otilia shared it is the response for all the mass arrangements such as Health, Police and the Fire and Ambulance Service. Otilia noted there has been logistical challenge in co-ordinating 19 inspectors from different inspectorates and all the safeguarding partners. Otilia shared they focused on children who have experienced domestic abuse under 7 and noted some of the difficulties were in capturing the child’s view across all agencies. The inspectors also focused on Education, SEND, inclusion, diversity and how those needs are met and captured and the response from incidental strategy to conference or multi-agency meetings. Otilia shared everything has been reviewed by the inspectorate and for a large number of children who did not meet the criteria for the JTAI, their siblings were looked at and older children involved with the family.  Leemya shared Kent have recently had a thematic inspection on OOCD, although this was a group learning exercise, it felt equally intense. The feedback was direct and raw. Leemya there was a focus and recognition of OOCD being most of YJ work and if it should be considered as the traditional prevention and diversion. Leemya noted there were challenges from inspectors regarding risk levels and the level being assumed lower due to it sitting in out of court, despite patterns of offending. Leemya highlighted there was a further challenged in relation to partnership in the YJ Board.  Leemya highlighted for the QA unit, there was a clear limited nature in the ability to provide an understanding of effectiveness and outcome on their own. Highlighted the needs to quality assure from a multi-agency perspective and how audits can be completed as a multi-agency. Leemya provided an example of an evaluation of Outcome 22 which was good but did not account for all of the street community resolutions being completed by police and therefore only provided half the story.  Leemya noted diversity and inclusion was also a focus and expectation regarding profiling and providing bespoke support. This was explored not only through race but also the politics of experience such as if workers specifically ask about discrimination and their experience in relation to protected characteristics. In addition to this, inspectors were interested in how Kent provide training and support in relation to OOCD.  Martin shared they are currently preparing for both the YJ inspection within the new methodology but also the JTAI for domestic abuse. A multi-agency audit tool has been drafted for the partnership to take part in therefore there is a good awareness of how needs are protected, responded to and assessed in a domestic abuse space. Martin asked Otilia a series of questions: How prepared they were for the JTAI? What practice lessons can you feedback to the group? In the methodology for the JTAI there was a focus on unborn children, were there any picked up and what messages came back from inspectors with regards to that?  Otilia shared they did not feel prepared as they would have liked to have been, they did not have a recent multi-agency audit regarding domestic abuse. If this had been completed, they would have seen some of the themes and been a bit more prepared. Out of the 6 specific cases, 2 were unborn children.  Otilia also noted an importance of a more co-ordinated approach with GPs and including them in the conferences instead of just midwifes as Health is an umbrella of organisations.  Martin questioned if anything was highlighted in relation to probation and working with perpetrators and risk assessment. Otilia responded there was focus on sharing what they’re working on and updates from their work with the perpetrator back into the multi-agency forum.  Kevin explained in relation to MAPPA arrangements whenever there is an ILACs inspection, Ofsted review who the local authority has registered as MAPPA on the databases. Kevin shared during a 2014 inspection, it came to light Kent were not triangulating back with probation and whether the MAPPA details were updated, with there being data protection issues later once it has ended and people being removed.  Vicky shared some preparation completed for JTAIs. A model has now been used twice through their Quality Assurance Partnership Group with an audit dry run completed. This was created together as a partnership, and they followed the timescales of a JTAI to see how responsive they would be. Once the audits were completed, a practitioner learning event held by the panel with the frontline practitioners.  Vicky shared she would speak with the partnership chair to see if they are happy to share the audit tool with the group.  **Action 2a - Vicky to speak with the chair of the Quality Assurance Partnership group to see if the JTAI audit tool can be shared with this group. Vicky to then share this with Sian to circulate.**  Kevin shared Kent complete mock JTAIs and are currently doing one for domestic abuse to explore potential learning.  Vicky highlighted the importance of QA processes and completing this as a partnership. Vicky shared the learning is fed back through the partnership who hold action plans with assurance reports fed into this in one central place.  Kevin referred to families first and noted inspectorates will have to change their approach to be more efficient. JTAIs will become the new inspections because there will be multi-agency child protection teams. Kevin encouraged all to practice now as this is the trajectory, instead of waiting for statutory guidance. Kevin highlighted local authorities should start to adopt a multi-agency approach to auditing as when the families first model is implemented there will be a need for a multi-agency audit to quality assure as a local authority that the multi-agency is doing practice right as according to family help.  Nicky shared they had a focused visit on children with SEN who are out of school. There was some clear focus in relation to making sure everybody understood the process across the whole partnership, with all understanding each other’s roles, how everybody fitted together and the communication.  Nicky noted a focus was if a child has been excluded and not in school, what support looks like for that child. In addition to this, if a child was on a neuro-diversity pathway and waiting for an ASD assessment, there was a focus on what support looks like for them while waiting for results due to the long wait list.  Nicky shared there was a further focus on general escalations and safeguarding escalations. Another focus was on transitions between schools and teams. Nicky shared one of the inspector meetings was with IROs, virtual school and wider partnership members who explored the idea of when children leave care and what happens in terms of involvement with parents. This meeting recognised a lot of children and young people might gravitate back home and therefore are partners being involved early leading up towards the transition.  Nicky explains the inspectorate asked particularly how many of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children were NEET, how they were being supported and whether there were children who were NEET in an unregulated placement.  Kevin reflected on a LGSCO complaint, where a finding was made against Kent which had to be accepted. Kevin explained as part of CIN/LAC CP planning there is a need to react to risk. However if a child is subject to an EHCP, there needs to be an annual review as soon as the plan changes or the family needs to be advised of the risk and this means there will be a consultation period on the EHCP which can then be changed without an annual review. Kevin shared Kent had not picked up on this and reflected on social care and the engagement of families to co-produce a plan.  Kevin noted there are many children with suspected disabilities and how children and families can be supported while they are on the waiting list.  Leemya made an observation of Ofsted specifically bringing in IROs as this does not usually happen. Kevin agreed with this observation. Nicola Ofsted met with every team in their service such as children in care, family safeguarding and front door alongside the whole partnership.  Leemya highlighted the quality of practice is based on the connectivity between teams and service and this is a focus of the inspectorate. |
| 1. **Quality assurance and performance** |
| Kevin asked the group if they have any points to update on regarding recent thematic audits completed, potential audits or any issues relating to these.  Teresa shared an ongoing theme of most the monthly and thematic audits undertaken, is the quality of supervision. Teresa explained there is a team managers forum working closely with team managers due to findings such as quality of assessments not being discussed in supervision, with this often being signed off by team managers without oversight of the quality. Plans such as CIN, CP and CIC are not referred to in supervision with the supervision not driving improvement through looking at the plans. Teresa highlighted the themes or recommendations emerging through the audits relate to the quality of supervision and reflective discussion with the team manager.  Kevin acknowledged the group have participated in the research driven by SESLIP with KCC analytic researchers completing. Kevin shared out of 19 authorities 14 QA frameworks were received. Devika is impressed with the quality of the frameworks, and she has identified consistencies but also elements completed by only some LA’s and is currently pulling together her initial research. Kevin asked the group to keep the momentum up by attending focus groups if requested to do so. Kevin highlighted the research is due to be published in the summer.  **Action 3a – Invite Devika to the September meeting to share an update on the research.**  Linde shared the partnership are completing thematic audits with a recent one relating to educational neglect. The report is currently being pulled together but noted it was an interesting process as everyone completed an audit on the same child and the group met to share the learning and pull together themes. Linde shared it was helpful to have discussions with different colleagues such as Police, Health and Education. Linde reflected they are exploring how to share the learning further such as embedding it in their 7-minute briefings.  Linde referred to quality of supervision, and highlighted a recent audit improved a grading because of clear reflection within supervision of tracking the audit, the improvement plan, the actions within the improvement plan and the reflection with the Service Manager. Linde stated supervision is key to improvement.  Kate shared part of the feedback from the Care Leavers inspection highlighted a robust QA framework, however noted the audit tool was quite long. Kate asked the group if they could share their audit tools to aid her when editing hers.  Kate shared they completed a focus on supervision and included a staff survey which received 250 responses with some positive feedback regarding supervision. Kate highlighted a challenge of tracking audit actions and not seeing these evident in supervision. Kate asked the group to share any strategies they have in tracking audits actions and who these belong to and closing the feedback loop, ensuring these improve practice.  Kevin shared Kent’s supervision form has 2 sections, one which sets out previous actions and the other setting out new actions. When the form is finalised, the new actions are automatically fed through to the next supervision form into the first section.  Martin shared their recent supervision form has been in existence for a year. The previous form was created in July 2023 and used for 6 months and was since changed to the current one. During an ILAC inspection in October 2024, Ofsted stated they thought the audit form was clear. At the end of an audit form the actions go to a QA tray. Martin chairs a 6-weekly QA Board which tracks all outstanding actions, holding Service Managers and Heads of Service to account ensuring all actions are completed within their service. Martin explained inadequate audit actions are given a week to complete with Requires Improvement, Good and Outstanding given 4 weeks to complete.  Teresa shared their audit process is on Mosaic. Staff complete an audit, and it drops into the next person’s tray for moderation and then to the Head of Service for final sign off. Recommendations are automatically added to the supervision for Team Managers and Service Managers to review. Service Manager’s put case notes on the file to ensure there is oversight. Teams are targeted via audit scorecards to identify areas of improvement and Practice Development leads will then work with the Team Manager and team to improve practice.  Kevin shared Kent have a PowerBI dashboard which now includes supervision completed within 3 months as a KPI and this has led to a shift in these being completed. Kevin shared although the quality of supervision is important, it is equally important to have them taking place in the first instance.  Laura reflected on scorecards and highlighted if LA’s do not have Mosaic or similar systema, MS forms can be used to generates reports and build scorecards out of these.  Kevin shared Kent have identified data around school absence with a link established between children who are missing from school or homeschooled and being open to social care. Analysis will be undertaken to see how this can be improved. Kevin highlighted after the first discussion in January regarding the Children’s Wellbeing and School bill, there was an influx of referrals into Kent’s Front Door from schools, which led to a number of strategy discussions being held due to children being missing from education for a long time. Kevin shared Kent are developing an education strategy to build a community of schools to bring together academies, trusts and mainstreams schools. The aim is to link data from education so Social Workers can view this on PowerBI. |
| ToR Discussion |
| Kevin shared the ToR with the group.  Kevin asked the group if any amendments should be made to the attendees and no suggestions were made.  Kevin shared following Devika’s research there is a plan to hold an annual conference to bring together QA colleagues across local authorities.  Kevin noted these meetings are held 4 times a year and asked the group is this should be changed; no suggestions were made.  Kogie highlighted the meeting is chaired by Kent and was previously chaired by Hampshire. Kogie questioned if there is a rota basis that should be included within the ToR.  Kevin explained one local authority has been the lead for SESLIP with all the funding from DFE to SESLIP goes through to KCC, this was previously Hampshire. This funding is then distributed to other local authorities. Kevin noted Sarah Hammond is the DCS sponsor and Kevin is the chair for this meeting. Kevin stated if the group wish to take turns in chairing, then this could be accommodated.  Kogie reflected how the responsibility moved from Hampshire to Kent and if there is a plan to move from Kent to another local authority. Kevin confirmed there is no plan.  Kogie questioned what is meant by the funding being distributed to the Southeast region. Kevin explained the distribution is for a number of consultants and will pay for activities such as peer reviews between a number of local authorities, leadership training and the BALI course.  Kogie questioned where the SESLIP funding comes from. Kevin clarified the funding comes from DFE. The DFE recognised the Ofsted framework alone was not enough for local authorities to improve practice and therefore decided to regionalise local authorities in which SESLIP was created.  Kogie suggested as there is a link to DFE, if a message could be shared to for them to drive the messaged that audit actions belong to Children’s Services practitioners and team and not QA. Kogie highlighted within a few councils there is a challenge team’s feel it is for QA to close the actions and suggested strategic messaging could help clarify this.  Kevin noted the discussion around ownership of actions can be added as an agenda item at the next meeting.  **Action 4a – Agenda Item – Ownership of actions**  Kevin explained there is an IRO network and LADO network with both of these being local Southeast and National, however there was not a CP Network 4-5 years ago. The Southeast regional network was created in which Brighton are now leading.  Kevin suggested taking off the standing item regarding CP Chair feedback from CP Chairs Subgroup and instead discuss all CP, IRO and LADO feedback.  Kevin noted agreement from the group to remove the CP Chair feedback from the agenda as the network has now been established.  Kogie suggested under the focus section of the ToR if training for auditors or QA leads can be added, Kogie explained when new staff start, they need to have a baseline understanding of what QA is and audit reports. Kogie highlighted it would be beneficial to have a consistency in this approach across the local authorities and having it as a resource would be helpful.  Leemya agreed with Kogie in this being a challenge. Highlighted developing skills for QA is unique and having a shared library of training and resources would be beneficial.  **Action 4b – Agenda item – Discuss a shared library of training and resources to help developing a baseline understanding of QA for staff.**  Kevin shared the rest of the ToR with no suggestions of changes to be made. |
| Best way to obtain feedback from CP Chairs, IRO’s and LADO’s |
| Kogie questioned why the standing item only focuses on CP Chair feedback and not IRO or LADO. Kevin explained as there was not a regional network for CP chairs previously this group was not receiving feedback and therefore this is now a legacy item.  Laura suggested the leads of each network to provide a summary for each of the subgroups around their areas of focus and developments. Kogie agreed and suggested inviting them periodically to the meetings.  Kevin agreed with Laura and Kogie and suggested there is rota. Laura noted the summaries or presentations should be focused to ensure they share the main themes and actions. |
| AOB |
| No other business was raised and Kevin thanked all for attending the meeting. |

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| **SUGGESTED AGENDA – 16.06.2025**  **Items in bold are standing items** | | | | |
| **Item No.** | **Time** | **Item Description** | **Lead** | **Papers** |
| **1.** | 14:00 – 14:10 | **Introduction and Apologies** | Chair |  |
| **2.** | 14:10 – 14:20 | **Review Action Log** | Chair |  |
|  | 14:20 – 14:40 | **National Ofsted Issues** | Chair |  |
|  | 14:40 – 15:00 | **CP**/IRO/LADO **feedback (rotated)** |  |  |
| **5.** | 15:00 – 15:20 | **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.** | All |  |
| **6.** | 15:20 – 15:35 | Ownership of audit actions | All |  |
| **7.** | 15:35 – 15:50 | Discuss a shared library of training and resources to help developing a baseline understanding of QA for staff. | All |  |
| **8.** | 15:50 – 16:00 | **AOB** | All |  |