

## Education and Young People's Services



## Early Help and Preventative Services

### Early Help and Preventative Services Quality Assurance Framework

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## 1) Introduction

Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS) is committed to providing excellent services in partnership with internal and external stakeholders, children, young people and their families by developing an organisation that encourages continuous learning from both successes and challenges.

The EHPS Quality Assurance Framework sets out the mechanisms through which the quality of service delivery and its impact will be measured and evidenced to support the continuous improvement of working practices across EHPS. It is essential that the service ensures the highest quality and effectiveness of its delivery in order to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

The EHPS vision:

*'Every child and young person, from pre-birth to age 25, and their family, who needs early help services will receive them in a timely and responsive way, so that they are safeguarded, their educational, social and emotional needs are met and they achieve good outcomes. The service works to ensure that children and young people contribute positively to their communities and are actively engaged in learning and employment to achieve adult wellbeing and independence.'*

Quality assurance is a continual and dynamic process by which standards are set, achievements are monitored against those standards and the information is used to improve the services provided and undertake ongoing reviews.

## 2) Purpose

The Framework is a systemic integrated approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of delivery of services using a variety of approaches to enable EHPS to review the performance of the service against its aspirations.

EHPS aim to support the most vulnerable children, young people and families with a focus on delivering better outcomes by ensuring they are able to access the right services at the right time in the right place. They are placed at the heart of everything the service does, working in a more integrated way and avoiding, where possible, single service interventions which may lack coordination or result in wasteful duplication. Key priorities and outcomes are detailed in the Kent EHPS Strategy and Three Year Plan 2015-18.

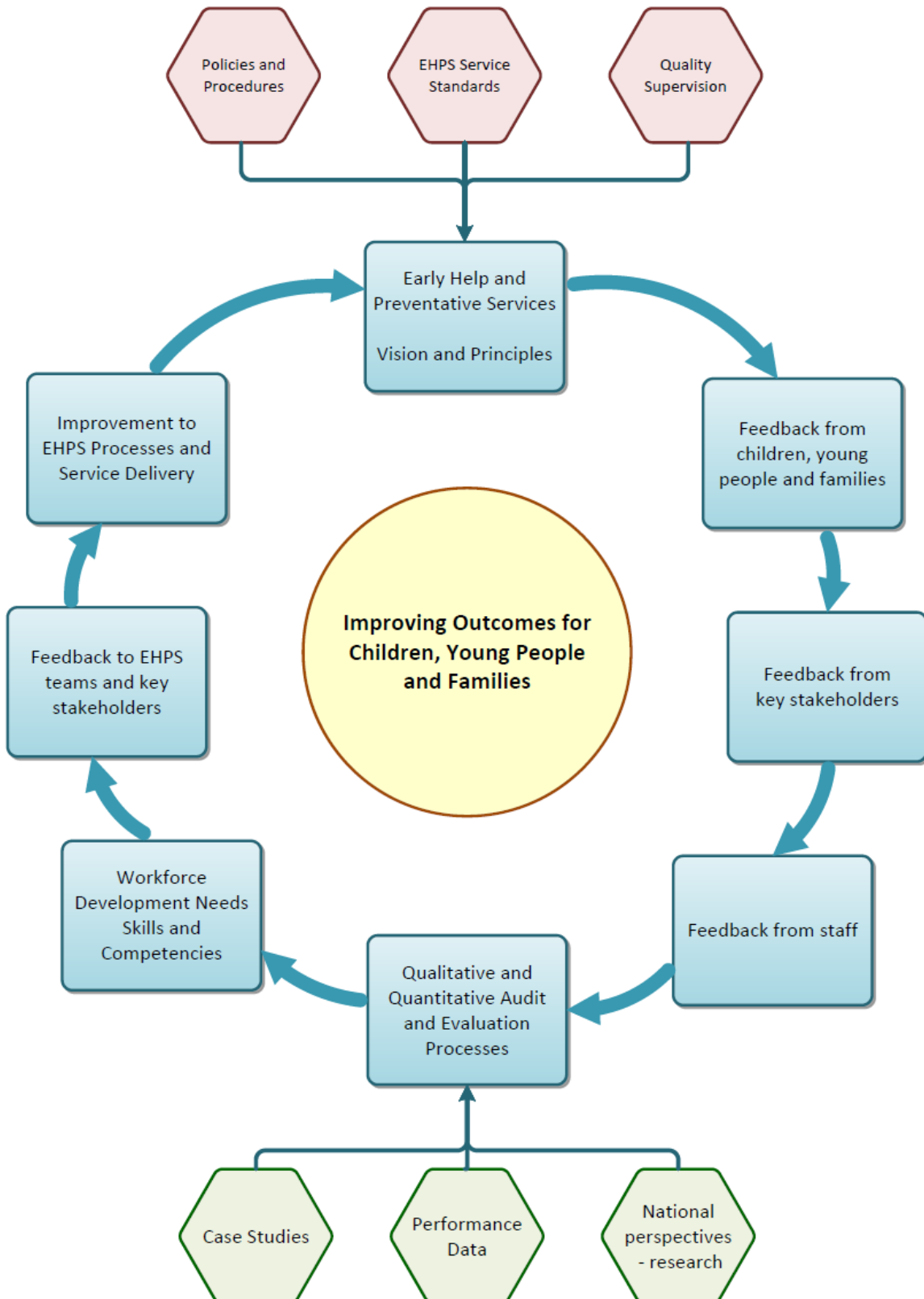
The key purpose of the Framework is to:

- Improve outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and families
- Ensure services are achieving consistently high standards
- Engender an organisational culture committed to learning and continual improvement
- Improve the level of feedback on the quality of services from key stakeholders - children, young people, families, internal and external partners and staff
- Support the continuous development of the core competencies, skills and knowledge of the children's workforce

The Framework is informed by key plans, legislation, performance frameworks and skills matrices shown in Appendix A, together with a range of feedback routes shown in Appendices B, C and D. These will be used as benchmarks for the quality of services and practice.

### 3) EHPS Quality Assurance Framework

The Framework, based on the improvement cycle, is both reflective and proactive.



By examining past service delivery against good practice standards and considering service users feedback about the services received and the experiences of key stakeholders, the impact and quality of service delivery can be measured.

High quality training, supervision and support is vital to ensure the quality and consistency of practice, to identify potential problems or issues in both practice and processes and to seek to resolve these before they become embedded as poor practice.

The Framework includes seven stages:

#### **a) Feedback from children, young people and families**

EHPS is committed to working with children, young people and families to ensure their needs, views and experiences are known and used to inform and drive the development and implementation of services. Families are encouraged to reflect on what is going well and what they would like to change and may be offered opportunities to self-reflect e.g. use of self-assessment tools in youth justice.

The quality assurance processes must provide regular opportunities for children, young people and families to give feedback on the service and practice through a variety of media including feedback forms (electronic and hard copy), online surveys, district youth forums and meetings.

The context in which children, young people and families provide feedback differs depending on the level and type of engagement in the service. It is essential that their voice and opinions are captured and evidenced accordingly. For intensive and specialist support this should, at least, be at each stage of intervention – assessment, formal review and end of involvement.

Any complaints received will be dealt with swiftly by the relevant manager following KCC complaints procedures. Lessons learnt will be used to improve services.

Any feedback received from children, young people and families should be shared with the relevant worker's line manager to support them in their coaching and feedback to individual staff.

#### **b) Feedback from key stakeholders**

EHPS works in partnership with internal and external organisations supporting families at universal, additional, intensive and specialist levels. All partners will be encouraged and given opportunities to feedback on practice and processes to support the continuous improvements for children, young people and families to achieve better outcomes. These opportunities should be at least every six months with organisations able to provide ad hoc feedback.

Feedback will be sought through district workshops and network meetings held three times a year, online surveys and consultations. Triage will be inviting feedback using an online form and capturing daily comments on a communications log. Partners will also be invited to engage in multi-agency audit processes providing opportunities to reflect on joint working and giving two way feedback.

Any feedback received from internal and external organisations will be used to inform developments and improvements in the services provided for families and in building robust

relationships with partners. Any complaints received will be dealt with swiftly by the relevant manager following the KCC complaints procedure and lesson learnt used to improve services.

### **c) Feedback from staff**

EHPS staff will be given regular opportunities to feedback and share experiences through service away days, workshops, roadshows and inspiration days. Feedback will also be gathered through ongoing operational meetings and supervision.

Online survey tools will also be used to gather feedback from staff, and to measure changes in staff opinions over time. The results of these surveys will be used to inform the content of future inspiration days to ensure a cyclical approach to staff and service development.

Staff will be engaged in quality assurance processes and contribute to improvements in practice and service delivery. Their contributions will inform the ongoing development of the EHPS Workforce Development Plan.

### **d) Qualitative and quantitative audit and evaluation processes**

Processes will be monitored via an audit matrix which will record dates of completion, review mechanisms and next steps.

#### Audit processes

A programme of quality audits across EHPS services will provide a clear cycle of audits to review the quality, consistency and effectiveness of process and practice when supporting children, young people and families across Kent. In addition, thematic and 'deep dive' audits will be undertaken to identify and develop an understanding in a particular service, area of practice or new development. In some cases these will be joint audits with multi-agency partners including Specialist Children's Services (SCS), Health and Education and Young People's Services (EYPS). Appendix B outlines all qualitative and quantitative audit and evaluation processes.

The audit processes may vary according to the type and level of support that is being provided (universal, additional, intensive, specialist) and will be an evolving process to be refined and developed through use and experience. Different types of audit will enable an understanding of the quality of case work, group work, programmes, activities and compliance.

Standardised tools will be used for all audits undertaken by EHPS. An online tool will be used to audit EHPS case work following the journey of the child, young person and family from receipt of notification to end of case work involvement reflecting the recording of process and practice. A checklist will be used for safeguarding audits to ensure the quality of operations in Children's Centres and Youth Hubs. An observation tool will be used for open access group activities.

All staff should be given opportunities to participate in the quality audit processes. District Managers will agree the involvement of individuals in peer audits and data quality audits. A series of Consultative Improvement Reviews will explore a range of themes in addition to audits and will be partnership reviews between district and area staff together with Information and Intelligence.

An analysis of findings is completed by the Information and Intelligence Service and will be shared with relevant managers to support them in coaching and feedback to individual staff and teams. The findings of any audit may be only part of the story and any feedback should

acknowledge this, inviting the manager and practitioner to reflect on the views expressed. Managers are responsible for any actions to be taken and building on lessons learnt.

Quarterly reporting will be given to the relevant Head of Service on the findings of the audits during the period for consideration and prior to discussion at Divisional Management Team.

Details of the audit programme and procedures are available:

<http://knet/directorate/Pages/Information-and-Intelligence.aspx>

### Evaluation processes

Ongoing evaluation is essential for the service to continuously improve. The evaluation process should be conducted by an Evaluation Team to include relevant Improvement Managers, Practice Development Leaders and Improvement Officers. Other key managers e.g. District Managers, Unit Leaders, Delivery Managers, Partnership Managers, Operations Managers or Leads should be invited, as necessary.

The evaluation of specific projects should also be conducted by an Evaluation Team to include relevant Information and Intelligence Managers, officers and other appropriate Managers and staff.

If the quality falls below the service standards, the reasons must be investigated by the Evaluation team and corrective action recommended and implemented. Management Information (MI) will be consulted where poor data quality is identified as not meeting the Data Quality Standards. The Evaluation Team should decide on appropriate action to take in the case of persistent poor quality e.g. assessments, data and limited improvement in outcomes for the child, young person or family concerned.

The evaluation will be informed by key statutory, national and local guidance and by quantitative information provided by MI from a variety of data sets and performance reports including the use and review of EHPS scorecards and dashboards. Research will be undertaken to consider other Local Authority approaches and perspectives along with local case studies evidencing good practice. The evaluation will build on both the positive and negative feedback received from service users and stakeholders to develop a clear picture of the areas for development.

The evaluation will be enhanced by the results and lessons learnt from the quality audit processes to define the areas for improvement to be considered by strategic and operational managers with key recommendations for change.

### **e) Workforce development**

The quality assurance processes will help to identify workforce development needs and areas for improvement in the competencies, skills and knowledge of individuals, teams, districts and the organisation as a whole.

The evaluation feedback will make recommendations which will be used to ensure the continuous development of the Workforce Development Plan and appropriate training opportunities. It will also support individual Personal Development Plans, team plans and inform operational managers of priority areas for consideration.

#### **f) Feedback to EHPS Teams and Stakeholders**

- **Front line Staff** – feedback to staff may be direct from children, young people and families or through line managers providing an opportunity to reflect on the views and comments received from children, young people, families and stakeholders and the outcome of any quality audit processes. Further feedback and discussion at team meetings should consider lessons learnt, the impact on daily practice and workforce development needs.
- **Operational Managers** – managers will be leading and actively engaged in the quality assurance processes across the district. Any feedback from children, young people, families and stakeholders will routinely be shared with operational managers with formal feedback on a monthly basis. Managers are responsible for reviewing the information received, consider the outcomes and ensure actions are taken where necessary. Managers should share the findings of audits, evaluation process and feedback from children, young people and families with their teams and all staff groups, as appropriate.
- **Divisional Management Team** – quarterly reporting will be given to the relevant Head of Service on the findings of the audit processes. Regular reporting from Information and Intelligence will include a quarterly evaluation report defining the areas for improvement to be considered by the Divisional Management Team with key recommendations for change. The half yearly report on the quality and effectiveness of EHPS will be drafted for approval by the Divisional Management Team prior to sharing with the Kent Safeguarding Children's Board (KSCB).
- **Key Stakeholders** – regular feedback, at least quarterly, will be given to partners to ensure they are kept update with progress and changes. Information will provided to schools and external partners via the KELSI E-Bulletin and shared through district operational and network meetings, commissioned service forums and local Boards. Feedback to internal teams and services within EYPS, SCS and Public Health will be shared through strategic forums and with operational managers across the district on a monthly basis or as appropriate. A report providing a summary of findings on the quality and effectiveness of EHPS will be provided to the KSCB Quality and Effectiveness Sub Group every six months for discussion with key stakeholders and to support improvements across the children's workforce.

#### **g) Improvement to EHPS**

It is vital for EHPS to continuously evolve and develop processes and practice to ensure the service is meeting the needs of the most vulnerable children, young people and families in Kent. The decisions taken by the Divisional Management Team may result in improvements and changes to EHPS. Working closely with operational managers, any improvements or changes will be designed and implemented and clearly communicated to internal and external stakeholders.

### **4) Roles and Responsibilities in supporting quality assurance**

Everyone has a role to play in improving the quality and effectiveness of the service from front line practitioners to senior managers.

#### Front line staff

One of the key principles to this Framework is that front line staff need to be engaged in the process of quality assurance. The process must be inclusive and working with staff who are well placed to assess the quality of what they do, understand any restrictions in delivering quality and to reflect and learn from the experience.

Front-line staff are best placed to obtain feedback from service users and to gather feedback when working with other organisations. Opportunities may be available for staff to be directly involved in quality auditing e.g. peer audits.

All staff must adhere to the EHPS Recording Policy and be aware of the EYPS Data Quality Policy which ensures the quality of data and information evidencing the quality and effectiveness of the work with families. The quality audit processes are based on the recording of process and practice.

### Operational managers

District Managers are responsible and accountable for quality assurance in their districts. They must ensure feedback is obtained from service users and will regularly liaise with key stakeholders providing opportunities for feedback and discussion to prevent problems and resolve issues.

Practice Development Leaders have a key role in leading the quality audit programme in the districts. They will work closely with District Managers and other managers to ensure an effective programme of quality audits is undertaken and completed in line with the agreed plan.

### Information and Intelligence Service

Improvement Managers, supported by Improvement Officers, will project manage the EHPS Quality Assurance Framework by enabling and supporting strategic and operational managers to ensure its effective implementation.

Improvement Managers will have oversight of the quality assurance processes which will be planned and jointly managed with Practice Development Leaders. They will maintain the programme of audits, the audit tools, undertake analysis of findings to develop an 'evidence led' approach when producing reports following the evaluation process ensuring feedback to strategic and operational managers and front line staff, where appropriate.

### Strategic Managers

The Divisional Management Team is responsible for strategic decision making to support the continuous improvement and development of the service through learning from both successes and challenges. They will ensure the appropriate strategic reporting to the KSCB and other key strategic Boards and Members. Working closely with KCC Internal Audit, they will support colleagues who may undertake an independent and objective evaluation of our ability to accomplish our business objectives and manage risks.

Heads of Service are ultimately accountable and responsible for the operational function of their area in ensuring the highest quality standards and effectiveness across the service to meet our objectives to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. Working closely with Information and Intelligence Service, they will ensure the implementation of this Framework and agree the programme of quality audits in their area.



## Appendix A

EHPS key plans, legislation, performance frameworks and skills matrices the service will use as benchmarks for the quality of services and practice:

- EYPS Vision and Priorities for Kent, 2015-18
- EHPS Strategy and Three Year Plan, 2015-18
- EHPS Workforce Development Plan, 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015
- Ofsted – Inspection criteria for Safeguarding and Children’s Centres
- HMIP – Inspection criteria for Youth Justice
- Public Health Outcomes Framework for England, 2013-16
- National Standards for Youth Justice, 2013
- National Occupational Standards for Youth Work, 2014
- Modern YOT Partnerships, 2013
- Children’s Act 2004
- Education Act 1996 and 2006 and subsequent Regulations

## Appendix B

### Qualitative and quantitative audit and evaluation processes

Type	Activity	When	Who
EHPS whole service	EHPS Scorecard	Monthly analysis of key performance indicators at Kent and district level	Divisional Management Team
	Casework Tracker	Monthly monitoring of caseload, case throughput and effectiveness	Divisional Management Team
	Sustainability Matrix	Monthly monitoring of service transformation and improvement	Divisional Management Team
Triage	Audit of Triage advice and guidance	Six weekly audit of decisions, thresholds and feedback – 10%	Triage Manager Triage Unit Leaders
	Audit of Missing Persons Process and Return Interviews	Monthly audit of return interviews and decisions taken	Triage Manager
	Review of feedback from notifiers and districts	Monthly review of feedback with collation of key findings for action	Triage Manager
Early Help Units	Audit of intensive case work	Six weekly audit programme of 10% of cases in the last six months focused on process and practice	Unit Leaders – pilot Practitioner – peer audits Triage involvement
	Audit of Unit meetings	Monthly peer audit of Unit meetings against framework standard – bronze, silver, gold	Unit Leaders
	Audit of cases closed with outcomes not achieved	Monthly audit of cases	Practice Development Leaders
	Data Quality Audit	Monthly reporting – EHM Three monthly audit of data quality	MI reporting Senior Support Officer
	Deep Dive Audits	Six monthly deep dives focusing on specific areas of need or concern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Step down cases</li> </ul>	I and I, Practice Development Leaders, Directors, Heads of Service, District Managers
	Thematic Audits	Six monthly thematic audits focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New practice e.g. Signs of Safety, young carers</li> </ul>	I and I, Practice Development Leaders, Directors, Heads of Service, District

	<p>Casework Trackers</p> <p>Sustainability Matrix</p> <p>EHPS Scorecard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint working e.g. joint audits with schools, health providers, SCS</li> <li>• Voice of child, young person and family</li> <li>• NEETs</li> </ul> <p>Daily/Weekly monitoring of caseload, case throughput and effectiveness</p> <p>Monthly updating and monitoring of service transformation and improvement</p> <p>Monthly analysis of key performance indicators at district level</p>	<p>Managers and MI. Joint audits with multi-agency partners, as appropriate</p> <p>Heads of Service, District Managers, Unit Leads, Early Help Workers</p> <p>Heads of Service, District Managers, I and I moderation</p> <p>Heads of Service, District Managers, Unit Leads</p>
<p>Open Access – Children’s Centres and Youth Hubs</p>	<p>Safeguarding Audits for each children’s centre or youth hub</p> <p>Audit of additional targeted case work</p> <p>Observation and evaluation of group activities</p> <p>Data Quality Audit</p> <p>Thematic Audits</p>	<p>Yearly audit of each centre or hub</p> <p>Six weekly audit programme of 10% of cases in the last six months focused on process and practice</p> <p>Six monthly audit of each centre Evaluation feedback of activities</p> <p>Monthly reporting – eStart Three monthly audit of data quality</p> <p>Six monthly thematic audits focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New practice e.g. open access</li> <li>• Joint working e.g. joint public health audits with children’s centres</li> <li>• Voice of child, young person and family e.g. youth participation</li> </ul>	<p>Delivery Managers with I and I support</p> <p>Delivery Managers pilot Practitioner – peer audit</p> <p>Delivery Managers and senior workers supported by I and I</p> <p>MI reporting Senior Support Officer</p> <p>I and I, Practice Development Leaders, Directors, Heads of Service, District Managers, Delivery Managers, Senior workers and MI. Joint audits with multi-agency partners, as appropriate</p>
<p>Youth Justice</p>	<p>Audit of Statutory case work</p>	<p>Six weekly audit programme of 10% of cases in the last six months</p>	<p>Youth Justice Managers with I and I support</p>

	Data Quality Audit	Monthly reporting - Careworks Three monthly audit of data quality	MI Senior Support Officer
	Deep Dive Audits	Six monthly deep dives focusing on specific areas of need or concern	I and I, Directors, Heads of Service, Youth Justice Operations Manager
	Thematic Audits	Six monthly thematic audits focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New practice e.g. Signs of Safety, young carers</li> <li>• Joint working e.g. joint audits with SCS</li> <li>• Voice of child, young person and family</li> <li>• Re-offending</li> <li>• NEETs</li> </ul>	I and I, Directors, Heads of Service, Youth Justice Operations Manager, Youth Justice Practice Managers and MIU. Joint audits with multi-agency partners, as appropriate
PRU, Inclusion and Attendance (PIAS)	Audit of PIAS pathway and outcomes	Six weekly audit programme of 10% of school requests in the last six months	Senior Education Lead, Area Education Leads with I and I support
	Data Quality Audit	Monthly reporting - Impulse Three monthly audit of data quality	MI Senior Support Officer I and I, Senior Education Lead, School Liaison Officers, Inclusion and Attendance Advisers
	Deep Dive Audits	Six monthly deep dives focusing on specific areas of need or concern e.g. levels of attendance	I and I, Directors, Heads of Service, Senior Education Lead, School Liaison Officers, Inclusion and Attendance Advisers, District Manager
	Thematic Audits	Six monthly thematic audits focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New practice e.g. SLO</li> <li>• Joint working with schools and across EHPS</li> <li>• Group and project work</li> <li>• Voice of child, young person and family</li> </ul>	I and I, Directors, Heads of Service, Senior Education Lead, School Liaison Officers, Inclusion and Attendance Advisers, District Manager, Triage Manager and partners as

	Exclusions Data	Monthly data pack includes Kent and district performance, school level data, context, and information about numbers of days lost and number of young people with 3+ fixed term exclusions.	appropriate Head of Service, Senior Education Lead, School Liaison Officers, Inclusion and Attendance Advisers, District Manager
	PRU Dataset	Termly (6x per year) pupil level and summary data with context and EHPS involvement	Head of Service, Senior Education Lead, PRU Heads

## **Appendix C**

### **Young People and Key Stakeholders feedback**

Feedback from young people will be gathered in the following ways:

- Viewpoint – young people survey tool (currently used for Youth Justice but there are plans to extend its use across EHPS)
- Cross-directorate working group exploring how best to facilitate the voice of the child being heard.
- Kent Youth County Council
- Views of young people central to planning of activities within Youth Hubs
- Observations of children’s responses and behaviour used to inform development of activities in Children’s Centres
- The views of the whole family, including children and young people, are considered and recorded throughout intensive case work, in the assessment, family plan and subsequent reviews and case closure. This is a core element of the Signs of Safety approach which is being embedded in EHPS.
- Conversations with children and young people are encouraged using focus cards and other tools.
- A Schools Working Group has been established to seek the views of schools about all aspects of Early Help work, and meets regularly to improve joint working and an increased understanding of the Early Help offer and any improvements that need to be made to service delivery or communication.
- Regular meetings with Health partners take place to ensure a coordinated approach to delivering Early Help services, and to provide opportunities for two-way feedback.

## **Appendix D**

### **Staff feedback**

Feedback from staff will be gathered in the following ways:

- EVP survey led by HR
- Staff supervision/Personal Development Plans/Total Contribution Pay
- EHPS staff training survey
- Inspiration days and roadshows
- Team meetings