



Centre for excellence
for Children's Care and Protection



Aberlour Sycamore Practice Profile

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building brighter futures

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Introduction

Practitioners from Aberlour Sycamore, with support from CELCIS, have worked together to develop a Practice Profile for high-quality residential childcare.

A Practice Profile is a way of describing the core elements of best practice, in accordance with the theories which underpin the approach Aberlour Sycamore take to caring for children. The Practice Profile articulates best practice, in a way which is teachable, learnable and doable, and includes clear examples.

As a tool to support best practice, the Sycamore Practice Profile identifies 8 areas of practice that are described in a way that is understandable and adults can connect with. The Practice Profile is a document that enhances opportunities for continuous learning and professional development (including through supporting direct observation of practice, reflection and feedback), as we work to provide the best possible care for our children.

The theory

Overall, the PLACE approach (Playfulness, Loving, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy, drawn from Dyadic Developmental Practice) underpins the Aberlour Sycamore practice articulated in this Practice Profile.

The practice

8 core components for practice:

1. Daily care
2. Building Rapport and Relationships
3. Offering Emotional and Developmental Support
4. Discovering and Uncovering Potential
5. Listening and Communication
6. Resources
7. Working Within a Shared Framework
8. Recording

Under each core component, detailed description of practice is set out, making clear the difference between ideal practice, progressing practice, and underdeveloped practice. This helps to translate the theory underpinning Aberlour Sycamore's work directly into day-to-day practice.

By practicing consistently in alignment with the best practice articulated in the Practice Profile, we will support our children and young people to reach their full potential, and our vision that our houses provide warm, loving homes where everyone laughs, learns, grows into their future and is treasured always, will be realised.

Aberlour Sycamore Values

These are the guiding principles that underpin all that we do. Our values inform our interactions with our children and families we work with, external partners and stakeholders, and importantly, with one another as colleagues. We use them every day and hold key decisions up against them to ensure we live and work to them.

Respect means acting in a way that shows we care about the feelings of one another, and that we listen to one another's opinions. As a person-centred organisation that stands up for every child's right to flourish, a culture of respect is inherent in all of our work.

Integrity means being courageous and brave enough to speak up when we know we need to. We recognise that to fully represent the concerns of Scotland's children and families, we may have to go against the grain or take difficult decisions. We will strive to act with integrity at all times.

Innovative means finding new, efficient and unique ways to do things. We are committed to learning and developing improved ways of helping Scotland's most disadvantaged children and families earlier and faster. We know that children and families are experts in their own lives and can help us to become the best possible innovators. We will use that expertise to drive our ideas and our thinking.

Challenging means testing ourselves and those around us. It means not accepting the status quo and will require us to provide equality of opportunity within our organisation and promote it in wider society. Within Aberlour Sycamore, we will challenge ourselves to be the best we can be and will listen carefully to children and families about their experiences. Externally, we will use our campaigning voice to strengthen policies which promote equal opportunity and equality and ensure that our families' voices are heard. "In adhering to our values, we will keep people at the centre of all that we do – because we believe that our children, young people and families deserve the chance to flourish."

Our Vision

'Our homes provide warm, loving homes where everyone laughs, learns, grows into their future and is treasured always'.

Core components for practice

1. Daily care

We ensure children and young people are always at the centre of their own care, that they can participate fully, and adults advocate for them. Children and young people are included in discussions and skilled assessments about their evolving developmental needs. Norms, boundaries and expectations are co-produced and clear.

Ideal practice	Progressing practice	Under-developed practice
<p>1. Supports and prepares our child or young person to attend any meetings about them.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Engages with our child or young person to determine what would assist them to fully participate i.e. ensures timings of meetings do not interfere with school/work/college/leisure pursuits; liaises with family members to ensure they are available to attend if appropriate.</i> • <i>Helps our young person to understand any reports, plans and views that will be discussed at the meeting.</i> • <i>Reviews records and considers what information will be shared from the perspective of the adults living with the young person – shares these views with the young person.</i> 	<p>Supports our child to attend meetings but does not always help our child to prepare.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is aware of timing conflicts but may not act to rearrange meetings.</i> • <i>Inconsistent completion of assessments and/or demonstrates limited understanding of the importance of this in progressing our child or young person’s plan.</i> • <i>Inconsistent engagement, support and preparation with our young person ahead of meetings</i> 	<p>Does not support or prepare our child to attend meetings, does not prepare relevant paperwork, does not advocate or represent our child or young person’s views.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No consideration of whether meetings interfere with other activities; does not contact family members.</i> • <i>Fails to undertake or complete assessments and/or demonstrates no understanding of the importance of this in progressing our child or young person’s plan.</i> • <i>Does not take the time to share with our young person the details of any reports, plans or information that will likely be shared during a meeting</i>
<p>2. Takes a rights-based approach and where necessary, advocates on behalf of our child or young person in all settings, and accurately relays our child’s or young person’s views.</p>	<p>Lacks confidence to act as our child or young person’s advocate, or inconsistently/inaccurately represents our child’s views.</p>	<p>Does not advocate or represent our child or young person’s views.</p>

<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Takes time to fully understand our child's views and can verbally represent this to others in a range of contexts.</i> • <i>Ensures that our child or young person's views are clear within their record.</i> • <i>Recognises and understands the role of specialist advocacy organisations.</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is not consistently prepared to represent our child or young person's views, leading to gaps in information.</i> • <i>Is persuaded by others' opinions in meetings preventing them from advocating on our child's behalf.</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Never prioritises seeking our child's views or seeks to help them participate in meetings.</i> • <i>Makes assumptions about what our child needs or wants.</i>
<p>3. Delivers on actions agreed in our child's Support Plan, doing so in a creative and flexible manner that meets the needs of our child, and can articulate this clearly in both written form (e.g. in Support Plans) and verbally (e.g. in meetings). Is able to reflect, review and adapt when approaches do not work.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Connects children and young people with a range of options in order to meet their needs such as education provision, specialist mental health services, hobbies, interests and dreams.</i> • <i>Always seeks to find alternative solutions to challenges i.e., facilitating a baking session for a child or young person with their parent/carer who would otherwise find it difficult to connect.</i> • <i>Always seeks to support our child or young person to develop skills that are useful for the future i.e., budgeting, domestic and administrative tasks</i> 	<p>Generally, acts in accordance with our child's plan. Is aware of creative/particular individual approaches, which work well, but may not always be able to use them.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will progress our child's plan but needs support to consider creative approaches to meet our child or young person's needs.</i> • <i>Sometimes seeks to support our child or young person to develop skills that are useful for the future i.e. budgeting, domestic and administrative tasks.</i> 	<p>Failing to act upon required plan, does not use or discuss creative approaches or individualised support.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does not progress identified tasks in the plan to meet our child or young person's needs.</i> • <i>Can offer no imaginative solutions to challenges or see that creativity might serve a purpose in supporting a child or young person.</i> • <i>Never seeks to support our child or young person to develop skills that are useful for the future i.e. budgeting, domestic and administrative tasks.</i>

<p>4. Can assess risk effectively and adaptively, ensuring safety but enabling risk taking where developmentally appropriate. Can evidence evolving risk assessment in Understanding Me Document, Support Plans, and plans and talks this through with our child or young person.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Takes informed decisions in consultation with colleagues and other partner agencies to consider when to support our child or young person to take developmentally appropriate risks, such as travelling alone on public transport or meeting friends in town.</i> • <i>Supports our child to take risks in an enabling context and to develop contingency plans when doing so.</i> • <i>Always communicates up to date risk assessments clearly and articulately both verbally and in writing.</i> 	<p>Understands risk but struggles to enable developmental risk-taking. Errs on the side of caution and lacks confidence or risk appetite. Is inconsistent when making decisions and communicating changes to Support Plans and Understanding Me Document.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has a notion of individual risk for a child or young person but fails to see risk assessment as something which will shift and change for our child or young person.</i> • <i>Does not support our child to take calculated developmentally appropriate risks.</i> 	<p>Is not able to account for risks. No evidence of risk assessment. Is unwilling to accept any level of risk due to fear, or due to taking a punitive approach. Tolerates extreme and developmentally inappropriate risk-taking behaviour.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Blames our child or young person for their behaviour and uses this as reason to maintain a risk averse stance i.e. stopping them from seeing friends, leaving the house etc.</i> • <i>Fails to see risk in situations i.e. shows no concern regarding a child or young person who has been sexually exploited being picked up by older men in cars.</i>
<p>5. Always supports our child or young person to have choice and control in different situations as appropriate. Can communicate this to our child or young person and takes into account the developmental needs of our child to assist them to fully participate in this process. Recognises the importance of learning through play.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is able to make informed and collaborative decisions about our child or young person's ability to fully participate in all aspects of their care i.e. in support plan meetings, and in daily care.</i> • <i>Can adapt to our child or young person's developmental stage to enhance participation</i> 	<p>Can support our child or young person with choices at times but does not do this consistently. Needs support to consider the full range of developmental needs for children and young people.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sometimes assists our child or young person with control over choices but sometimes prioritises other aspects of care.</i> • <i>Needs support to think of ways to adapt to our child or young person's developmental needs in this context.</i> 	<p>Is unable to support our child or young person with choice and control. Demonstrates no understanding of the range of developmental needs of children in this context.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does not seek our child's participation in choice and control or view this as relevant.</i> • <i>May actively close down opportunities for our child or young person to participate in making choices by making choices on their behalf without consulting them.</i>

<p><i>in making choices i.e. using art, play, drama and storytelling.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>May overwhelm our child or young person with choices, without providing any safety, containment or support to make decisions.</i>
<p>6. Consistently seeks to include children and young people in development of house norms, rhythms and routines creating a family atmosphere and connection for our children, young people and adults.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regularly talks with children and young people to review house norms, rhythms and routines as a group.</i> • <i>Uses creative methods such as Aberlour’s Personalisation Toolkit to ensure all children and young people are included in this process.</i> • <i>Understands that this encourages relationship, connection and continuity.</i> • <i>Looks after and takes care of the physical environment within the house ensuring a clean, tidy welcoming space is maintained and everyday care tasks are supported, i.e. managing laundry, keeping areas clean and tidy, maintenance tasks as appropriate.</i> 	<p>Offers some children and young people input into development of house norms, rhythms and routines but does not always include everyone in this process.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will engage with some children and young people to consider house norms, rhythms and routines but does not do this regularly or always find ways to include all of the group.</i> • <i>Uses some creative methods to ensure participation but lacks confidence in this area.</i> • <i>Has a limited understanding of the importance of engaging children and young people in this process.</i> 	<p>Gives no consideration to the views of children and young people in determining the way the house should be organised.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Never seeks the views of children and young people in determining house norms, rhythms and routines.</i> • <i>Has no understanding that this presents an opportunity to further develop connection and relationship with our children and young people.</i> • <i>Is unaware of the range of personalisation approaches available that help children and young people be involved in planning and review activities.</i>

2. Building rapport and relationships

With an open mind, we form and maintain unconditional, non-judgemental relationships. We build on this through the skills of being playful, loving, accepting, curious and the use of empathy.

Ideal practice	Progressing practice	Under-developed practice
<p>1. Always shows genuine interest in our child or young person's world and demonstrates curiosity about their preferences and needs.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Asks questions about our child or young person's interests, enables them to lead.</i> • <i>Notices and is curious about our child or young person's internal world, and behaviours. Strives to understand the meaning behind different behaviours and respond appropriately (being mind-minded).</i> • <i>Persistently maintains unconditional positive regard regardless of our child or young person's behaviour.</i> 	<p>Shows genuine interest when child or young person's preferences and interests align with their own but may otherwise demonstrate superficial interest and a lack of curiosity.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Asks questions about our child or young person's interests but fails to fully connect in this context and does not allow them to lead.</i> • <i>Notices our child's behaviour in particular circumstances, however, struggles to look for meaning.</i> • <i>Ability to relate to our child or young person is negatively impacted by our child or young person's behaviour.</i> 	<p>Disinterested in child or young person's world, needs and preferences, or inhibited due to fear and lack of confidence. Displays no curiosity.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Views their role as providing practical aspects of daily care with no concern about our child or young person's world beyond this.</i> • <i>Demonstrates no understanding of the ways in which our child's past experiences have impacted on them.</i>
<p>2. Builds and continually develops strong, positive, unconditional relationships with our child or young person.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fulfils commitments to spending time with our child or young person, makes this a priority wherever possible.</i> • <i>Supports and encourages reflective conversations Demonstrates love,</i> 	<p>Requires some support to build positive relationships, may be motivated to form and develop relationships but these might appear conditional.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can make initial relationships with our child or young person but needs help to contain their feelings when the relationship is tested by our child or young person.</i> 	<p>Does not attempt to build positive relationships. Responses and interactions create negative relationships.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maintains emotional 'distance' with our child or young person and actively avoids creating a deeper relationship.</i> • <i>Inappropriate use of power to intimidate or provoke our child or young person e.g.</i>

<p><i>compassion, and empathy in their interactions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shares genuine interest in getting to know our child</i> • <i>Adults take the lead on repairing relationships following distressed behaviour in a sensitive and timely way.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will celebrate the uniqueness of our child or young person but this is not always achieved consistently.</i> • <i>Accesses available information about our child's past (for example from files) but does not seek additional information to understand our child's journey.</i> 	<p><i>continuing to push the conversation, adding consequences, escalating our child or young person's behaviour.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uses sanctions as a reaction to distressed behaviour with no understanding of what our child or young person may be communicating through their behaviour.</i>
<p>3. Committed to understanding our child or young person, their past and their experiences.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeks comprehensive information from other agencies and family/carers regarding our child or young person's experiences and journey to Aberlour Sycamore.</i> • <i>Explores this with our child to understand their perspective and what matters to them.</i> 	<p>Shows some commitment to understanding our child or young person, their past and their experiences.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeks some information from other agencies and family/carers regarding our child or young person's experiences and journey to Aberlour Sycamore but does not always explore this with our child to understand their perspective and what matters to them.</i> 	<p>Shows no interest in understanding our child or young person, their past and their experiences.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fails to seek information from other agencies and family/carers regarding our child or young person's experiences and journey to Aberlour Sycamore.</i>
<p>4. Builds positive, collaborative relationships with our child or young person's family (or other important adult's e.g. former carers). Always believes the family have done their best to their ability.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uses respectful, non-judgmental and strength-based language in all communications and involvements with</i> 	<p>Attempts to build or maintain collaborative relationships with family/other adults but may require support to do so. Inconsistent recognition of family's circumstances or best intentions.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Takes some steps to maintain relationships with family and other adults but fails to</i> 	<p>Does not maintain collaborative relationships with family/other adults. Undermines the role of others. Judgemental of family members. Lacks confidence in engagement with family members, which may involve conflict. Alternatively, lacks understanding of professional boundaries and what constitutes an appropriate relationship with a family member.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Makes no attempt to initiate and plan contact with the family unless directly instructed to do so.</i>

<p>family members. Appropriate use of challenge where required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent in making family feel welcome and involved. Find ways to break down barriers to encourage different methods of communication and be inclusive and creative e.g. letters, phone calls, MS Teams. • Seeks to maintain or renew past relationships with family, extended family, friends and carers for our child or young person where appropriate. • Sensitively demonstrates a clear understanding of the factors that may have affected parents or carer's ability to provide optimal care for their child. • Will personalise plans for parents based both on their needs and the needs of our child or young person through e.g. familiarity with local area, public transport, support to identify and book activities. 	<p>always keep them fully informed and/or seek their perspective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes is respectful of family circumstances but can be influenced by others' judgemental attitudes. • Is sometimes creative in supporting different methods of communication with family. • Can on occasion be influenced by assumptions they have made about our child and their family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of judgemental language both verbally and in writing for example 'Mrs Smith is devious' (opinion) as opposed to 'Mrs Smith appears to have difficulty in sharing her reasons for missing the visit with her son' (objective behavioural observation). • Provides personal contact details to family members, contact with family out with working hours, connects through personal accounts on social media. • Never considers the needs of parents and has one approach for all families.
<p>5. Builds, maintains and values positive and effective relationships with multi-agency partners and decision makers.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens to multi-agency partner's views and seeks to create an environment where diverse perspectives are encouraged in order to reach consensus. Confidently and respectfully challenges other's perspectives where required. • Understands the role of other partners and can make referrals as appropriate to meet our child or young person's needs. 	<p>May have limited confidence engaging with multi-agency partners and decision makers or sees limited value in the role of others.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggles to consistently prioritise building and maintaining positive working relationships with multiagency partners. • Some understanding of the expertise and contribution of partner agencies to support our child or young person but lacks full understanding of other agency role and may make inappropriate referrals for services at times. 	<p>Does not value multi-agency partner or decision maker's role. Avoids or does not participate in multi-agency discussions.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to work with partner agencies to develop an understanding of their role and remit. • Assumes that the perspective of multi-agency partners is wrong, or unhelpful, or lacks the confidence to challenge other perspectives where this would be beneficial to our child or young person.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shares responsibility to implement child's plan with agency colleagues.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sometimes avoids discussion of different perspectives and moves forward without understanding or seeking resolution.</i> 	
<p>6. Supporting children and young people to make and maintain friendships in the different areas of their lives including school, hobbies/activities and at home.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explores opportunities to include friends (natural parenting) in activities and hobbies.</i> • <i>Encourages friends to visit the house, stay for meals and be involved.</i> • <i>Creating an environment that welcomes and supports friendships.</i> • <i>Plans for after school activities in advance that encourage, support and nurture friendships.</i> • <i>Supports children and young people to go to and have sleepovers.</i> 	<p>Recognises the importance of making and maintaining friendships but could be more proactive in supporting the child outwith the house.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Supports the child in activities and hobbies and sometimes encourages the opportunity to include friends.</i> • <i>Plans for afterschool activities and sometimes encourages a friend to be included.</i> 	<p>Does not value the importance of making and maintaining friendships for children and young people. Never encourages or supports friends to be included at home or during activities and hobbies.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Plans activities but never considers including friends.</i>
<p>7. Respects diversity and is inclusive and supportive of the needs, culture, religion, spirituality and language of children, young people and their families.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Respects the cultural, religious or symbolic significance of foods and takes</i> 	<p>Recognises the importance of being inclusive and supportive to meet the cultural, religious, spiritual and language needs of children young people and their families but is inconsistent in their approach.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Allows their own bias to influence their opinion and responses to our child's cultural, religious, spiritual and language needs.</i> 	<p>Does not value the importance of an inclusive approach and respecting the cultural, religious, spiritual and language needs of our child, young person and their families.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is intolerant of the cultural, religious or spiritual needs of children and young people.</i>

<p><i>time to learn and prepare it e.g. Halal meat.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Respects and supports the religious activities and events</i> • <i>Recognises, supports and celebrates cultural and religious events alongside children and young people.</i> • <i>Creates an inclusive environment where child, young people and their families cultural and religious needs are respected.</i> • <i>Adults are confident in recognising and challenging discrimination.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will support some religious and cultural needs but not others.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is unsupportive of preparing meals and food of cultural or religious significance.</i>
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3. Offering emotional and developmental support

We have an understanding of the impact of early life trauma, and the effect this has on a child’s development. We respond to children and young people with warmth and love. We provide safety, routine and containment to meet children and young people’s needs and support their growth. As an organisation, we are committed to reducing the use of physical restraint and any other form of restrictive practice.

Ideal practice	Progressing practice	Under-developed practice
<p>1. Uses knowledge of child development to understand and assess the needs of the individual child or young person, at different stages.</p> <p>Shows nuanced understanding of the impact of attachment and/or trauma on our child’s development and is able to make use of self (experience, knowledge, skills) to find or create ways to meet our child or young person’s needs.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports an older child to safely get comfort from a soft toy or textiles (e.g. blanket, ribbon), recognising this developmental need has not been met in the past. • Anticipates triggers for a child or young person i.e. a smell of aftershave which serves as a reminder of child or young person’s experience of abuse. • Understands that a child or young person’s struggles to maintain close relationships is rooted in previous severed attachments. • Supports our child or young person to explain and articulate their developmental 	<p>Has some knowledge and understanding of child development, attachment and trauma. Limited understanding of developmental stages and how this may manifest in behaviour.</p> <p>Attempts to use knowledge and self to find ways to meet child or young person’s needs, but effectiveness may be diminished due to limited knowledge and/or confidence.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some general knowledge is evident in practice but lacks a sophisticated understanding of attachment and the potential impacts on our child or young person’s development i.e. understands that our child struggles with relationships but needs support to make sense of potential trauma triggers. • Requires further learning and development opportunities to consolidate knowledge into practice. 	<p>Has no understanding or knowledge of child development, attachment or trauma, and how these can manifest in behaviour.</p> <p>Does not have knowledge base, and any use of self therefore has limited effectiveness.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only understands our child or young person’s needs in relation to their current behaviour and fails to see the impact of disrupted attachments and trauma on our child. • Has little or no self-awareness and therefore fails to view themselves and colleagues as a resource.

<p><i>needs in their Support Plan, meetings and other settings.</i></p>		
<p>2. Always creates and maintains a safe home environment where each child or young person feels stable and secure. Maintains the predictable routines and rhythm of daily life, being adaptive and flexible where necessary.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Notices when our child or young person feels unsafe and works with our child or young person to develop an individual plan which helps our child feel safer.</i> • <i>Recognises the need to communicate routines and boundaries which meet the needs of the wider group but can be flexible and adapt to the needs of individuals for example providing a warm drink before bed, water bottle or a favourite toy to provide comfort.</i> • <i>Understands and follows processes to ensure house safety is maintained (i.e. how to report a broken window etc.)</i> • <i>Uses initiative to maintain physical safety, e.g. removing potentially harmful objects at an early stage when a child or young person has the potential to become distressed.</i> 	<p>Understands the importance of maintaining a safe and predictable environment but may lack confidence or skill in consistently managing to do this.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In most cases is able to provide predictable boundaries</i> • <i>to our child or young person to keep them safe but sometimes gets distracted by other work.</i> • <i>Struggles to be consistently flexible to meet the needs of our child or young person.</i> • <i>Some familiarity with processes to maintain physical safety but may require reminders of their role/responsibilities.</i> 	<p>Does not attempt to (or is always unable to) maintain a safe and predictable home environment. Maintains rigid structure and routine, even in situations where flexibility is required.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Contributes to an environment where child-centred routines and boundaries are not important i.e. does not prioritise bedtime and evening routines.</i> • <i>Has no or little insight into the individual needs of children and young people in requiring an individual approach to creating a feeling of safety.</i> • <i>Does not understand own role in maintaining a physically safe environment</i>
<p>3. Consistently able to develop and use strategies and approaches which ensure feelings of safety and emotional containment and fully meet our child or young person's emotional needs and supports their development. Supports our child or young</p>	<p>Recognises the importance of ensuring feelings of safety and emotional containment, but not always able to use effective strategies in practice.</p>	<p>Does not recognise the importance of ensuring safety and emotional containment. Does not attempt to ensure children and young people feel emotionally safe.</p>

<p>person to develop emotional intelligence and understand own thoughts, feelings and behaviours.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is reliable, predictable and empathic. Allows child to demonstrate distressed behaviour while finding ways to stay close to them even when they are pushing them away.</i> • <i>Aware there are emotions behind distressed behaviour, and always attempts to understand these. Looking at things from another perspective.</i> • <i>In responding to distressed behaviour, always seeks to respond with compassion</i> • <i>whilst maximising learning and development from natural consequences, rather than enforcing sanctions.</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Understands what our child might be communicating through their behaviour but may be reactive, and fail to respond in a trauma-informed, child-centred way as a result.</i> • <i>Needs support from colleagues to understand and respond to our child or young person so that they feel safe.</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is inconsistent, unpredictable and uncaring.</i> • <i>Will take the opportunity to shame our child or young person when they are in crisis.</i> • <i>Imposes sanctions in response to distressed behaviour, rather than responding with compassion or supporting learning and development via natural consequences.</i>
<p>4. Uses all engagement with our child or young person as opportunities to demonstrate care and love in a manner appropriate to their individual needs.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always uses loving language during engagement with our child or young person for example: 'you are a special person', 'we love you' etc. Uses individualised language, terms of endearment.</i> 	<p>Inconsistently uses engagement with our child or young person to demonstrate care and love. May struggle to always account for individual needs or be unsure/lack confidence in knowing the boundaries for individual children.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uses generic language/terms which are not individualised.</i> • <i>Is comfortable expressing care and love to the group as a whole, but struggles to demonstrate this on a one-to-one basis.</i> • <i>Lacks confidence to make sure they understand our child or young person's needs and preferences regarding physical touch.</i> 	<p>Does not use engagement with our child or young person to demonstrate care and love and does not see this as part of their role. Consistently fails to adhere to boundaries and causes child or young person to feel uncomfortable.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regularly uses institutionalised language i.e. LAC child, children's unit, birth parent etc.</i> • <i>Overwhelming affection leaving our child feeling uncomfortable. Fails to understand our child or young person's preferences in relation to physical affection.</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uses appropriate physical affection (hugs, positive touch) to consistently demonstrate warmth and care.</i> • <i>Can demonstrate use of creative strategies such as the "I Love You" box featuring items of special significance to our child or young person.</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alternatively, is emotionally cold, little warmth or eye contact with our child, no physical affection.</i>
<p>5. Parents with PLACE (Playful, Loving, Accepting, Curious, Empathic), a parenting approach which is high in warmth, clear in providing boundaries and allows appropriate autonomy matched to our child or young person's developmental needs.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has a growth mind-set and will set appropriate challenges for our child and young person, according to their individual needs, to achieve their full potential for example, helping a child or young person who struggles to complete Maths homework.</i> • <i>Communicates to our child that making mistakes is a valuable part of learning and helps them to build resilience.</i> • <i>Encourages our child or young person to try out new activities, develop new skills and take risks as appropriate to develop agency.</i> 	<p>Uses a PLACE (Playful, Loving, Accepting, Curious, Empathic) parenting approach but sometimes unable to match autonomy to our child or young person's individual developmental needs.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is able to provide clear boundaries in a general context but may find it difficult to support our child or young person to push themselves to try out new activities.</i> • <i>Has a general understanding of the concepts of resilience and wellbeing but needs support to assess needs and implement plans which promote the resilience and wellbeing of individual children and young people.</i> 	<p>Relies entirely on own parenting approach, rather than PLACE (Playful, Loving, Accepting, Curious, Empathic) parenting approach. Inappropriate use of power and control, or overly liberal.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fails to intervene when they should to support our child or young person with feelings of distress which manifests in behaviour.</i> • <i>Fails to understand what lies behind the behaviour (i.e. trauma and pain) and therefore has inappropriate expectations of our child or young person.</i> • <i>Inappropriately uses power i.e. places unwarranted sanctions on our child or young person and exacerbates difficult situations.</i>
<p>6. Always recognises the role of family or important people in our child or young person's current and past networks in supporting our child's development. Is skilled in supporting our child or young person to</p>	<p>Sees the potential of family (and important others) but lacks the skills and/or confidence to support our child to navigate these connections.</p>	<p>Does not support our child or young person to build and maintain connections with family or important others. Does not support our child or young person when these relationships are difficult.</p>

<p>navigate these connections and helping our child to cope if/when these relationships are difficult.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks for ways to support our child's relationships by identifying shared interests and facilitating practical ways to support them i.e. organising a game of bowling for a child and their brothers and sisters. • Will seek information about past significant relationships and ways to nurture these or reconnect as appropriate. • Offers comfort and makes one to one time with our child and young person to help them to process their feelings when relationships are difficult. 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially tries to pursue relationships on behalf of our child or young person but when this proves challenging is inclined to let this drift. • Is unsure how best to support our child when relationships are difficult. 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views our child's contact with family members as detrimental to them and actively discourages contact. • Does not believe that other significant relationships are worth pursuing for our child or young person. • When our child feels distressed about family relationships takes an openly 'blaming' attitude towards them.
<p>7. Supports the young person from the start of their journey to work towards their future plans alongside their social worker and family (if involved).</p> <p>Always supports our child or young person to be involved in planning from the earliest possible stage, irrespective of the setting they are moving on to. Strives to ensure that moves are staged and personalised, graduated and extended. Advocates for the young person and ensures they are aware of their rights (e.g. to Continuing Care)</p>	<p>Offers support with moving on but misses early opportunities to do so. Needs support to coordinate moving on plans, and to ensure young person is fully aware of their rights.</p>	<p>Does not prioritise planning for moving on, lacks insight into their role, and the importance of planning for moves. Fails to ensure young person has awareness of rights and does not advocate on their behalf.</p>

<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Plans and facilitates opportunities to strive towards positive moves, through shift planning, using SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) Goals, including the young person's views and wishes and the use of internal and external resources.</i> • <i>Works closely with new setting and multi-agency team to build relationships and arrange visits.</i> • <i>Supports and encourages child or young person to keep in touch with Aberlour Sycamore, e.g. sending cards, visits, phone calls etc.</i> • <i>Will hold our child in mind once they have moved on from Aberlour Sycamore and continue to offer emotional and practical support including funds from "the bank of mum and dad".</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Attempts to prepare child or young person for moving on but may require support to ensure they are fully involved.</i> • <i>Is inconsistent in supporting and encouraging child or young person to keep in touch with Aberlour Sycamore, e.g. through the sending cards etc.</i> • <i>Does not support our young person to understand how Staying Put Scotland guidance and Continuing Care legislation may impact their individual choices.</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lack of forward planning results in child or young person being unprepared for moving on.</i> • <i>Does not encourage or support child or young person to keep in touch, and does not see this as their role.</i> • <i>Misses the opportunity to keep in touch with the child or young person when they move on from Aberlour Sycamore e.g. through sending cards etc.</i>
<p>8. Understands our child's history and the impact that trauma can have on emotional containment and understanding.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is able to identify our child's emotional triggers and understand and respond to these in a way that does not cause our child to feel shame.</i> • <i>Is fully aware of existing strategies as well as being confident in using relationship to develop new ones.</i> • <i>Understands when to give our child space and when to be with them, being proactive rather than reactive.</i> • <i>Presents as non-threatening, non-judgemental, approachable and confident</i> 	<p>Has limited knowledge of our child's history, triggers and strategies in support of these. Does not fully understand the impact of trauma.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has limited ability to identify our child's emotional triggers and limited understanding of potential reasons for them.</i> • <i>Inconsistently provides emotional containment for our child.</i> • <i>Will occasionally use restrictive practice.</i> 	<p>Has no knowledge of our child's history or trauma, is unable to identify triggers or apply strategies in support of these.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dismisses our child's emotions and presents as demanding and authoritative.</i> • <i>Threatens use of sanctions.</i> • <i>Will use restrictive practice as a means to control our child's behaviour. Shows no awareness of children's rights.</i>

<p><i>in support of an empathic and safe environment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Avoids the use of restrictive practice.</i> 		
<p>9. Demonstrates insight and understanding of their role as a residential worker/enhanced learning support worker. Understands the need to work from a shared value base and that an 'ordinary' parenting style most likely will not work with young people who have experienced significant trauma.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Focusses on connection and reflection as opposed to a consequence-based approach which leaves the young person feeling shameful.</i> • <i>Understands the importance of time in with our child instead of time out, away from them.</i> • <i>Will assess the right time to hold learning conversations with our child and is sensitive and attuned to the timing of those conversations – how you lead them into the conversation without shaming.</i> 	<p>Has limited understanding of their role as a residential worker/enhanced learning support worker and will often disregard the notion of therapeutic parenting.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has limited ability to work from a shared value base</i> • <i>Will often use their own experiences of being parented or parenting as their approach with our children.</i> • <i>Has limited understanding of the concept of therapeutic parenting.</i> • <i>Will often look for consequences to be imposed to correct behaviour.</i> 	<p>Does not understand their role as a residential worker/ enhanced learning support worker and will often disregard the notion of therapeutic parenting.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cannot work from a shared value base and will use their own experiences of being parented or parenting as their approach.</i> • <i>Does not understand the concept of therapeutic parenting and will look for consequences to be imposed to correct behaviour.</i>
<p>10. Understands the importance of therapeutic work within their role and will research tools and resources that can be used as a method to engage and support young people to learn and develop. This includes developing their knowledge and understanding of specific subjects (i.e. self-harm, substance misuse, self-esteem). Therapeutic work is highlighted within the</p>	<p>Is sometimes creative in their approach to therapeutic work, however this is not always evidenced, researched or communicated to others and isn't always recorded or stored within the young person's file.</p>	<p>Never looks to engage the young people in any form of therapeutic work. Does not see it as their role to engage the young person in therapeutic work and doesn't research tools and resources that can be supportive to the young person's learning and development.</p>

<p>young person's support plan and the adult recognises the importance of creativity in their approach.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will ensure that all therapeutic work is captured (i.e. recorded, drawn, pictures taken) and is stored safely in our young person's file. • Communicates effectively with their team and other relevant people regarding the nature of the work they are undertaking. • Therapeutic breaks will be planned with our young person and have a specific focus. • Makes use of the therapeutic tools available. Is proactive in their approach. 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will schedule time for therapeutic work but will reschedule or cancel prioritising other tasks. • Will schedule time for therapeutic work however is unprepared or inconsistent in their preparation for this • Does not adapt or personalise the therapeutic work undertaken with our child, often uses generic resources or tools. 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not engage in therapeutic work with our young person. • Does not recognise the value in therapeutic work, does not seek to develop that understanding.
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4. Discovering and uncovering potential

We support children and young people to discover their unique talents and skills, nurturing individual's interests and abilities and building self-efficacy and resilience. We maximise opportunities for children and young people to achieve their full potential, now and in the future.

Ideal practice	Progressing practice	Under-developed practice
<p>1. Recognises the importance of our child or young person's understanding of their past to their identity. Supports children and young people to create coherent narratives about their life and life story. Works with others to identify the best person to take forward life story work.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Creates a life story book or box with our child or young person and prioritises individual time with them to help them make sense of past experiences and their 'journey'.</i> • <i>Supports our child or young person to ask questions about gaps in their knowledge, and to find answers.</i> • <i>Ensures that photographs, mementos and objects of significance continue to be included in this during our child's time at Aberlour Sycamore.</i> • <i>Does not force life story work on our child but seeks to prepare for this in case it can be used in the future.</i> 	<p>Sees the importance of child or young person's past to their identity but may lack skills in supporting them to understand and make sense of their life story.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Offers help to develop the life story book or box but lacks confidence to know how best to support our child or young person to make sense of their experience i.e. struggles to ask our child about what the items mean to them.</i> 	<p>Does not value the importance of child's life story or see this as part of their role.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fails and/or lacks understanding of the need to develop life story work. Does not see the importance of our child's narrative to our child's sense of identity. Feels this is a waste of time.</i>
<p>2. Seeks out information to identify talents and skills, champions the individual and promotes success on their terms. Holds individual in</p>	<p>Recognises talents and interests and sometimes spends time to support our child or young person</p>	<p>Uninterested, or lacking in knowledge and skills regarding recognising our child or young person's individual talents and strengths. Does</p>

<p>mind, even when not present. Recognises importance of building our child or young person's resilience and uncovering their hidden potential.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborates with our child and young person and others to identify interests, skills and talents for example, meets with previous teachers to get a sense of strengths. • Offers praise in a way the individual can accept, celebrates achievements, displays certificates/photos etc. • Will pursue child's interest and hobbies on their behalf even when not working i.e. picking up a leaflet about a local swimming club. 	<p>to develop these. Sometimes imposes own ideas of success.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks our child about their particular interests and talents but lacks the skills to pursue this beyond this level. • May celebrate success in a way our child young person • finds uncomfortable, for example buying balloons and streamers for a child who has won a race at school when our child would prefer a less elaborate celebration. 	<p>not make attempts to get to know the individual e.g. shows no curiosity, doesn't strive to develop potential.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids or delays spending individual time with our child or young person. • Seeks little or no information regarding our child or young person's unique talents or interests.
<p>3. Always believes in our child or young person and has high aspirations for them. Supports our child to participate across a range of opportunities and offers praise in a manner our child or young person can accept and is based on participation rather than 'winning'.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages our child or young person to try out and persevere with new activities and opportunities even when initially hesitant. • Praises our child or young person for challenging themselves to try out new things and for participating in teamwork with other children and young people. • Reinforces learning by reflecting with child or young person on activities, e.g., helping 	<p>Encourages our child or young person to participate in current or new interests but may not genuinely believe in their potential. Offers praise but may do so in a way which does not have meaning to our child or young person.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will assist our child or young person to participate in activities but may not believe our child or young person can build on their skills to improve. • Offers praise in a general sense without considering our child or young person's particular needs i.e. if our child's team loses a match at football being over the top stating 	<p>Does not believe in our child or young person's potential. Has low aspirations for them and does not encourage participation in activities. Offers no praise.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes a fatalistic and negative attitude to our child or young person's future potential. Sees little hope for a positive future. • Fails to mark our child or young person's achievements.

<p><i>a child or young person to see they have used maths skills in a baking activity.</i></p>	<p><i>how well they did which does not feel genuine to our child or young person.</i></p>	
<p>4. Recognises the value of formal education (whether school aged or beyond) and always advocates for our child’s educational inclusion, and for their individual educational needs to be met. Strives to support our child to achieve their full educational potential.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Takes a genuine and consistent interest in child or young person's progress in education and/or training and employment i.e. attends parents evening, meetings etc. Is aware of strengths and gaps and seeks to fill these.</i> • <i>Advocates on our child or young person's behalf for additional support to ensure they are able to fully participate in their education.</i> 	<p>Recognises that education is valuable to all children and young people, but may approach this generically, and struggle to comprehensively understand and promote individual children and young people’s educational needs. This may risk our child or young person not realising their full potential.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Supports our child or young person's education and attends meetings but may fail to identify or pursue particular needs. For example, not checking with a teacher if our child or young person may benefit from additional tuition in Maths.</i> 	<p>Does not prioritise education, content to allow children and young people to miss out on educational opportunities. Does not support our child to achieve their full educational potential.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Views education attendance as necessary however has little or no aspirations for our child or young person beyond this.</i> • <i>Sees education as something which happens in school, separate to home life. Does not see or capitalise on opportunities for learning within the house.</i>
<p>5. Where a child is not in formal education, always strives to reduce barriers to their return. But where school attendance is not possible, ensures a detailed learning plan and education support worker are in place. Links in with school and curriculum to develop a personalised learning plan, captured within their support plan, which meets our child or young person’s individual needs.</p>	<p>Committed to supporting our child or young person’s return to formal education but requires help to pursue this. Adheres to our child or young person’s learning plan but has limited input in creating and developing this.</p>	<p>Does not actively pursue opportunities to support a return to formal education. Lacks awareness of our child or young person’s learning plan and learning needs. Lacks confidence and skills, so fails to use opportunities for teaching and learning within the house.</p>

<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Actively maintains links with school.</i> • <i>Uses creative ways to promote learning.</i> • <i>Regularly revisits long term education plans with our child or young person.</i> • <i>Always holds high aspirations for child or young person's education.</i> 	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uses creative approaches which are set out in the learning plan but struggles to think of additional creative ideas in the moment.</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does not communicate with school or maintain links.</i> • <i>Does not use creative approaches to support learning.</i>
<p>6. Where moves in education are necessary (e.g. between schools), always works to ensure these are well planned and managed, and understood by our child or young person, and they are well prepared and supported.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ensures information in any Coordinated Support Plan (or other education plan) is transferred and understood.</i> • <i>Post 16 supports development of relationships with agencies such as Skills Development Scotland or local college and pursues other opportunities such as training, volunteering and employment for the young person.</i> 	<p>Tries to provide practical support around moving on but may struggle to understand their broader role in managing and supporting our child or young person's educational moves.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can offer practical support in preparation for moving on but does not always recognise the loss of relationships, the emotional impact of change and may view this preparation as the role of educational professionals.</i> 	<p>Fails to recognise the impact of moving on to our child or young person. Takes minimal role in supporting our child or young person, practically or emotionally.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Demonstrates little or no understanding of the importance of preparation for moving on or the significance of this for our child or young person.</i>

5. Listening and communication

We recognise that all behaviour is communication and remain attuned to the ways children and young people communicate. We demonstrate active listening, prioritising time, and build trust to enable meaningful engagement and connection.

Ideal practice	Progressing practice	Under-developed practice
<p>1. Always demonstrates active listening in a manner suitable to the individual child or young person. Listens for both content and feeling. Seeks clear understanding by clarifying what has been said, so our child or young person feels truly heard and valued.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Appropriate use of eye contact, open and engaged body language, offers their undivided attention, appropriate tone of voice</i> • <i>Summarising and reflecting back to our child or young person and checking out what has been said, heard, and understood.</i> 	<p>Can demonstrate active listening and hears content but may struggle to make sense of the feelings behind this. Despite seeking clarification, may not fully understand what has been said, leaving child feeling somewhat unheard.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In engagement with our child or the young person, may demonstrate positive use of body language to evidence active listening.</i> • <i>Finds it more difficult to ascertain what is not being said and therefore misses opportunities to fully understand our child or young person.</i> 	<p>Does not use or demonstrate active listening. Does not attempt to clarify understanding of child or young person's communications.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Poor eye contact, body language and appears distracted i.e. looking away or constantly checking a mobile phone.</i> • <i>Never checks out the meaning behind the communication of our child or young person.</i>
<p>2. Is confident in developing and using creative ways of communicating, depending on children and young people's developmental needs, and learning style. Views all behaviours as a form of communication and responds accordingly.</p> <p>Examples:</p>	<p>Attempts to use creative methods of communication, but requires support to do so confidently, and in a manner aligned to child or young person's development needs. Tries to understand behaviour as communication but may focus on the behaviour rather than what is underpinning it at times.</p> <p>Examples:</p>	<p>No attempt to use creative communication techniques. Has no knowledge of different learning styles. Sees all behaviour as planned, rational and deliberate, rather than a way of expressing distress and pain. Responds punitively to child or young person's attempts to communicate through their behaviours.</p> <p>Examples:</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Using a third object (including driving, doing activities alongside our child/young person, using puppets etc.); communicating through written notes; therapeutic letter writing; reaching out to children and young people despite physical barriers – such as bedroom doors.</i> • <i>Using social stories as method of communication.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will try to use creative methods via play or puppets but feels inhibited and lacks self-assurance to carry this through in a confident manner.</i> • <i>When practicing at an optimum level can consider the meaning behind behaviours but when under pressure struggles to do so consistently.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communicates with our child or young person verbally and pays little or no attention to non-verbal communication.</i> • <i>Seeks to punish distressed behaviour and demonstrates very little understanding of the meaning behind behaviours.</i>
<p>3. Recognises when additional help is needed to facilitate communication (for example, where a child does not use English, is non-verbal, or has other special communication needs). Persists in identifying the right supports, and ensuring these are in place, to maximise opportunities for communication.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pursues the correct methods to assist our child to communicate i.e. sources translators, speech and language therapy, symbols, peg method, talking mats as appropriate.</i> 	<p>Lacks confidence and initiative and in seeking additional help. Motivated, and recognises the need for additional help, but requires guidance to seek the right supports.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recognises that our child or young person has communication needs beyond the resources within the house but is unclear how to access or make best use of these.</i> 	<p>Does not attempt to seek additional supports when these are necessary, or when child is requesting these, either due to lack of understanding or lack of motivation.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Takes no initiative to help our child or young person find a preferred communication method.</i> • <i>Does not see this as part of their role</i> • <i>Does not challenge where additional supports have been refused</i> • <i>Does not pass on information or share concerns with the rest of the team.</i>

6. Resources

Adults are Aberlour Sycamore’s most valuable resource. Adults collaborate to maintain a culture of growth and learning, where respectful challenge is viewed positively. Adults mentor one another and recognise one another’s strengths and seek to learn and develop as practitioners for the benefit of children and young people.

Adults use internal resources with skill and creativity, and access appropriate external resources to support children and young people, and their own professional development. Adults apply training and learning into daily practice.

Ideal practice	Progressing practice	Under-developed practice
<p>1. Recognises and values the whole staff team as an important resource. Recognises the strengths and role of individuals within the team (including self), practices collaboratively, and communicates clearly with colleagues.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shares information clearly and consistently (both written and verbal – such as at changeover); practices with integrity, is accountable for plans/actions.</i> • <i>Will offer assistance and feedback to others and seeks out help and feedback to aid practice and personal development with a view to improving outcomes for our child or young person.</i> • <i>Uses appropriate forums to share challenges or frustrations, e.g. supervision.</i> 	<p>Acknowledges the importance of the team as a resource but may struggle to recognise the roles and strengths of self and others within the team. Tries to practice collaboratively but may communicate inconsistently at times.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is inconsistent in the quality of written information. Is unclear/ ambiguous in communications (written and verbal).</i> • <i>Sees other team member’s strengths and a source of support but is less confident about their own contribution.</i> • <i>Needs support to make the best use of peer supervision/team meetings.</i> 	<p>Does not value the team as a resource. Disinterested in other’s strengths and contributing to the team. Little/no collaboration and poor communication with colleagues.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Avoids or opts out of peer supervision and/or meetings.</i> • <i>Is negative about the purpose of, and others contribution to practice.</i> • <i>Disrupts meetings by repeatedly leaving the room to take calls, distracted by mobile phone, takes unnecessary breaks or interrupts when individuals are speaking with little or no helpful content.</i> • <i>Uses inappropriate forums to share frustrations, e.g. social media/group emails. Does not consider the impact on adults or young people of this behaviour.</i>
<p>2. Can take a lead role to mentor and coach the team to have reflective learning conversations, in order to promote a</p>	<p>Participates in reflection and is able to learn from their own practice, and that of others. May need support from others to evaluate practice.</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate reflection or participate in a learning culture. Unable to reflect on learning or contribute to team development.</p>

<p>learning culture. Consistently evaluates practice and demonstrates leadership in developing the practice of the whole team.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is able to offer practice examples in team meetings, DDP practice sessions, and supervision to aid staff development.</i> • <i>Seeks solutions to problems from within team skill set and consistently seeks improvements to practice with a view to improving outcomes for children.</i> 	<p>Limited ability to undertake a leadership role in reflective and learning conversations.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can describe practice but needs support to assess and evaluate this.</i> • <i>Needs help to develop leadership skills.</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Takes no part in reflective discussions, appears disinterested and makes no contribution to practice development.</i> • <i>Makes negative comments about others attempts to improve practice.</i>
<p>3. Contributes to a culture which views respectful challenge positively. Is able to have open and honest conversations with colleagues where there are concerns or disagreements about practice. Acknowledges own learning needs and is confident in asking for help when needed. Always seeks solution focused resolution.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always strives to seek diverse views to resolve issues and difficulties in a courteous manner. Inspires respect in others and treats colleagues, children, young people, families and partners with respect.</i> 	<p>Attempts to have open and honest conversations with colleagues but lacks confidence or does not fully acknowledge others' views. May need encouragement and support to stay solution focused at times.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can engage in dialogue about practice but finds it difficult to offer constructive feedback to others.</i> • <i>May struggle to accept constructive feedback about own practice.</i> 	<p>Does not engage in constructive challenging conversations with others. Is unable to be solution focused, or to accept challenge from others. Makes challenges that are inappropriate and/or disrespectful. Does not acknowledge own learning needs and fails to seek support to improve practice.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fails to participate or contribute to difficult conversations about practice.</i> • <i>Offers no positive solutions to issues and difficulties.</i> • <i>Is defensive about own practice or unfairly critical of others.</i>

<p>4. Views self as a key resource to ensuring children and young people have the best experiences and outcomes. From the point of induction onwards, is motivated and takes responsibility for own learning. Seeks out and embraces opportunities to increase knowledge and skills through formal training and practice-based learning/coaching.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Attends and actively engages in training opportunities such as DDP courses.</i> • <i>Seeks constructive feedback about practice from colleagues and manager.</i> • <i>Will seek training opportunities out with the organisation.</i> 	<p>May struggle to prioritise engaging with learning and development opportunities. Can rely on manager's direction to undertake formal learning opportunities.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Positive about and engages with learning and development opportunities when these are provided.</i> • <i>May lack initiative to seek these out for themselves.</i> 	<p>Does not view self as a key resource for children and young people. Disinterested in learning and development. Only attends when directed to do so, minimal contribution.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will avoid training or development opportunities when offered.</i> • <i>Makes little use of opportunities in attendance.</i>
<p>5. Always evidences the translation of knowledge/learning into practice, and shares this with the wider team, including sharing knowledge from external learning opportunities. Embraces learning, change and improvement.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeks support from manager and colleagues to put newly acquired knowledge into practice and seeks feedback about performance.</i> 	<p>Translation of knowledge/learning into practice may be inconsistent. Makes attempts to put new learning into practice, but without support may revert back to former practice.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Begins positively to evidence new learning in practice but needs a degree of assistance from manager to sustain this over time.</i> • <i>Attempts to share new learning with the team but may lack confidence or clarity in doing so.</i> 	<p>Does not attempt to modify practice if learning and development opportunities are taken up.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does not value learning and development opportunities.</i> • <i>Makes no link with improved practice and children and young people's improved outcomes.</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will disseminate knowledge and skills to colleagues and offer support for wider learning.</i> 		
<p>6. Always makes best use of physical resources within the house to support children and young people’s development. In collaboration with children and young people, is able to identify gaps in resources available, and puts forward ideas to develop the resources held. Advocates for high quality resources to be maintained and broken items to be quickly replaced.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is proactive in thinking creatively in consultation with our child or young person to consider use for outdoor space for play, board game, books, and the internet.</i> • <i>Is proactive in pursuing funding opportunities, e.g. grants to develop physical space/environment, based on the needs and wishes of children and young people.</i> 	<p>Motivated to make use of the available resources but may require support to be creative. Accepts the resources which are in place and may not put forward ideas to enhance the resources available.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Makes full use of physical resources but cannot always think creatively about this i.e. can only consider the outdoor space in its existing form with goals for football and could not develop the creation of a cycle track area of the garden.</i> 	<p>Lacks interest in the physical resources available. Is unconcerned by their quality and does not discuss the needs and views of children and young people about the resources available.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Takes little or no interest in the physical resources in the house and does not participate in discussions about quality or how to improve resources for the benefit of children and young people.</i>
<p>7. Consistently pursues opportunities to bring in external resources, for the benefit of all children and young people, or on the basis of individual needs. Is confident in liaising with other agencies and seeking out expert inputs. Such resources may be for the benefit of the learning needs of the staff team in a specific area; for an</p>	<p>Can identify that an external resource is required but may lack the confidence and knowledge to pursue this further.</p>	<p>Does not consider the benefits of external resources or attempt to secure these.</p>

<p>individual child or young person's care plan; or for leisure and recreation.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Actively makes use of external consultants in relation to improving their own practice and that of fellow team members.</i> • <i>Recognises when a child or young person may require specialist support and seeks to find the best available provision.</i> 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recognises that our child or young person needs additional support but is unsure how to identify suitable services.</i> • <i>Needs support from manager and others to source the right provision i.e. external consultant.</i> 	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fails to recognise that our child, young person or staff team may benefit from additional help or support. Sees this as the manager or senior's role.</i>
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7. Working within a shared framework

We have knowledge and understanding of relevant legislative and national frameworks, as well as the Aberlour Sycamore practice model, policies and procedures.

Ideal practice	Progressing practice	Under-developed practice
<p>1. Understands and always practices within the Getting It Right For Every Child national practice model. Holds our child at the centre, and consistently upholds their rights and promotes their wellbeing. Works in partnership with families and other agencies to provide the right support, at the right time, in the right way.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evidences a comprehensive understanding of child or young person’s wellbeing indicators in their Support Plan and demonstrates this consistently verbally and in written form. Makes use of my world triangle and other assessment tools as appropriate.</i> • <i>Recognises that our child and young person’s family and others are central to their wider wellbeing and advocates for their needs to be met at all times.</i> 	<p>Has a generic understanding of GIRFEC and the national practice model. Tries to use wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI) but may struggle to do so meaningfully on every occasion. Makes efforts but may require support to respond to children’s rights issues, and to work in partnership with others.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uses the national practice model but may use this in a prescriptive and generic manner i.e. when using the SHANARRI indicators this lacks depth and does not fully reflect our child or young person’s individual circumstances.</i> • <i>Understands the general landscape of children’s rights but when an issue is raised by a child or young person needs help to pursue this further.</i> 	<p>Does not refer to GIRFEC national practice model or work collaboratively with partners with our child at the centre.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trivialises the national practice model, views framework as ‘box ticking’ exercise, and resists using the tools available to promote our child or young person’s wellbeing.</i>
<p>2. Consistently demonstrates practice that is aligned with Aberlour Sycamore’s values, as articulated in the Aberlour Practice Manual (respect, integrity, challenge and innovation).</p> <p>Example:</p>	<p>Practice is generally aligned with Aberlour Sycamore’s Values, though may require refinement in some areas.</p> <p>Example:</p>	<p>Practice does not align with Aberlour Sycamore’s values.</p> <p>Example:</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is able to evidence Aberlour Sycamore's values in their practice and always treats children and young people and others with respect.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In most cases incorporates the organisational values into practice but may need assistance in some areas i.e. promotion of our child's rights out with the house.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does not know what the organisation's values are, and little or no evidence of them in practice.</i>
<p>3. Always strives to keep informed of the Support Plans for all children and young people. Holds a comprehensive knowledge of the needs and preferences of each child or young person in order to respond to them appropriately in the moment.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always makes time to seek information about the current situation and wellbeing of all children and young people in the house.</i> • <i>Can speak knowledgeably about individual needs and wants if required in different forums i.e. if other agencies need information to progress plans or in internal and external meetings.</i> 	<p>Tries to keep informed of all children and young people's Support Plans but may struggle to retain all of the necessary information.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is up to date with Key child's Support Plan. Struggles to prioritise seeking information regarding other children and young people's current situation.</i> • <i>Needs support to speak to a young person's needs and wants in different forums.</i> 	<p>Does not attempt to keep informed of individual children or young people's Support Plans. Is therefore not able to respond helpfully in the moment.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has no understanding of the importance of being knowledgeable about the current information regarding children and young people.</i>
<p>4. Practices in full accordance with the standards set out by relevant regulatory bodies including the SSSC and the Care Inspectorate's Health and Social Care Standards. Takes responsibility and is accountable in their work.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fully cognisant of regulation and standards and always practices within these frameworks and with a high degree of integrity. Refers to these in a range of settings and make links to improved outcomes for children and young people.</i> 	<p>May sometimes require support to strengthen practice so that it fully meets these standards at all times.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Practices with integrity but does not always refer to the regulatory guidance and standards. Needs help to fully adhere to the regulations for example to meet all of our child's needs and respect their choices. May</i> 	<p>Practice may fall below these standards and practitioner may be unaware of the requirements of these standards.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Practice fails to meet regulations and standards in a number of areas.</i>

	<i>miss opportunities to provide examples of this.</i>	
<p>5. Understands the importance of supervision and uses this time and space to engage and reflect on practice, review, and prioritise caseload and identifies areas of work that need to be developed.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is always prepared for supervision and brings practice examples to discuss.</i> • <i>Is open, engaged, and willing to reflect upon positive practice as well as areas that can be developed.</i> • <i>Is able to discuss caseload and can articulate their in-depth knowledge of their key child.</i> 	<p>Understands the importance of supervision but does not always prepare for these supervision sessions.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will sometimes avoid supervision due to lack of planning.</i> • <i>Will sometimes engage in reflective practice.</i> 	<p>Sees supervision as a chore, does not see the importance or benefits and never prepares for supervision sessions.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Avoids supervision and makes excuses not to attend.</i> • <i>Avoids reflection and discussion about practice.</i>

Recording

Our records are accurate, clear and are attentive to language, tone, accessibility and quality. Our records are kept with our child in mind, as a narrative of their life and journey. Our recording practices reflect an understanding that children and young people may seek out this information in the future.

Ideal practice	Progressing practice	Under-developed practice
<p>1. When recording information about our child or young person, this is always done with our child or young person in mind. The quality, tone and clarity of the recording is such that the record is accessible (either now or in the future) to our child or young person (as far as possible, in light of our child or young person's development).</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recording is used as an opportunity to let our children and young people know that you love and value them.</i> • <i>Uses non-judgemental language, loving language and avoids use of jargon and acronyms. Is clear about what is fact and what is opinion.</i> • <i>Always finds time to share records with our child or young person and seeks their views on tone, language and content.</i> • <i>Writes daily 'to' our child or young person that are meaningful and reflect</i> 	<p>Generally, records information with our child or young person in mind, though may struggle to do so consistently. Records may lack clarity at times and may require support to consistently use a person-centred tone. May lack confidence in sharing the record with our child or young person.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mostly evidences non-judgemental language but sometimes slips into use of jargon at times. Occasionally needs reminded to be conscious of language in records.</i> • <i>Needs encouragement to make time and find ways to share records with our child or young person.</i> 	<p>Is not motivated, or does not know how, to record information with our child or young person in mind. Uses unclear language and a judgemental tone. Does not attempt to share records with our child or young person.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Records are poor quality, with missing information or highly descriptive with little analysis.</i> • <i>Uses judgemental language i.e. 'Katie's behaviour was appalling on the trip'.</i> • <i>Sees little value in recording and therefore makes little or no attempt to share this with our child or young person.</i> • <i>Recording is used as an opportunity to vent frustrations and is consequently very negative.</i> • <i>Recording is not used as an opportunity to let our children and young people know that you love and value them.</i>

<p><i>challenges and distress as well as highlights.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is proactive in sharing and giving our child or young person ownership of their records.</i> 		
<p>2. Always uses recording as a valuable tool which captures the journey, life story and narrative of our child or young person (including their relationships with family and important others).</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The content of records always reflects experiences, changes and our child or young person's development over time.</i> • <i>Recording is dynamic to reflect ongoing process of assessment, planning, action and review, writing to our child's goals.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to capture the life story and journey of our child or young person in recorded information but may not capture some important details. May focus on the procedural purposes of recording rather than using recording as a tool to provide a dynamic narrative. <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mostly includes key experiences and events in our child or young person's records but may miss some important information i.e. captures information about winning an award at school but fails to include that a member of our child or young person's family attended the ceremony.</i> • <i>When there are competing demands may view recording as a task to complete and therefore the focus on our child risks being lost.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not attempt to capture a coherent narrative of our child or young person. Records basic information in a procedural manner. <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Records minimum information with little or no focus on keeping our child in mind when completing records.</i>
<p>3. Strives to reflect our child or young person's unique personality, talents and strengths in any records kept.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Records have sufficient detail in order that our child or young person can always recognise themselves in the narrative.</i> 	<p>Uses a strengths-based approach inconsistently, does not always prioritise this over the procedural elements of recording.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mostly records are of a reasonable standard but without support may default to recording as a practical task. Needs some encouragement to always keep our child's strengths in mind.</i> 	<p>Does not attempt to take a strengths-based approach and focuses on perceived deficits.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always records negative examples of our child's behaviour. Has little awareness or insight into the importance of recording in a strengths-based manner.</i>

<p>4. Always updates records in a timely way, including accurate and comprehensive information, whilst being succinct and not over-documenting.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prioritises time to reflect and record information about our child and young person.</i> • <i>Recognises the importance of the record for our child or young person now and in the future.</i> • <i>Records are consistently of a high quality and in line with Aberlour Sycamore's recording guidance.</i> 	<p>Generally, maintains records in a timely way, but may not be able to prioritise this always. At times includes too much irrelevant information or may miss some important details.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Often sets time aside to record information but is prone to get distracted by other demands.</i> • <i>Needs some assistance to keep succinct records.</i> 	<p>Avoids recording, or records very basic or irrelevant information.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Never prioritises recording and needs continual reminders to complete this.</i> • <i>Little or no evidence of reflection in what is recorded.</i>
<p>5. Always presents written information for external reports (and other external communication) clearly. Includes all relevant information and discusses this with our child or young person in advance of any meetings.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is organised and prepared for presenting written reports in a variety of settings.</i> • <i>Always strives to prepare our child for the sharing of their information in a flexible and informative way which meets the needs and preferences of our child or young person e.g. during an informal activity.</i> 	<p>Provides written reports, but these may lack coherence, or assessments may seem unclear. May struggle to support our child or young person to understand the full content of the report.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always provides timely reports however, other agency colleagues may struggle to make sense of conclusions from the information provided. Makes time to prepare our child or young person but where they child or young person does not fully understand the information needs support to articulate this to our child.</i> 	<p>Reports and assessments are unclear and poorly evidenced. Does not attempt to share reports with children and young people.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reports are frequently late, and the information provided of poor quality.</i> • <i>Avoids sharing the content of reports with our child or young person.</i>

About CELCIS

CELCIS is a leading improvement and innovation centre in Scotland. We improve children's lives by supporting people and organisations to drive long-lasting change in the services they need, and the practices used by people responsible for their care.

For more information

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