

**Safeguarding Records Audit (School Copy)**

**Name of education setting:**

**Date of audit** [Pick the date]

**Author/s:**

**Child Protection School Liaison Officer** (please note name of CPSLO if they have provided advice and guidance during the audit process):

*Once completed, please provide the final draft of your audit to the CPSLO who will add their comments and any further advice at the end of this document*

**Why should schools and colleges evaluate their safeguarding record arrangements?**

[The Education Act 2002](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents)section 175 and 157,places a legal duty for all educational settings to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The requirement for schools to keep pupil records is set out in The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005. [Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2023)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) chapter 68 also states “*All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those*

*decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child”.*

[Working together to safeguard children](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2) clearly states that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. Good record keeping is an important part of professional accountability to children and their families and is an essential function which enables Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) to implement their key responsibility to respond appropriately and timely to concerns about children’s safety and welfare.

[Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2023)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) chapter 70 highlights that “*It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children’s welfare. Research and local child safeguarding practice reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action”.*

Quality records will therefore provide settings with a consistent and live account of their involvement with children and their families. They will enable the early identification of causes for concern but also any patterns or accumulation of low-level concerns which may then evidence a wider safeguarding or child protection concern. Quality records will also ensure that oversight and decisions for children where a safeguarding or child protection response is required, will be fully informed, timely, appropriate, and proportionate.

Regular monitoring of a setting’s overall arrangements for record keeping alongside specific case files is an essential task to ensure that the educational setting has strong policies, procedures and mechanisms in place to safeguard children and young people.

**The Audit Toolkit**

The purpose of the audit toolkit is to assist the safeguarding team in school (DSL, Headteacher and Safeguarding Governor) to complete a self-analysis of their overall organisational systems, individual case records by DSLs and recording by the whole school staff group to ensure that the whole setting contributes and supports effective safeguarding practice at all times.

The audit has been aligned to the following statutory guidance and inspection frameworks:

* [Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)
* [Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2023)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)
* [Ofsted Framework for School Inspection and the School Inspection Handbook (2024)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif)
* [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Child Protection Procedures](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/hertfordshire-safeguarding-children-partnership/hscp.aspx)
* [Pupil Safeguarding Records for Educational Establishments (chapter 7)](https://thegrid.org.uk/assets/safeguarding-record-keeping-guidance-aug18.pdf)
* [IRMS Schools Toolkit - Information and Records Management Society](https://irms.org.uk/general/custom.asp?page=SchoolsToolkit)
* [The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO)](https://ico.org.uk/)
* [Data protection](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools)
* [Information sharing](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice)

**Part 1 - Organisational safeguarding arrangements for record keeping**. Self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the overall systems and management of recording and sharing information about pupils.

**Part 2 - Individual casework and the role of the DSL/DDSL**. Self-evaluation and analysis of key recording in children’s individual safeguarding record files. Headteacher and DSL(s) should select up to three children’s safeguarding files to audit and then RAG rate the minimum practice standards as appropriate. To avoid unconscious bias, it is recommended that DSL/headteachers do not audit files that they have been significantly involved with as a lead professional.

**Part 3 – Whole School Staff Recording (Record of Concerns).** SLT/DSL analysisand oversight of the quality of whole school staff recording which contributes to the decisions and response by the DSLs. Individual records of concerns can be audited as part of this main audit but ideally an overall analysis and summary of quality assurance undertaken throughout the academic year should be available and provided. [PART 3 IN DRAFT – PLEASE CONTINUE TO USE EXISTING AUDIT ON THE GRID]

**Part 4 – Safeguarding Records Action Plan.** To be completed by the Headteacher/DSL and shared with the Safeguarding Governor.

Rag Ratings:

**RED** - Not met - insufficient evidence that the required standard for safeguarding record keeping and is not being met.

**AMBER** - Partially met - Some evidence and examples of good practice but further development required.

**GREEN** - Met - Clear evidence and examples that minimum safeguarding standard for record keeping is met.

**Quality Assurance**

It is recommended that the audit involves a range of staff within the Senior Leadership and DSL Teams working together to approach auditing with a shared vision so that the values, views, and standards of the whole school approach can be captured and represented in any areas that need to be improved on. This will also increase the quality of the analysis and actions plan to ensure they are current, realistic and measurable. Where relevant, the voice of pupils and their parents and carers would also strengthen a whole school approach.

The oversight and management of the audit is the responsibility of the SLT/DSL and therefore may be undertaken independently. It is recommended that settings observe the guidance produced by the CPSLO Service [Pupil Safeguarding Records for Educational Establishments](https://thegrid.org.uk/assets/safeguarding-record-keeping-guidance-aug18.pdf) (chapter 7) and also use the resources on The Grid at [Safeguarding records - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)](https://thegrid.org.uk/safeguarding-and-child-protection/child-protection/safeguarding-records).

If a setting would like support and guidance through the audit process, the DSL should contact their link CPSLO [CPSLO Handbook Chapter2](https://thegrid.org.uk/assets/chapter2-cpslo-service-contact-details-2022-2023.pdf) to arrange. The scope and role of a CPSLO during the audit process is to offer advice and guidance to help identify evidence of good practice as well as areas that require improving.

It is the responsibility of the setting to ensure that the final analysis of the audit and any accompanying action plan correctly reflect the setting’s view of their safeguarding arrangements. Where assistance has been provided by the CPSLO, they will provide comments and any additional advice to the final draft of the audit, but it will remain the responsibility of the setting to implement and review their action plan in partnership with Governance at proportionate timescales to ensure there is sufficient progress being made. The CPSLO’s view does not provide a judgement as to whether safeguarding arrangements are effective but rather an overview of where there is evidence of good practice and plans to maintain progress in preparation for inspection. The formal grading is the responsibility of Ofsted/ISI.

**Part 1 Organisational Safeguarding Arrangements for Record Keeping**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Column A**  **Safeguarding practice standard and descriptors**  Minimum statutory requirements and best practice in accordance with KCSiE and other related statutory and local guidance. | **Column B**  **Evidence/examples of how these duties are being met?**    This column where DSL/DDSL team can provide examples to evidence their S/C practice and decide on what RAG rate it meets. | **C**  **RAG rate** | **Column D**  Use this column to outline initial actions and timescales. It would be good practice to ensure updates are made to these at regular intervals to ensure there is a live overview to progress of individual actions/single elements of an action that requires multiple stages.  Alternatively, this information can be transferred into the action plan table at the end of the audit. |
|  | **Systems** | **Evidence/examples?** |  | **Action required and by when?** |
| **1** | It is essential in order to safeguard children and meet their needs, that school/college (S/C) should recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies, including ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information e.g.,   * within the S/C staff community * local authority children’s social care, * safeguarding partners and * other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.   [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice)  [Part one, two and five KCSiE](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) |  |  |  |
| **2** | S/C have a centralised and standardised recording system to keep accurate and contemporaneous records of concerns. Records are stored securely, and DSL should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it. This system should be easily accessible to all staff with ‘permissions’ and available in a range of places, e.g., in the staff room. |  |  |  |
| **3** | S/C keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. |  |  |  |
| **4** | The DSL is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding files are kept up to date.  Records should include:   * a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern * details of how the concern was followed up and resolved * a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. |  | **☐**  **☐**  **☐** |  |
| **5** | S/C staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is open to Children’s Services.  Staff must share safeguarding records of concern securely with the DSL. |  |  |  |
| **6** | S/C provide at induction and safeguarding training what the arrangements are in place for staff to record concerns and child protection disclosures. |  |  |  |
| **7** | Visitors – contractors, governors and parents are informed about how to report a concern and who to pass this to. |  |  |  |
| **8** | S/C have a recording system that extends to any outside third parties using the S/C premises. This should ensure safeguarding reporting/arrangement requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e., lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises and it is made clear that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. |  | **☐**  **☐**  **☐** |  |
| **9** | Managing concerns and allegations against staff/volunteers, that meet harm test or low-level concerns see [Part four KCSiE 2023](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f0a68ea78c5f000dc6f3b2/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf) , must not be recorded on pupil’s records but S/C have a robust and secure confidential system in place. |  |  |  |
|  | **Transferring safeguarding records** | **Evidence/examples?** |  | **Action required and by when?** |
| **10** | Where children leave the S/C the DSL ensures their child protection file is transferred to the new S/C:   * within 5 days for an in-year transfer or * within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new S/C to have support in place for when the child arrives.   The DSL ensures secure transit, and confirmation of receipt is obtained. The CP file is transferred separately from the main pupil file. |  |  |  |
| **11** | The receiving S/C should ensure key staff such as DSLs and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) or the named persons with oversight for SEND are aware as required.  See Herts Grid For Learning [Safeguarding records](https://thegrid.org.uk/safeguarding-and-child-protection/child-protection/guidance-and-resources/pupil-safeguarding-records-guidance) |  |  |  |
| **12** | In addition to the transferring of the CP file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new S/C in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new setting to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, or those who are currently receiving support through the ‘Channel’ programme and can have that support in place for when the child arrives. |  |  |  |
| **13** | If files are not transferred ‘for a number of reasons’ S/C have a clear retention policy.  NB see retention of records below. |  |  |  |
|  | **Archiving** | **Evidence/examples?** |  | **Action required and by when?** |
| **14** | Secure and appropriate system to archive with restricted access.  If S/C have electronic files, there needs to be clearly set out in the agreement with the company about archiving of sensitive data. |  |  |  |
| **15** | If the setting is a secondary school or college, arrangements are made for archiving if the child is **not** moving on to Further Education. |  |  |  |
| **16** | The storage, retention and destruction of child protection files is made clear in S/C data management policy.  [IRMS Schools Toolkit - Information and Records Management Society](https://irms.org.uk/page/SchoolsToolkit) |  |  |  |
|  | **Auditing** | **Evidence / examples?** |  | **Action required and by when?** |
| **17** | Headteacher/DSL to audit [Record of Concern-and-action-form-proformas-2023-2024](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fthegrid.org.uk%2Fassets%2Frecord-of-concern-and-action-form-proformas-2023-2024.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) [Example & Guidance-for-record-of-concern-and-action-forms-2023-2024](https://thegrid.org.uk/assets/example-and-guidance-for-record-of-concern-and-action-forms-2023-2024.pdf) regularly to ensure that procedures are being followed and good practice standards of record keeping are being kept. This should be regular and recorded, when carried out. |  |  |  |
| **18** | Ratification of whole S/C standards of record keeping is shared with staff in order to encourage whole school staff ethos of continuous improvement and where applicable, for individual staff learning and development to improve on practice and identify any training needs. |  |  |  |
| **19** | Record auditing should be part of the S/C wider safeguarding organisational practice and scheduled in alongside other routine self-evaluation tasks. |  |  |  |
| **20** | Outcomes of record audits shared with the full Governing Body/Trustees. |  |  |  |
|  | **Data protection** | **Evidence/examples?** |  | **Action required and by when** |
| **21** | S/C is aware of, and are compliant with, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) that places duties on all organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.  Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2) which includes a myth-busting guide to information sharing  [Information Sharing](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice): Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers. The seven golden rules for sharing information will be especially useful.  [The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO)](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/), which includes information about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information.  [Data protection](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools) toolkit for schools - Guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with the UK GDPR. |  |  |  |
|  | **Subject Access Requests** | **Evidence/examples?** |  | **Action required and by when** |
| **22** | Clear processes and procedures for dealing with subject access requests with regard to safeguarding information and S/C requirement to keep records and the right to request access  [Pupil Safeguarding Records for Educational Establishments](https://thegrid.org.uk/assets/safeguarding-record-keeping-guidance-aug18.pdf) (chapter 7) |  |  |  |
|  | **Single Central Record (optional if requested)** | **Evidence/examples?** |  | **Action required and by when?** |
| **23** |  |  |  |  |
| **24** |  |  |  |  |
| **25** |  |  |  |  |

Enter any action onto the summary plan at the end of the audits or you can use column D to track and update as necessary

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| **Part 2 Individual casework and the role of the DSL/DDSL** |

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|  | **This column sets out minimum standard of pupil record keeping and sharing information. If met RAG rate** **GREEN**. | **Case audit 1** | **Case audit 2** | **Case audit 3** |
|  | Does the child’s main school file clearly have an indicator that corresponds with there being a separate confidential/safeguarding file in existence?  Is the case status for the child clear?  Were all necessary information/documents in relation to this transferred to the safeguarding file when it was opened?  There should be no safeguarding information in the open general file. |  |  |  |
|  | Does the file have a clear and concise front sheet?  Does the order/set up of the actual file corroborate with this? |  |  |  |
|  | Does the file have clear demographic information about the child and their family? i.e full names, DOB, address, including addresses where they may live part time, ethnicity, additional needs, communication needs of parents/carers?  This should include all persons living in their family home and key adults/persons involved in their care/influence family home life that the school are aware of.  Where there are issues or specific requirements when communicating or sharing information with parents i.e Child Arrangements Order, Prohibited Steps Order, separated parents, is this clear in the file?  Is there a clear section where risk factors i.e family having fled DV can be recorded so that information does not get shared with those who may present a risk?  Is there evidence that this information has been updated in a timely manner if and when changes have occurred for the child? |  |  |  |
|  | Is the record up to date?  Records should reflect meetings/updates having taken place regularly in line with the timescales set by the LA i.e minutes of core group meetings 4-6 weeks |  |  |  |
|  | Does the file contain details of any other professionals/agencies working with the child?  Does the file contain copies of all referrals made, reports for social care/multi-agency meetings and minutes of those meetings?  Does the record evidence that SLT/DSL have attended statutory/multi-agency meetings as well as providing reports?  Were the school have been allocated actions/pieces of work as part of a multi-agency/statutory plan are these clearly recorded in the file with clear updates and outcomes of those actions? |  |  |  |
|  | Are records of concern clearly visible in the file? Are they dated and concerns outlined clearly?  Are any follow up conversations held between the DSL and the staff member recorded in the file?  Does the file evidence feedback (where appropriate) was given to the member of staff by the DSL?  Is the DSLs analysis and decision following this information clearly in the file, and dated so it collates to this event of sharing information? Actions should be specific and have timescales.  Does this evidence DSLs reviewing information and responding in a timely manner?  Was there evidence of delay? What was the reason for this?  Does the file evidence the outcome of any referral made by the DSL following this event? i.e referral to an agency/Children’s Services? |  |  |  |
|  | Where referrals/requests have been made for the child/family, does the file evidence the DSL gaining consent/seeking views or contribution by the parents/carers?  Does this also evidence the child’s wishes and feelings where appropriate? |  |  |  |
|  | Does the file evidence the DSL working collaboratively with other agencies/professionals to gain advice and support in relation to any concerns when appropriate?  Referral/s or request for early help to other agencies including Children’s Services, are made when there has been an identified need. |  |  |  |
|  | Does the record have a clear and concise chronology?  Does this include all significant events/decisions in relation to the child and is easily understood to provide a ‘journey’ of the child to an outside reader i.e Ofsted?  Does the chronology evidence impact on the child?  Do dates in the chronology corroborate the actual main file i.e dates of reports, CP meetings etc? |  |  |  |
|  | Is there a record of telephone calls/emails/ discussions with parents/professionals? |  |  |  |
|  | Does the record show oversight and management of risk posed to the child by themselves/other child?   * If a child RAMP or Safety Support Plan is in place, is there a copy in the file? * Does the file evidence timely reviews of this plan in line with the action plan? * Does the file evidence the DSL reviewing this plan in response to any significant events or changes to the risk to always ensure effective oversight? * Does the file evidence the DSL seeking views and professional opinion from multi-agency partners i.e Children’s Services, PPU, CAMHS etc to ensure the assessment is fully informed and tailored the child/risks to the child?   RAMP/Safety Support Plans should be updated in response to both increased and decreased risk |  |  |  |
|  | Does the record show oversight and management of risk posed to the child/children in the setting by an associated adult?   * If there is an adult RAMP is there a copy in the file? * Does the file evidence timely reviews of this plan in line with the action plan? * Does the file evidence the DSL reviewing this plan in response to any significant events or changes to the risk to always ensure effective oversight? * Does the file evidence the DSL seeking views and professional opinion from multi-agency partners i.e Children’s Services, PPU, Probation, Change Grow Love (Spectrum) etc to ensure the assessment is fully informed and tailored to the risks? * Does this evidence inclusion of the adult subject to the plan? And appropriate feedback to them preferably in a meeting?   RAMP/Safety Support Plans should be updated in response to both increased and decreased risk |  |  |  |
|  | Does the file evidence the child’s voice?   * What does this look like? * Is this evident throughout the file in conjunction with all significant events/decisions made about the child?   How does the file evidence the school’s consideration of any additional needs the child may have? It is clear how they have ascertained the child’s views? |  |  |  |
|  | Overall does the file evidence:   * tenacity and professional curiosity in following up concerns and referrals? * DSL ability to pick up and act upon pattern of accumulative risk and identify appropriate actions * Sound decision making, appropriate responses and referrals in a timely way? |  |  |  |
|  | Where the setting has disagreed or challenged another agency/professional decision, is this clearly recorded in the file with a rationale?  Does the record evidence this is done in a professional manner, with the child’s needs being paramount?  Is an outcome of this recorded? |  |  |  |
|  | Records show clearly feedback/outcome of any actions taken to safeguard the child, e.g. DSL/DDSL spoke to parents for clarification, a child protection referral made or recorded decision why one was not required. |  |  |  |
|  | Multi-agency work carried out with partner agencies. |  |  |  |

**Action Plans:** This section is optional to use. DSL can either populate the actions from the main body of the audit where there is identified requirements for development, or DSL can use the column D to work from to update RAG rate accordingly when actions have been completed.

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| **Part 3 Whole School Staff recording – Records of Concern** |

The audit template for this particular task is on the back page of the Record of Concern template. It would be good practice for the Headteacher/DSL to complete the checklist/brief audit on the back of the model record of concern form periodically – perhaps a random sample taken of one or two concern forms every half term.

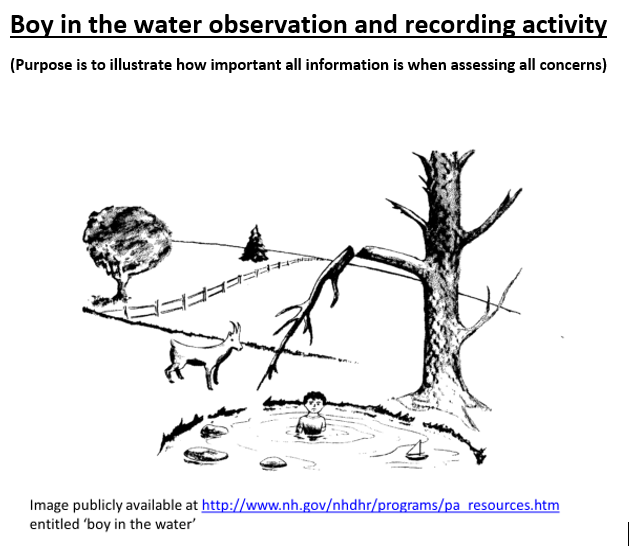
However, it is strongly recommended that DSLs should be regularly reviewing/quality assuring these documents upon receipt or at certain intervals in the academic year. Themes of improvement or areas of learning for whole staff identified in this activity should feed into this audit.

| **Part 1 Organisational Safeguarding Arrangements for Record Keeping** | | | | |
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| **Number/safeguarding practice standard and descriptor** | **RAG rating** | **Action and development required** | **Timescale** | **Name and position of person responsible** |
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| **Part 2 Individual Casework and the Role of the DSL/DSL** | | | | |
| **Number/safeguarding practice standard and descriptor** | **RAG rating** | **Action and development required** | **Timescale** | **Name and position of person responsible** |
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| **Part 3 Whole School Staff Recording – Record of Concerns [IN DRAFT – USE EXISTING AUDIT]** | | | | |
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**Exercise resources for recording activity**

Instructions for staff: Working **on your own**, write an observation of the image of the boy in the water below, **do not discuss this with your colleagues.**

* What can you see?
* What is the context?
* What is happening?
* How?
* Why?



**Instructions for DSL/DDSL - Boy in the water observation and recording exercise**

**Materials needed**

* Copy of the picture of the boy in the water
* Pen and paper, or if printed off as a table exercise staff can make notes on the image.

**Sequence of the exercise**

1. DSL to instruct staff to take 5 mins to work on their own and write a description/observation of what you see in the picture, **staff must not discuss with colleagues at this stage.**

* What can you see?
* What is the context?
* What is happening?
* How?
* Why?

1. Now swap your version with the person sitting next to you.
2. Looking at your peer’s version consider the following:

* Does the observation you wrote differ from the one you now have?
* In what ways?
* Are there any common features between the records?
* What information is included in the record?
* What information is missing? This might be apparently irrelevant things (such as the background scene, weather etc)
* Is there an example of a clear fact?
* Is there an example of an opinion?
* Is there an example of jargon/professional language?

**CPSLO Comments and Recommendations**

Name of CPSLO/s:

Date:

CPSLO comments on audit finds and identified actions outlined by education setting:

Any additional comments: