

## **Introduction**

Regulation 24(d) requires a provider to ensure that "*there is an annual review to assess the quality and safety of special care provided in the special care unit and to confirm that such special care is in accordance with national standards, the interim special care orders or the special care orders generally, and the child's programme of special care...*".

The National Standards for Special Care units ("the standards") provide a framework for the ongoing development of child-centred services for children detained in special care units to support the provision of safe and effective services. This guidance and template has been developed to provide a framework for you to undertake and record your annual review of quality and safety of care and support in your designated centre, and make judgments about your performance against the standards.

The aim of the template is to support you to measure your performance against the standards, and to identify areas for ongoing improvement of your service. It is not a statutory template, and as such you are not required to use it, however, you are required to produce a report of your annual review and make a copy available to the Chief Inspector (if so requested).

The template includes a series of prompts to support you to:

- assess your performance against each standard
- rate your performance
- develop a plan to address any areas for improvement
- write a final summary

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<sup>1</sup> Health Act 2007 (Care and Welfare of Children in Special Care Units) Regulations 2017 (as amended)

## About the template

The template has two sections.

- Section 1 Quality and Safety
- Section 2 Capacity and Capability

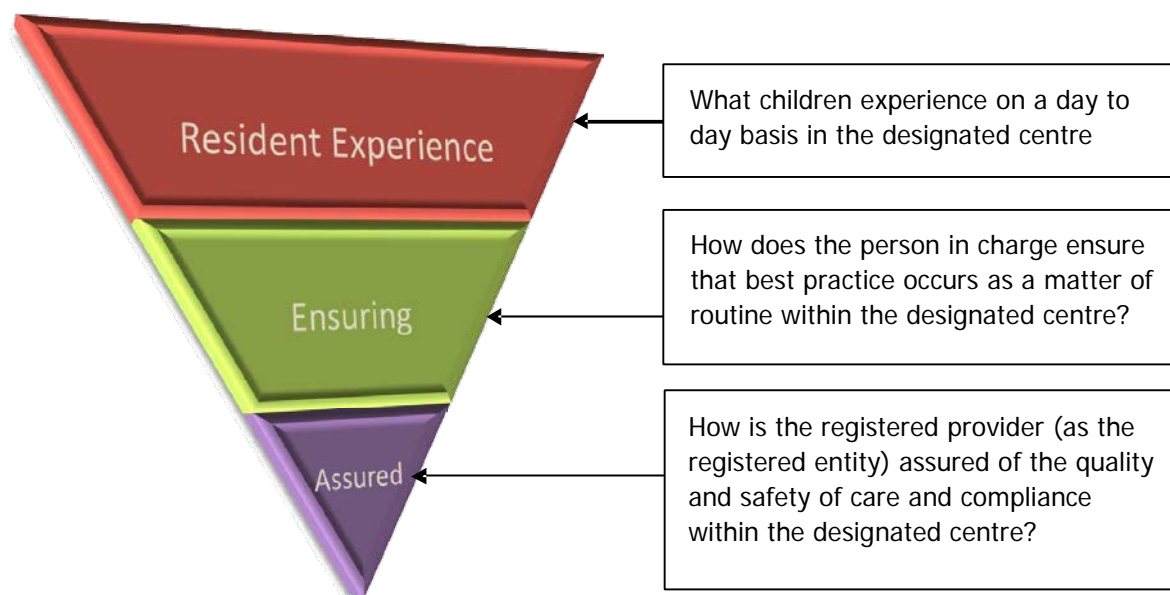
Each section is made up of four themes which are set out in full in the standards which are available on our website, [www.hiqa.ie](http://www.hiqa.ie). The standards are then written against each theme.

These themes are illustrated in Figure 1.



## Assessing your performance

In considering the assessment of your designated centre against the standards, you should be guided by the principles enshrined within the following model.



For each standard, you should consider the following, including examples:

- How are you assured there are effective systems in place to make sure children receive good quality and safe care?
- How do you monitor and evaluate the practice in your centre?
- How are you assured that there are effective procedures in place?
- What are your accomplishments in this area this year?
- Have you identified areas you need to improve?

Appendix 1 sets out some examples of assurance methods:

- Outcomes for children
- Effective policies and procedures
- Monitoring performance
- Effective reporting arrangements
- Outcomes of assurance methods

## Rating your performance

When rating your performance you should review all of the evidence you have identified through the assurance methods you have carried out, including your unannounced visits to your centre, and make a judgment about whether you are meeting the standard or not.

## **Developing a plan to address areas for improvement**

There is an improvement plan at the end of each section. This should assist you to identify how you intend to address any areas where you have assessed that quality improvement is needed. When considering what actions to take it may be useful to consider the following:

- Improvement to be achieved
- Actions that need to be taken
- Resources (if any) that are needed
- How the improvement is to be measured
- Timescales by which improvements will be achieved
- Who is responsible?

### **Summary**

You may find it useful to bring all the information to a summary at the end of the document, considering the following:

- Have standards been identified where there is a need for quality improvement?
- Have any regulations been identified as non-compliant by the Chief Inspector?
- Has the service been provided in line with your statement of purpose?
- How are you going to use this information to support your service planning and allocation of resources?
- What is your plan to make improvements, if required?
- If you have judged that you are not compliant with any regulations what actions are you taking to achieve compliance?

In some cases the Chief Inspector may ask for a copy to be submitted to the Chief Inspector or it may be reviewed on inspection.

**About the centre**

Centre name:

Centre ID:

Registered provider:

Person in charge:

Annual review period: From: To:

**Section 1****Quality and Safety****Theme 1: Child-centred Services**

**Quality  
improvement  
required? Y/N**  
Where yes  
complete  
improvement plan

Standard 1:1	The rights and diversity of each child are respected and promoted.	
Standard 1.2	The privacy and dignity of each child are respected.	
Standard 1.3	Each child exercises choice and experiences effective care and support as part of a programme of special care.	
Standard 1.4	Each child has access to information, provided in an accessible format that takes account of their communication needs.	
Standard 1.5	Each child participates in decision-making, has access to an advocate, and consent is obtained in accordance with legislation and current best practice guidelines.	

Standard 1.6	Each child develops and maintains positive attachments and links with family, the community and other significant people.	
Standard 1.7	Each child's complaints and concerns are listened to and acted upon in a timely, supportive and effective manner.	

**Theme 1: Child-centred Services**

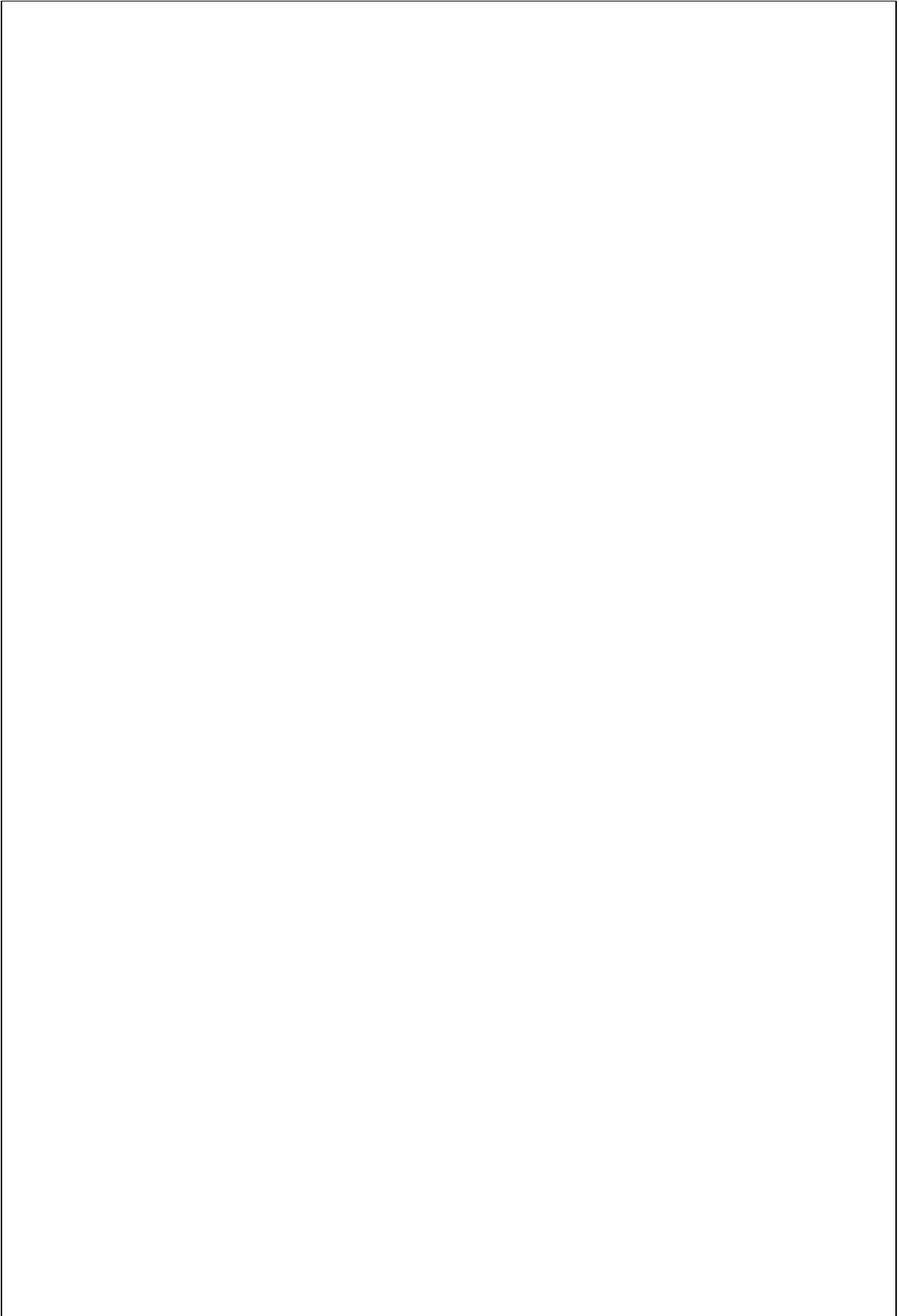


**Theme 1: Child Centred Services**

<b>Improvement Plan</b>	<b>Action/Resources</b>	<b>Timescale</b>



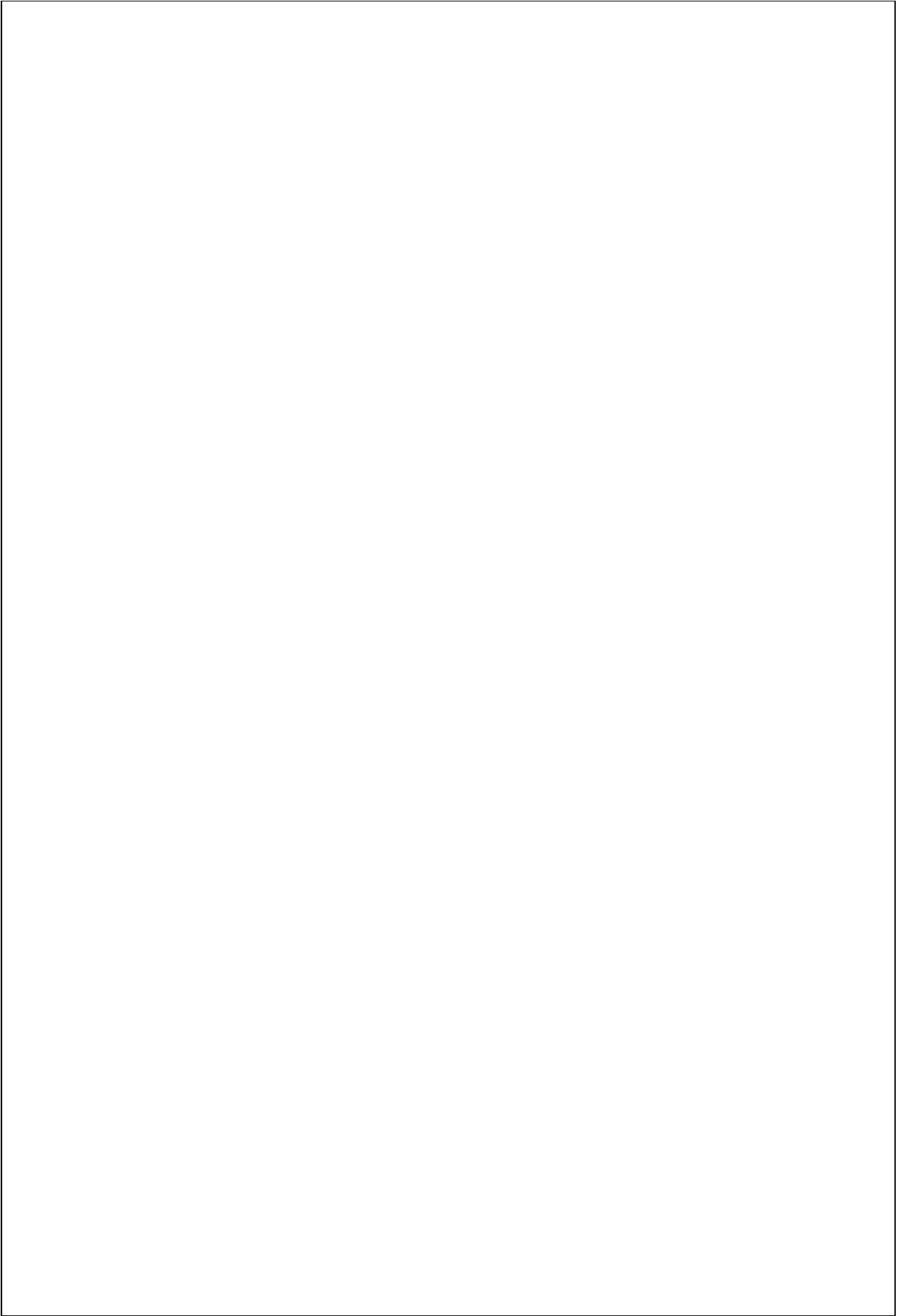
<b>Theme 2: Effective services</b>		<b>Quality improvement required? Y/N</b> Where yes complete improvement plan
Standard 2.1	Each child is placed in special care, in accordance with his or her identified needs and subject to the relevant legal authority.	
Standard 2.2	Each child has a programme of special care which details their needs and outlines the supports required to maximise their personal development.	
Standard 2.3	The special care unit is homely and promotes the welfare, dignity and safety of each child, consistent with the provision of safety and security.	
Standard 2.4	Children are actively supported in the transfer to and/or from special care and all transitions occur in a timely manner with a discharge plan in place to assure continuity of care.	
Standard 2.5	Special care units have a care record for each child.	
<b>Theme 2: Effective services</b>		



**Theme 2: Effective services**

<b>Improvement Plan</b>	<b>Action/Resources</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

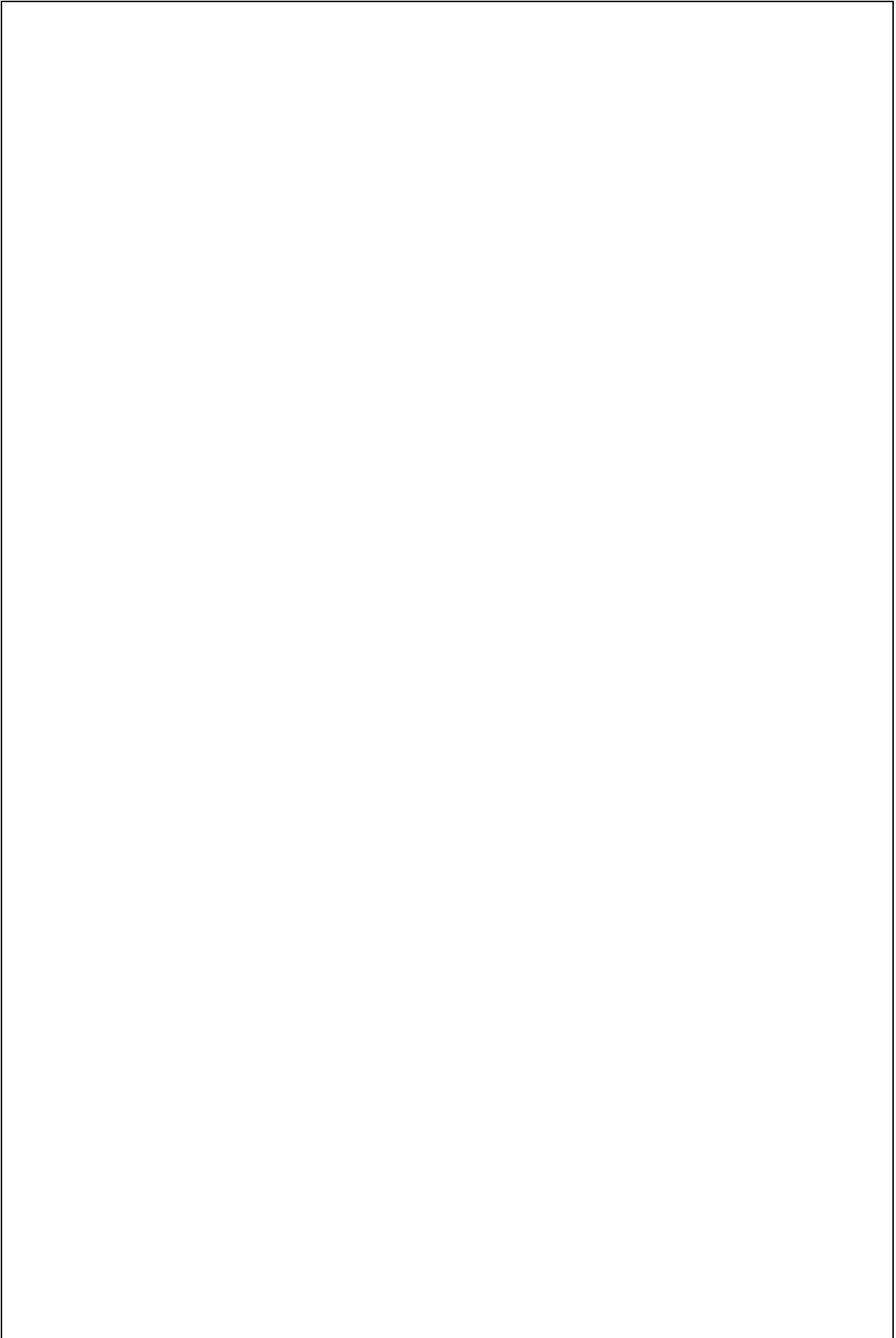
<b>Theme 3: Safe services</b>		<b>Quality improvement required? Y/N</b> Where yes complete improvement plan
Standard 3.1	Each child is safeguarded from abuse and neglect and their protection and welfare is promoted.	
Standard 3.2	Each child experiences care that supports positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing.	
Standard 3.3	Children are not subjected to any restrictive procedure unless there is evidence that it has been assessed as being required due to a serious risk to the safety and welfare of the child or that of others.	
Standard 3.4	Incidents are managed and reviewed in a timely manner and outcomes inform practice at all levels.	
<b>Theme 3: Safe services</b>		



**Theme 3: Safe services**

<b>Improvement Plan</b>	<b>Action/Resources</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

<b>Theme 4: Health and Development</b>		<b>Quality improvement required? Y/N</b> Where yes complete improvement plan
Standard 4.1	The health and development of each child is promoted.	
Standard 4.2	Each child receives an assessment and is given appropriate support to meet any identified need.	
Standard 4.3	Educational opportunities are provided to each child to maximise their individual strengths and abilities.	
<b>Theme 4: Health and Development</b>		



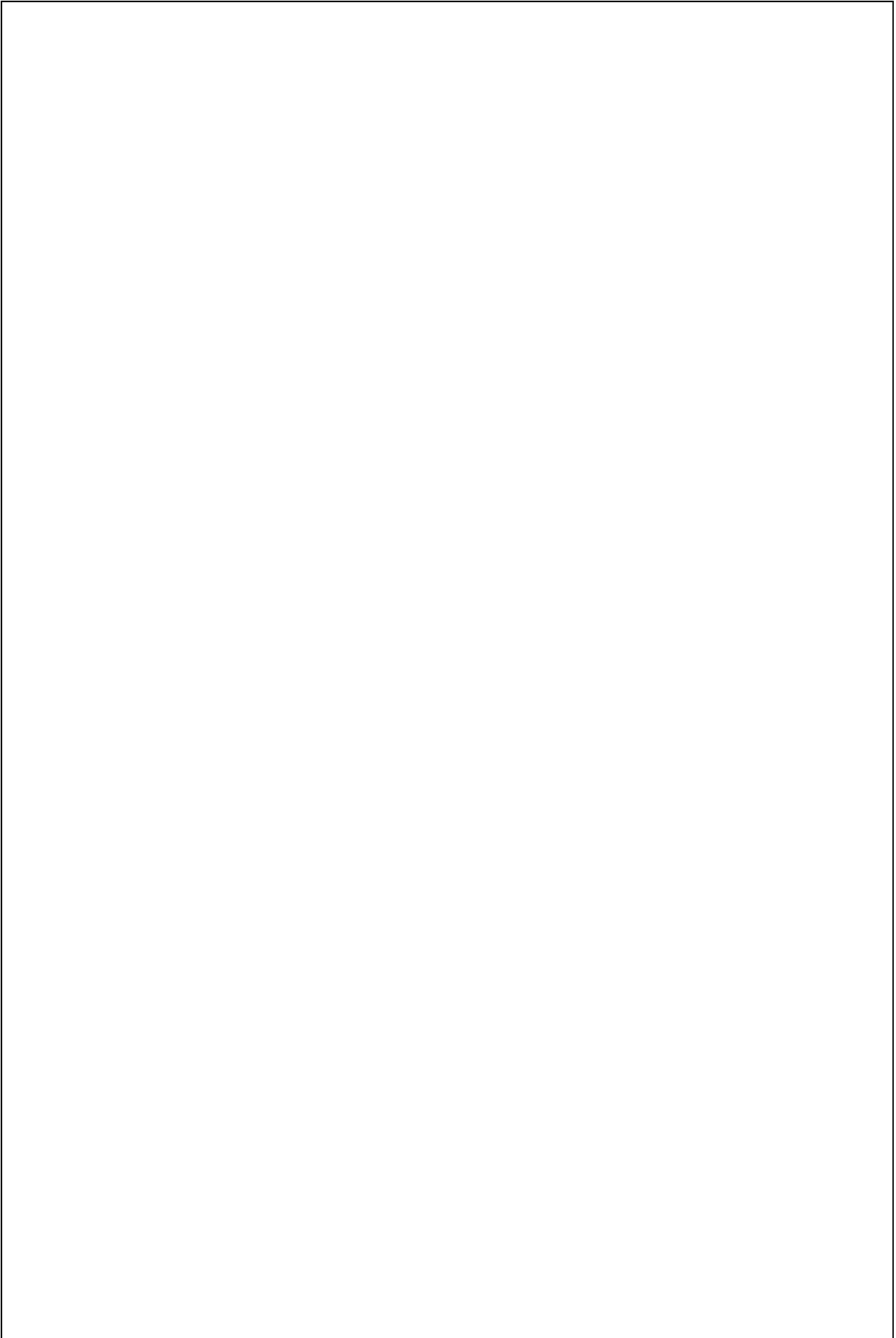


<b>Theme 4: Health and Development</b>		
<b>Improvement Plan</b>	<b>Action/Resources</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

## Section 2

### Capacity and Capability

<b>Theme 5: Leadership, Governance and Management</b>		<b>Quality improvement required? Y/N</b> Where yes complete improvement plan
Standard 5.1	The special care unit performs its functions as outlined in relevant legislation, regulations, national policies and standards to protect each child and promote their welfare.	
Standard 5.2	The special care unit has effective leadership, governance and management arrangements in place with clear lines of accountability.	
Standard 5.3	The special care unit has a publicly available statement of purpose that accurately and clearly describes the services provided.	
Standard 5.4	Appropriate service level agreements, contracts and or other similar arrangements are in place with the funding body or bodies.	
<b>Theme 5: Leadership, Governance and Management</b>		



**Theme 5: Leadership, Governance and Management**

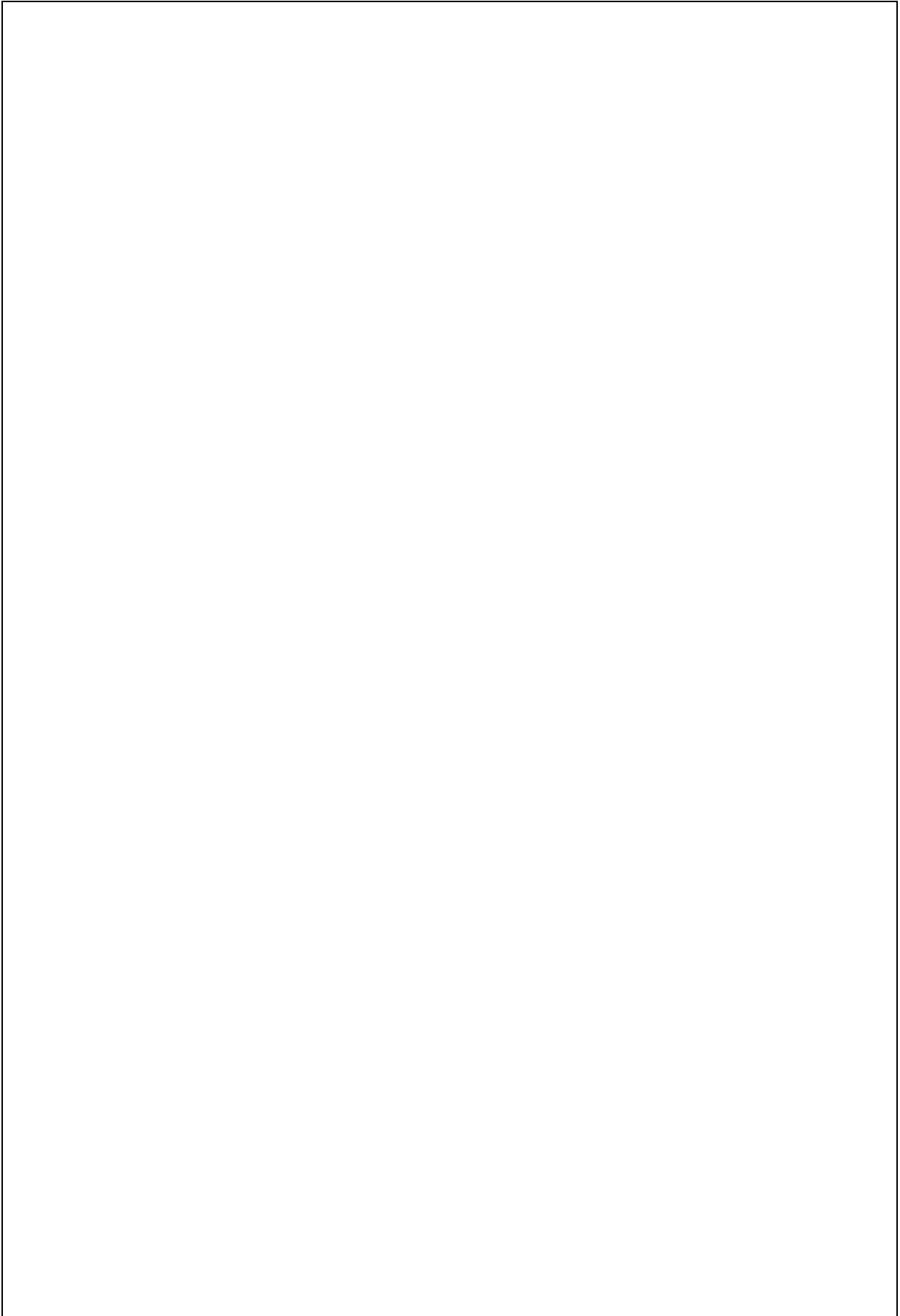
<b>Improvement Plan</b>	<b>Action/Resources</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

<b>Theme 6: Use of resources</b>		<b>Quality improvement required? Y/N</b> Where yes complete improvement plan
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Standard 6.1	The use of available resources is planned and managed to provide child-centred, effective and safe services to children.	
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<b>Theme 6: Use of resources</b>
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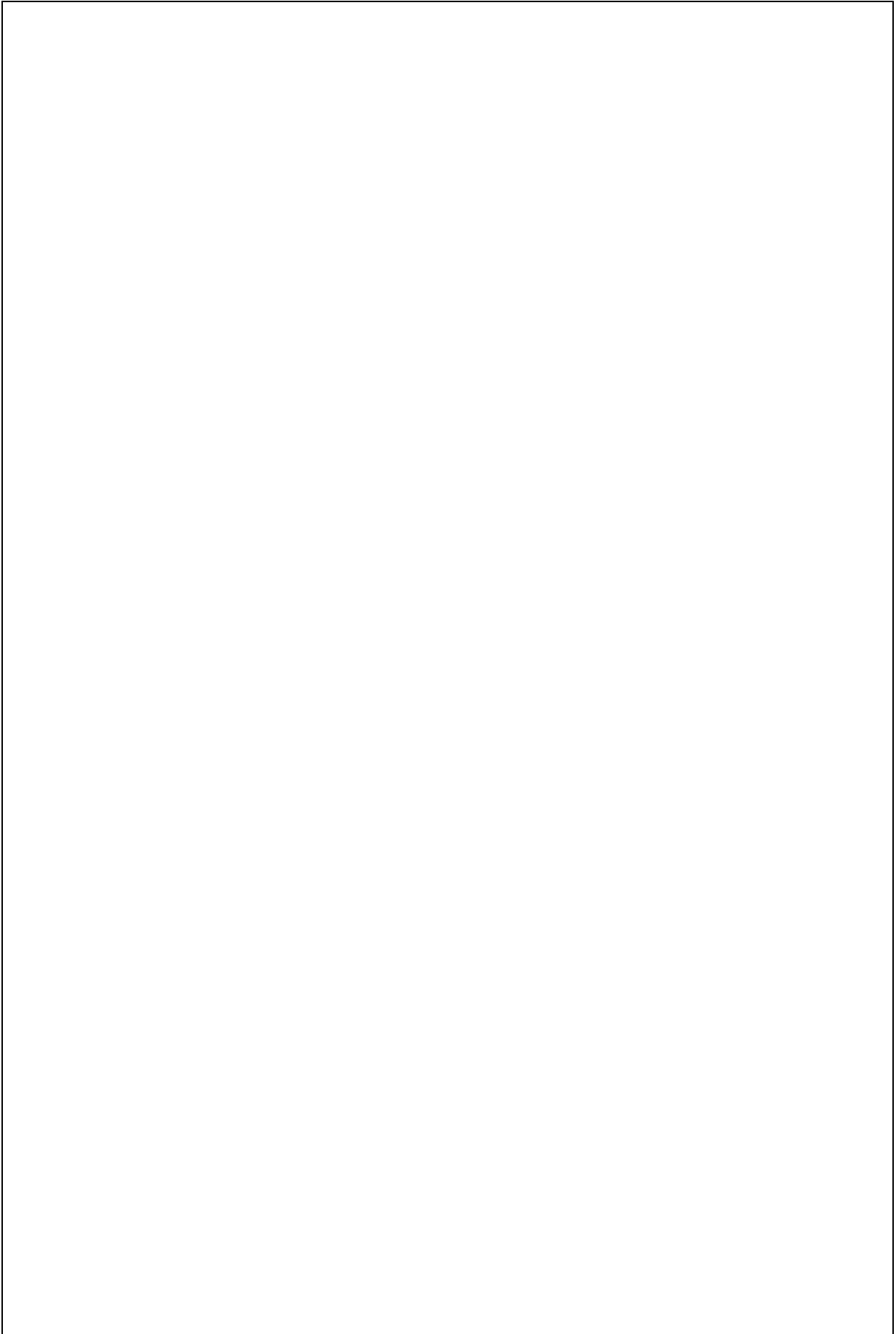
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Theme 6: Use of resources		
Improvement Plan	Action/Resources	Timescale

<b>Theme 7: Responsive Workforce</b>		<b>Quality improvement required? Y/N</b> Where yes complete improvement plan
Standard 7.1	Safe and effective recruitment practices are in place to recruit staff.	
Standard 7.2	Staff have the required competencies to manage and deliver child-centred, effective and safe services to children.	
Standard 7.3	Staff are supported and supervised to carry out their duties and promote and protect the care and welfare of children.	
Standard 7.4	Training is provided to staff to improve outcomes for children.	
<b>Theme 7: Responsive workforce</b>		

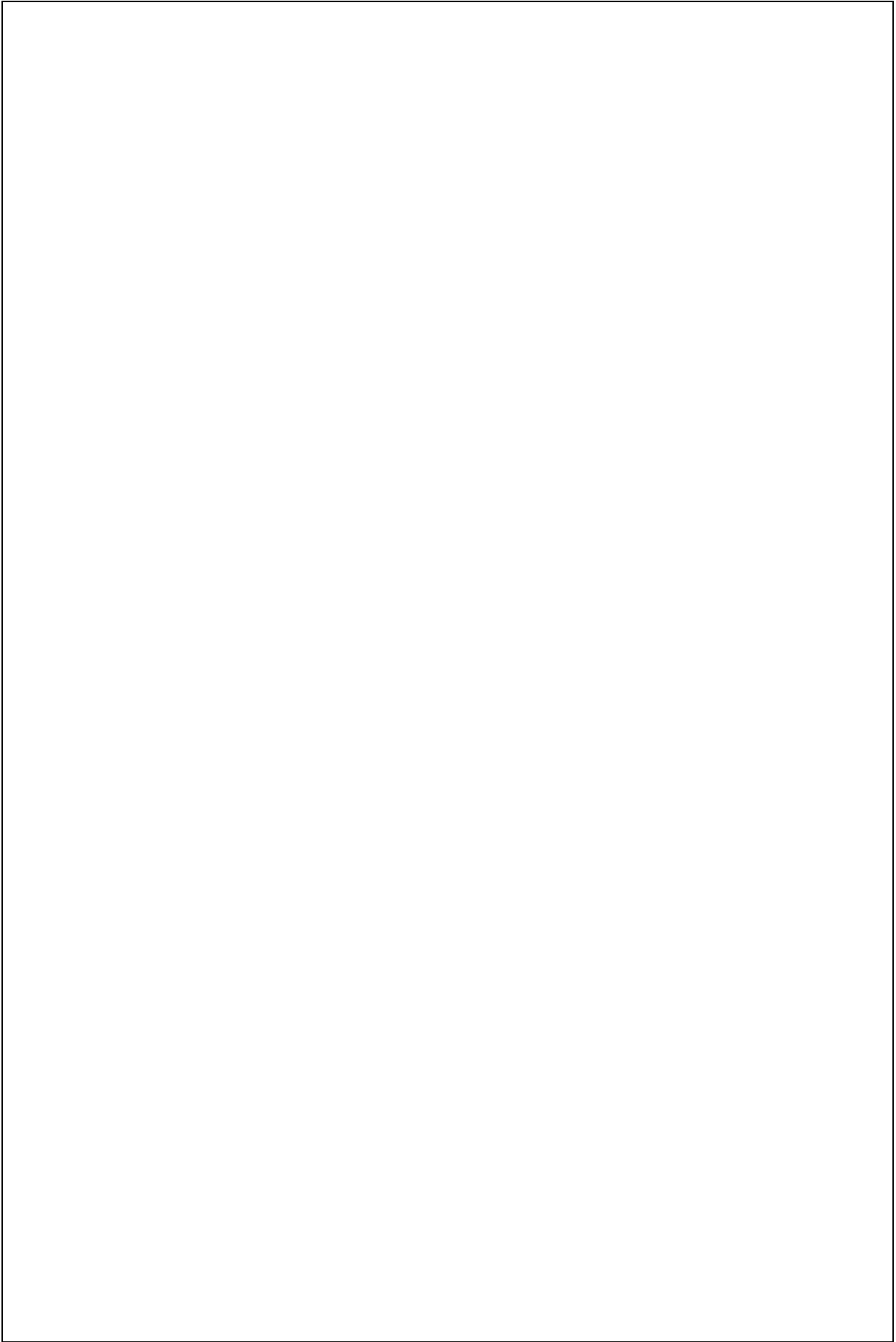




Theme 7: Responsive workforce		
Improvement Plan	Action/Resources	Timescale

<b>Theme 8: Use of Information</b>		<b>Quality improvement required? Y/N</b> Where yes complete improvement plan
Standard 8.1	Information is used to plan and deliver a child-centred, safe and effective service.	
Standard 8.2	Information governance arrangements ensure secure record-keeping and file-management systems are in place to deliver a child-centred, safe and effective service.	

**Theme 8: Use of information**



**Theme 8: Use of information**

<b>Improvement Plan</b>	<b>Action/ Resources</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

## Summary

**Appendix 1**  
**Examples of assurance methods**

Type	Example methods
<p><b>Outcomes for children</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are children involved in the running of the service?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Children's meetings</li> <li>○ Consulted about changes in the service</li> <li>○ Involved in key decisions about their special care programme?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How has this informed your practice?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What evidence is there?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Identify if children are enabled to make choices about their lives               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are children making choices about day to day arrangements?</li> <li>○ Are children involved in making choices about how they spend their time?</li> <li>○ Are children supported to make decisions about their lives?</li> <li>○ Do they experience their care as supportive and forward-looking?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Seek the views of the children on the quality of the service:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Speak with children</li> <li>○ Observe quality of interactions with peers and staff</li> <li>○ Attend house meetings</li> <li>○ Surveys</li> <li>○ Comments boxes</li> <li>○ Communication with relatives and representatives – what are they telling the service?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Observe practice               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Informally spend time with the children</li> <li>○ Observe staff practice</li> <li>○ Consider formal observation tools</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Review practice in relation to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Positive behaviour support</li> <li>○ Restrictive practice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Type	Example methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Incidents/ accidents</li> <li>○ Complaints</li> <li>• Review documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are relevant documents accessible by children?</li> <li>○ Is key information available for children? (for example complaints, advocacy, keeping safe)</li> <li>○ Have assessments for children been carried out within required timeframes?</li> <li>○ Are records clear?</li> <li>○ Where support needs are identified, is it clear how those needs will be met?</li> <li>○ Where other professional input is required, has it been identified and facilitated?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Have other professionals' recommendations been implemented?</li> </ul>
<b>Effective policies and procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm you have all the policies required by the regulations in place? (regulations 6, 9 and 12 and schedule 2)</li> <li>• Carry out samples/audits to check they are effective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do they provide clear information?</li> <li>○ Does the audience understand them?</li> <li>○ Are they put into practice?</li> <li>○ Are there any areas where practice is not following what is set out in the policy or procedure? For example, staff are not clear how to record information when a complaint is made to them.</li> <li>○ Do any need to be reviewed/updated?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out unannounced visits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Speak with children and relatives</li> <li>○ Use alternative communication methods where appropriate</li> <li>○ Observe quality of interactions with peers and staff</li> <li>○ Meet with staff</li> <li>○ Observe practice of staff</li> <li>○ Check staffing levels</li> <li>○ Sample procedures, such as complaints and safeguarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inspect the premises (clean, tidy, free of risk)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure audits are in place to monitor performance</li> </ul>



Type	Example methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have systems in place to review results of audits, and record actions to be taken so they can be monitored</li> <li>• Ensure the risk assessment mechanisms are effective               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are risks being identified?</li> <li>○ Are you assured that steps are being put in place to mitigate identified risks?</li> <li>○ Are all safety procedures being followed? (fire, risk management, premises, vehicle management)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Effective reporting arrangements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there systems for important information to be escalated through managers?</li> <li>• Do you receive the information you need to be assured the service is meeting the needs of the children, and complying with the standards and regulations?</li> <li>• Is there an appropriate procedure for escalation of pertinent information?</li> <li>• Is the staff team kept informed of changes for children, practice, upcoming events, and expectations for practice?</li> <li>• How do managers and staff request resources for areas where a need has been identified? For example specific training to meet a new child's needs.</li> <li>• Are there mechanisms for managers to meet and share information?</li> <li>• Are there appropriate on call arrangements?</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes of assurance methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are the assurance methods you are using supporting you to run an effective service?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What do you know?</li> <li>○ How are you going to respond?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How are the results impacting your business planning?</li> <li>• How are your assurance methods improving the service for children?</li> <li>• How are you assured that the service is meeting the needs of the children?</li> <li>• Are you assured that you are meeting the standards and regulations?</li> <li>• If you are not, what are you going to do about it?</li> <li>• If you are, what are you going to do to continuously improve the service and the experience of people using it?</li> </ul>

Type	Example methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you let the children and their relatives know about the results of your review?</li><li>• How do you let employees know about the findings of the review, and engage them in any improvements needed?</li></ul>