##### NB This template was originally designed for needs to be tailored to the specific circumstances of each organisation. It is intended as a framework for discussion and planning, with suggestions for areas you may need to consider. There may be other areas that are specific to your type of work.

# ANYORG: Record-keeping Policy (Children)

##### Status, e.g. approved by Board [date]; to be reviewed [date]

This template is designed for agencies carrying out regular case-work with children. For agencies with more informal dealings with children, the principles will still apply, but other aspects of the policy may be abbreviated. In all cases, this Policy should be read in conjunction with policies covering Confidentiality and Safeguarding.

#### Purpose

The purpose of keeping children’s records is to ensure that:

* each child's progress and achievements can be monitored
* there is a record of any concerns about a child's safety or welfare
* there is an account of ANYORG's dealings with children and their parents
* people at ANYORG are responsible and accountable for their actions
* there is continuity in providing services to children if staff leave or are temporarily unavailable

#### Principles

ANYORG regards good record-keeping as essential to good child protection practice and an important part of a professional’s task.

Records should use clear, straightforward language, be concise, and accurate. They should clearly differentiate between facts, opinion, judgements and hypothesis.

Safeguarding children requires information to be brought together from a number of sources, and careful professional judgements to be made on the basis of this information. Records must be clear, accessible, and comprehensive. The subject of a record does have the right in law to request access to them at any stage. Judgements made, actions and decisions taken should be carefully recorded.

Where decisions have been taken jointly across agencies, or endorsed by a manager, this should be made clear on the case records.

#### Practice

Relevant information will normally be collated in one place by the [Manager / key worker / case-worker dealing with the service user concerned].

Records should clearly provide the chronology of the case and should demonstrate how the process has been managed by the professional and indicate how actions taken and decisions made have been endorsed by line managers and senior managers.   
  
Specifically, the reader should be able to track the plan for the case through:

* the information about the child and family and actions taken from referral through interventions to outcome and closure of the case
* identified and potential risks of harm, the source of harm and those at risk
* the intended outcome for the child, the interventions which have taken place, by whom and the reasons for intervention
* the evidence that change has taken place and
* an analysis of the progress that is being made

Staff who make verbal, or telephone, referrals to social services will confirm them in writing within 24 hours, and will record the decisions/actions taken by the receiver of the referral in the child’s case file.

When a child moves outside ANYORG’s area or ceases to receive a service, the [Manager / key worker / case-worker dealing with the service user concerned] will review whether the child’s records need to be transferred to another agency. Cases where this need is not identified should be retained in accordance with the agency’s record retention policy.

Records will be stored safely and in a way that they are not accessible to the inquisitive but can be retrieved promptly and efficiently when needed.

Case-work records will be retained for at least one year from ceasing to provide a service [or longer if required under your specific regulatory regime].