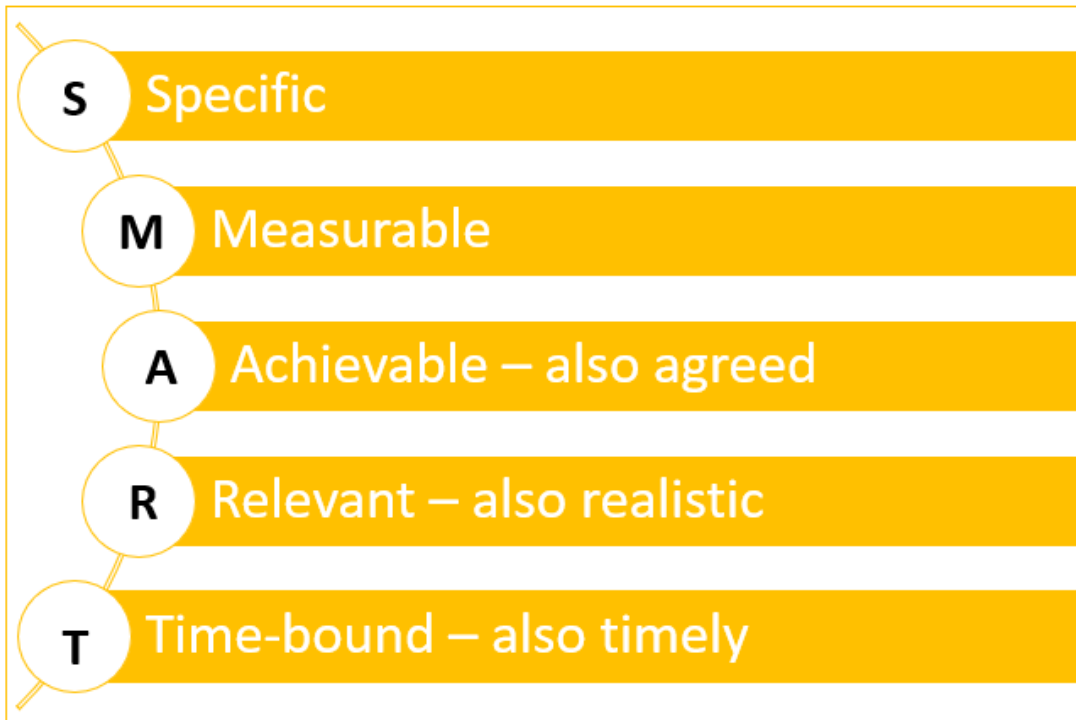


## Spotlight on SMART Planning

### What does SMART stand for?



### Why SMART planning?

Evidence from Significant Case and Learning Reviews suggests that where serious issues have been known to services, actions in plans have often been vague, non-measurable and have lacked direction. In turn this makes them difficult to apply or measure and can leave professionals unsure of the expectations of them – and importantly also very difficult for children, families and adults to know what is expected of them. Using a SMART approach to planning, the focus must remain on what needs to change for the child, young person or adult, as well as how quickly that change needs to happen.

### Why is SMART planning important?

Objectives that are SMART are more likely to be achieved, because the expectations are clear, and everyone involved in the plan knows who is meant to do what and when. This includes the person who the plan is about, their family and carers. Involving the child, adult and family in the plan, and sharing it with them is important. It helps them understand their rights and options and sharing understanding of the situation from their perspective. The voice of the child or adult should always be heard in the development, implementation and review of the plan.

# Spotlight on SMART Planning

## What are the elements of SMART?

S

**Specific** – the action needs to be clear, well defined and unambiguous. State what is to be done, by whom, where and when. Actions should address each identified risk.

M

**Measurable** – there must be clear criteria for measuring progress and determine if you are on track to reach your goal. Ask – how many? How much? How do I know if I have reached my goal? What will it look like for the child or adult if the plan is working?

A

**Achievable** – A also sometimes stands for **Agreed**. Outcomes should not be out of reach and set up a child, adult or family to fail. Actions must be in the control or influence of the people who are named in the action. Is it reachable, given the time and resources?

R

**Relevant** – R also stands for **Realistic**. Plans need to be dynamic and address the current risks and concerns. The plan should be adapted accordingly as it progresses, by a core group or at a review meeting.

T

**Time-bound** – T also stands for **Timely**. All actions need to have a clear timescale. On-going should not feature in the plan – state the date by which the action will be completed and reviewed.

## SMARTER?

Sometimes we will hear people talking about SMARTER planning. In this context, E stands for **Evaluated** and the R stands for **Re-evaluated**. There is no point in having a plan unless we regularly review how well things are working and adjust it as new information comes to light. We should always ask if the plan is working – is it reducing the risk of harm? Do we need to make any changes?

## Want to know more?

Check out what our [Multi-agency Adult Support and Procedures](#) and [Multi-agency Child Protection Procedures](#) say about planning.

