



Dudley Children's Services

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFER 2018 – 2019

Strengthening partnerships with children, families and communities to provide sustainable services, strong partnerships, quality in practice



Welcome to Dudley Children's Services

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Dudley Council and I hope your time here will be exciting and rewarding – both for you in your development and for your work with Children, Young People, Families and Carers.

This brochure provides an overview of the offer and support that we provide in Dudley for your continuous professional development. Firstly this brochure will focus upon the learning and development opportunities for all staff at all levels working within Children's Services. The second section of this brochure will detail the career development opportunities available at different levels for staff wishing to progress within Dudley.

Dudley is dedicated to your learning and progression and we want you to have a great experience working here. If you have any questions regarding the training or development opportunities, please feel free to contact the Centre For Professional Practice on 01384 818622 or CPP@dudley.gov.uk. You can also visit our website for more information www.dudleycpp.org.uk

We are excited to share what is on offer here in Dudley and look forward to working with you in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Darren Shaw

Principal Social Worker and Head of Practice Improvement

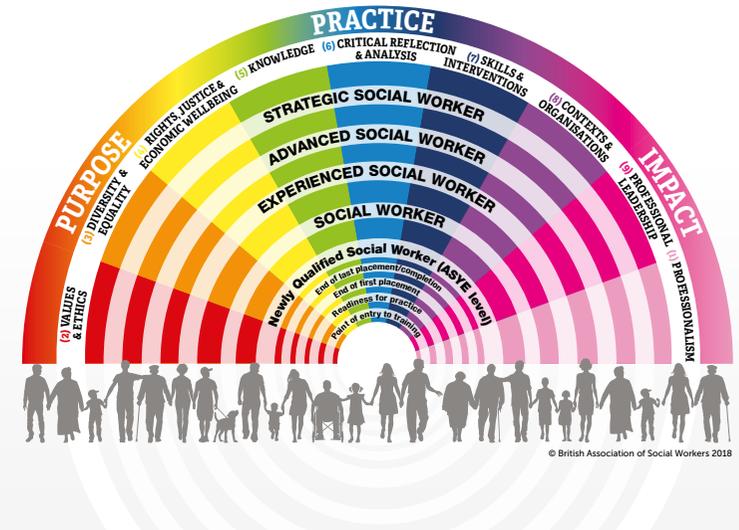
Introduction to Dudley Children's Services

Here at Dudley, we want to offer our Children's Services workforce the best opportunities to progress and lead practice. We want you to be a part of our journey to 'Good'. To do that we offer training and development that fits in line with the revised Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF's).

The framework recognises that learning takes places in a range of different ways, not just through traditional training activities and we offer a wider range of learning and development opportunities for workers at different levels.

Dudley's Learning and Development Offer has also been mapped against the (KSS) **Knowledge and Skills Statement for Child and Family Practitioners** and for **Practice Supervisors**. Our training programme offers opportunities in preparation for the **National Accreditation** of Social Workers. Dudley will be working with the West Midlands Teaching Partnership, Research in Practice and the West Midlands Principal Social Worker Network to develop a robust process for accreditation.

Dudley expects all Social Workers to take professional responsibility for developing their skills to a high standard, through undertaking learning and development activities over and above the core standards required for registration with Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC).



We want to grow our own Social Workers, senior Social Workers and team managers to increase opportunities and stability within the workforce. Our ambition is to create a sufficient, motivated and highly skilled workforce to be comprehensive and competent in meeting the needs of children, young people and families that we work with.

We recognise that our staff are our greatest asset and this strategy describes the support and opportunities available to all staff. Here in Dudley we are proud of the robust and skilled managers working across all services to ensure that it runs effectively. Our workforce is made up of a range of services and teams that create a one council approach to supporting children, young people and families in our borough. These include but not limited to:

- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
- Early Help Services
- Assessment
- Care Management
- Court Team
- Intervention and Prevention Team
- Adolescent and Response Team
- Children in Care teams
- Care Leavers team
- Fostering
- Adoption
- Youth Service
- Youth Offending
- Independent Reviewing Service
- Contact Team
- Looked After Children's Education Service (LACES)
- Children with Disabilities
- Residential Homes

Learning and Development opportunities for all staff

Induction process

Each new employee in Children's Services will experience our comprehensive induction to Dudley.

The induction provides an overview of Dudley Children's Services and the way in which we work. The induction process provides new staff with the tools and resources to enable you to undertake your role effectively. This includes training in using the electronic systems and providing you with your ID and laptops so that you are ready to start your new role feeling ready and supported.

The induction process runs on a weekly basis so that all new staff can access it as soon as they start here in Dudley.

Please see the link for more the [Induction Process](#).

Restorative practice

Dudley is implementing a Restorative Practice approach across all service areas to underpin practice.

Restorative practice has the underlying premise that people will make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things with them rather than to or for them. The approach requires high levels of challenge to set boundaries, expectation and clear consequences. This is balanced against high levels of support of encouragement and nurturing through compassion and empathy.

Restorative practice is a way of *being* which helps to build and maintain healthy relationships; resolving difficulties and repairing harm.

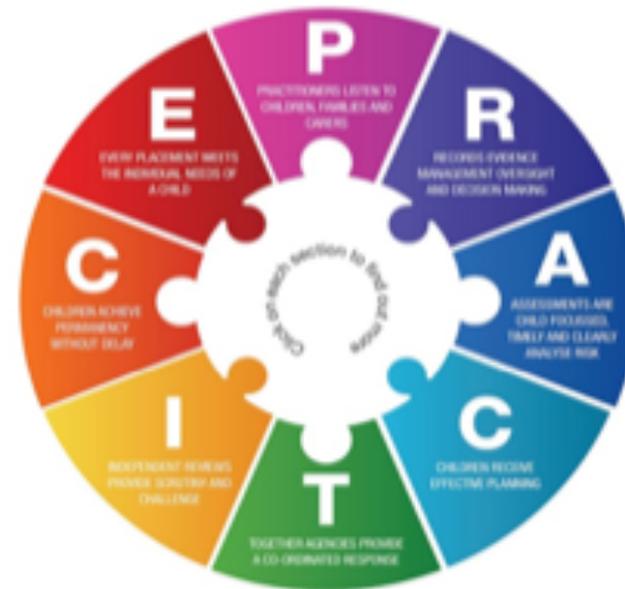
This mandatory three-day training is currently being rolled out to all Children's Services staff across 2018 – 2019.

Children's Services Practice Standards

Dudley have developed its own Practice Standards to give everyone working with Children and Families a set of consistent values and core standards by which to work to.

These standard will allow measurability of the quality of services provided and ultimately the impact they have on children and families in Dudley. They are acknowledged by our partner agencies and designed to support you in working together in achieving good outcomes for the children and young people we work with.

For further information please see [Dudley Practice Standards](#).



Training Programme

Dudley Children's Services training offer was created with the needs of the service and staff at its heart. The programme itself is dynamic and creative running 296 training sessions with over 70 different courses all relevant to roles in Children's Services.

In recognising the learning needs of our workforce, the training sessions are offered in several formats to allow time to develop and reflect on practice. A mix of internal and external trainers of a high standard and expertise delivers training sessions.

Training includes full day sessions and half-day workshops to allow flexibility in a working day.

Team training is available where teams and services can request tailored training to their requirements and timescale delivered by service link workers, making the experience personal and beneficial.

The training programme links to online training courses available at no cost to Dudley employees and courses provided by the Safeguarding board are accessible via the training links.

Centre for Professional Practice Team (CPP)

Dudley has the highest aspirations for children and young people. Evaluating the impact of service delivery is critical to achieving this.



The Centre for Professional Practice supports and evidences that services are being delivered effectively and to standards that enable children's welfare to be safeguarded and promoted.

The team is managed by the Principal Social Worker and Head of Practice Improvement Darren Shaw, and supported by several Advanced Social Work Practitioners who evaluate practice through audit activity and quality assurance. The team offer a program of coaching, mentoring and support.

Each Advanced Social Work Practitioner has areas of expertise and they are linked to a service area providing extensive assistance and guidance to managers and practitioners.

The CPP team have a website accessible by all Children's Services staff and partner agencies providing easy access to policy and procedures, the training programme booking system and tools and resources to use in your roles.

The website www.dudleycpp.org.uk is regularly updated with new upcoming events, feedback and news in Dudley ensuring staff have access to current practice issues and successes.

Supervision

Dudley Council is committed to fulfilling its duty of care to its staff whilst safeguarding its service users and the public.

The council therefore recognises the need for all of its staff members to receive good quality regular supervision which is of an equitable standard across services.

The supervision policy holds reflective practice at its heart and uses a set of procedures, guidance and tools specific to service needs to support effective supervision.

Research in Practice's Five Anchor Principles are used to underpin reflective discussion focusing on the journey of the children and young people we work with. The supervision procedure gives an option to record directly onto the child's electronic files creating an ease in recording and decision making process.

Further reflective theories are used to promote staff wellbeing, learning and development with a visual and engaging approach.

Research in Practice

Research in Practice brings together research and practitioner expertise, building the sectors capacity for evidence informed practice. Professionals on all levels benefit from their wide range of high quality, accessible resources and learning opportunities.

Dudley Children's Services subscribe to research in practice enabling all staff to have access to all services provided.

Staff are encouraged to create their own account provided by Dudley and have access to resources such as webinars, print outs, videos, training days and online training on many topics from fabricated illness to domestic abuse and the public law outline (PLO) process – and everything else in between!

Awards Ceremony

In Dudley we know that our staff work hard and are passionate about achieving positive outcomes for children and young people in the borough.

In recognising the hard work, here in Dudley we want to celebrate our successes and ensure that our staff are valued and rewarded for their hard work and determination.



Each year, the Centre for Professional Practice run a Childrens Services Development week offering workshop training and support on many hot topics including guest speakers and resources.

At the end of the development week a Staff Recognition Awards ceremony is held where there are several awards given to staff which have been nominated by their colleagues and children that they are working with including social worker of the year and the extra mile award. All Newly Qualified Social Workers receive recognition of their completion of the ASYE programme and all nominees for all categories are provided with a certificate.

Health and Wellbeing

As a Local Authority, we recognise the importance in maintaining staff wellbeing, given the high levels of pressure and stress that come with working in frontline Children's Services.

We have a designated support team offering a range of services from one to one counselling, group sessions around mindfulness and stress management. As a member of our staff you have access to these services as needed with support from your managers to allow engagement alongside your working role.

Career Progression Pathway in Dudley

At every stage of the career pathway, Dudley will provide support and challenge through regular learning opportunities and supervision.

This is also linked to performance, audit and through annual review of workers progress. We want every worker who joins Children's Services to have a long and successful career. We have a number of opportunities at different levels to support your career progression.



Grow your own Social Workers

If you work with children and families within Children's Services and you are interested in becoming a qualified social worker, then we want to support your progression.

You are an integral part of the journey for our children and families in Dudley and your experience of early help will lend itself to you becoming a child focused social worker. We therefore want to offer you the opportunity to study with the Open University.

The application criteria is:

- You should already hold a relevant degree/higher education qualification
- You have worked for Dudley for more than 2 years
- You will remain working for Dudley post qualification for 2 years.

To apply, you will need to complete an application form post November 2018 and you will be shortlisted to attend a panel who will make a final decision.

Following any successful offer, you will be required to sign a contract of education with Dudley to outline the conditions of the offer.

Within your study; you will continue to be employed within your role, earning while you learn. You will be provided with two social work placements in contrasting services to your role in order to gain a wide experience of social work practice developing your knowledge and skills.

You will have access to the support of the CPP team to support your learning and development with reflective supervision sessions on a monthly basis during placement and quarterly during your course study.

We are also working with the Step Up to Social Work programme, which is an intensive 14 month full time programme for trainee Social Workers. Trainees will work gaining hands on practitioner experience and academic learning. Successful trainees will be awarded a post graduate diploma in Social Work, once they complete the programme. This will allow them to register and practice as a social worker. For more information about the application process please see [Step Up to Social Work.](#)

Students

In Dudley, we work with local universities to provide placement for student Social Workers.

We work mainly with the University of Birmingham as Dudley is part of the West Midlands Social Work Teaching Partnership (WMSWTP). We also work with other universities such as Birmingham City University, Warwick University and the Open University. We offer placements across a selection of services from Early Help through to the Court team and Children in Care.

If you are a student, our offer to you is that you experience good social work practice and you are offered the opportunities to experience working with children, young people and their families to enable you to gain the knowledge and skills you need to qualify as a social worker.

Social Workers supervising and assessing a student on placement hold or are working towards a suitable practice education qualification in line with the Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS); these are minimum requirements for practice education. To ensure that you are fully supported and given the best experiences we continue to support our Practice Educators with regular training and peer supervision in order to maintain high level practice.

You will have access to the full training programme and you are welcome to attend any training relevant to your post, with permission and guidance from your Practice Educator. There are times that as a student you will be offered an insight into the ASYE training sessions and have opportunity to discuss what this could mean for you once qualified and seeking a position in Dudley.

If you are on your final placement with Dudley and you are successful in passing your placement, we will support you to apply for an ASYE position.

Newly Qualified Social Workers

Dudley provides a structured Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) Programme for Newly Qualified Social Workers.

The first year is crucial in providing you with the support and experience you need to develop into a confident and competent practitioner. To support you we have an ASYE programme that offers a week long induction, targeted training days, group supervision sessions that will focus on elements of the Knowledge and Skills Statement for Children and Family Social Work. You will have a protected caseload, regular reflective supervision and study days to support your practice development and to allow time to build your portfolio of evidence.

Your ASYE portfolio will be internally moderated and verified by a panel of internal professionals such as the ASYE programme lead and team managers. Portfolios are also externally moderated through the regional group. All Social Workers completing their ASYE will be recognised within the National Database and locally through the annual Children's Services Awards.

Our programme in Dudley has had many successes with previous Social Workers within the programme going on to become Dudley's Social Worker of the Year and good achievements within the Audit and Quality assurance process.

For full details please read the [ASYE Handbook](#).

Social Workers

Following the completion of the ASYE programme, as a qualified social worker with post qualifying experience, you will have full access to our training programme that includes both internal training and external training.

You will be able to access Research in Practice and the CPP website that offers a range of useful tools, research and resources to support and develop your practice.

You will be offered reflective supervision to challenge and develop your social work knowledge, skills and practice. There are further opportunities using Peer Supervision to explore practice issues in more depth using innovative support networks across social work teams.

Dudley offer quarterly practice development events that considers a 'hot topic' for all staff working in Children's Services. Other opportunities include being a mentor for ASYE's to support their first year in practice and this may include completing practice observations for ASYE's and supporting with more complex case work. You will have the opportunity to support first year social work student with their Practice orientation prior to them starting their first placement and this will support your ability to contribute to the development of others.

Each year in Dudley your annual income will increase throughout the pay grade with opportunity for you to apply for further rises as you become an experienced social worker via career progression panel.

Senior Social Workers

Once you have been qualified for two years and have passed your ASYE, you will be able to apply to our career progression panel.

This will be your opportunity to highlight your best work and the development and progression you have made, to show that you are capable of taking on more complex cases as a result of your experience and that you will be able to start supporting other Social Workers practice. For more information please see **Social Work Career Progression.**

You will be able to apply to be a Practice Educator, for both stages 1 & 2, to enable you to supervise students at stage 1 on a day to day basis and at stage 2 you will be able to assess their skills and capability to pass their placement and contribute to them achieving their social work qualification. We work with the University of Birmingham to obtain practice education qualifications and this will include you have to complete a portfolio of your own to evidence your skills with students and an academic piece of work.

As a Practice Educator, we recognise the additional work this creates and we therefore have a Practice Education agreement to support you as a practice educator. We will also hold Practice Educator forums to support you with this additional role. To ensure a practice educators continued proficiency in their practice education skills and 'maintain their currency' they will have opportunity to take a student at least every two years.

For each student that you will take and support at both levels 1 and 2, you will be able to claim back a one off placement fee as recognition of the extra duties carried out in the management of student Social Workers learning opportunities.

If taking on a student is not something of interest to you – then we have another avenue for senior Social Workers to progress and develop. We want you to be a champion. If you have a particular area of expertise or interest then we want to recognise this and support your growth. For example if you have experience and interest for example of conducting Direct Work or working with young people through CSE then we want to support you to develop that interest by you attending relevant training, being able to support training delivered through the CPP or by being part of a pool of practitioners who can support other teams and workers in developing their skills and experience in that area.

Advanced Social Work Practitioners

Permanent Advanced Practitioners are non-case holding Social Workers who provide consultative advice, support and guidance to Social Workers.

The role is designed for Advanced Practitioners to work together with management and front line staff to drive practice forward in our journey to good. Currently there are several Advanced Practitioner roles in Dudley, these posts are within the CPP team, and Early Help services.

Advanced Practitioners are responsible for the learning and development of the staff they are working with, pushing positive outcomes in line with Dudley's quality assurance processes. Like Senior Social Workers, Advanced Practitioners can also take advantage of the practice educator route to support and assess students in placement. This post is an excellent stepping-stone for those interested in becoming a manager in the future.

If you wish to progress to becoming a manager, we will support you through an Aspiring Team Manager Training Course, to develop your knowledge and skills, in line with the Practice Leaders Knowledge and Skills statements.

Further to this in Dudley you are also able to access the Torch Aspiring Managers training courses where we are working in partnership with Dudley College to offer you CMI Level 3 or 5 qualification in leadership.

Team Managers

In Dudley, we support our managers to be confident and lead practice to support the journey to good.

Team Managers are responsible for providing case supervision, management oversight as well as support the development of Social Workers within your team. Team Managers will also carry out observations of practice, performance management and provide appraisals for your staff. Dudley support managers by providing training which develops supervision skills, management decision making and people management skills. You will also have access to supportive and reflective supervision from your service manager. There are further opportunities to attend the Middle Leadership TORCH management training again gaining qualifications for your hard work and skill development.

You will be closely linked to our Centre for Professional Practice through the link advanced practitioner who you can approach for support for yourself, your staff or your team. You will be involved in the qualitative auditing to reflect on the performance of your team and you will be supported to develop your practice and your teams practice to support improvements.

Workforce Strategy

The Learning and Development offer is the underpinning document to the new Workforce Strategy that will be launched in October 2018.

An online version of this document can be found at www.dudleycpp.org.uk

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Building stronger and safer communities in...
...the historic capital of the Black Country

