**Guidance for SW Students on Statutory Placements**

Social work England (SWE) provides [Guidance on Practice Placements](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/practice-placements-guidance/) for social work students.

Social work students need to be enabled to develop their skills and knowledge across all areas of social work, gain required experience in practice settings and meet the professional standards in a supportive, supervised and safe settings. They need to gain experience of sufficient numbers of statutory social work tasks involving high-risk decision making and legal interventions; to enable them to experience, understand the realities and evidence competency of high volume, high-risk work within a statutory environment. This means whilst on placement with us they are able to undertake / take lead on some tasks out staff not SW qualified can’t.

Some common learning opportunities students will be expected to be involved in during a placement include:

* Social work assessments: including observation, gathering of information, analysis, application of appropriate theory, reporting and development of recommendations.
* Formal processes considering and managing risk and/or safeguarding for child protection, for practice in mental health or with vulnerable adults. E.g. Strategy discussions, S47 Enquiries, Child protection Conferences, CIN meetings, Core Groups
* Presentation of outcomes of formal assessment processes, including analysis of risk and proposed recommendations, at panels, meetings and courts.
* Communicating and engaging with and supporting people with lived experience of social work.

The level of responsibility that students will have when undertaking these opportunities will vary depending on their skills and experience. A student’s responsibility should gradually increase, under appropriate supervision, as their knowledge and skills develop. Students development on different schemes will progress differently - for example schemes like Frontline, Step up and SW Apprentices are likely to be develop quicker because they are placed with us for the duration of their training and No student should visit a child / family alone or lead on any social work process until they have been shown how to do the task, observed doing it and assessed as competent to do/lead it, and the each situation they are going into / leading alone is assessed safe for them and at a level of complexity they are competent to deal with (this can be a movable position for any student) .

Nb the student’s supervisor is ultimately responsible for the quality of their student’s work – they should QA all written reports / assessments and ensure appropriate support and supervision is given throughout the placement.

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| **What SW students can be enabled to do alone and/or lead on, when assessed as competent to do so (and the situation deemed appropriate for skills / experience)** | **What SW students shouldn’t do alone / lead on – but can be involved in and** |
| * Visits to children / families (non- statutory visits) * Single Assessments * Child’s Plans * Child in Care Reports * Attend and present reports at panels and meetings * Direct Work | * Statutory SW visits * S47 Enquiries * Care Proceedings – they can contribute / write reports for court – but a qualified and experienced SW should oversee this and be named on the report as responsible for the evidence |

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