

Children’s Social Care Training Report (Single Agency)

Social Care Training Team

April 2022- March 2023

Overview

The Social Care Training Team provide social work learning and development opportunities across the adult and children’s workforce. The programme is dedicated to meet the needs of social work and social work support assistant practitioners, but is also available to practitioners in other roles, such as early help workers and those who would benefit from these opportunities. Where appropriate, the training offer extends to multi-agency partners in accordance with the joint Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP) arrangements.

During this training period we received feedback from evaluation surveys to advise that face-to-face delivery would be a preference for almost a quarter of staff members and consequently, adapted our delivery during this period, to offer a combination of face-to-face and virtual sessions for many learning events.

In addition to planned training events, Northumberland County Council purchased licences to support all social work practitioners to have access to Community Care Inform platforms (<https://www.ccinform.co.uk/>) for self-directed and team learning opportunities.

Key Data – Core Training

The table below provides key data of the training programme for our children’s services workforce.

Where indicated * this may be an event which is attended by practitioners in other roles, including multi-agency and adult social care services. The attendance data refers to NCC Children’s services teams only.

Subject	Total Attendance
Signs of Safety (4-day event)	74
Sings of Belonging: Children Who Are Cared For	77
Learning Disability and Communication	4
Supporting Children and Young People in Care with Speech, Language and Communication Needs	24
Life Story Workshop	21
Contextual Safeguarding *	12
Sibling Assessments	6
Effective Report Writing	28
Assessment and Analysis	9
Court Skills	31
Achieving Best Evidence (ABE)	7
C.A.R.E – Trauma Informed Awareness *	35

Trauma Informed Practice – specialist 3D Virtual Reality event	9
Trauma: What happened ‘back then’ does not remain ‘back then’ – specialist event with Zoe Lodrick *	22
Criminal Exploitation *	8
Vulnerability Not Age: Exploring Sexual Exploitation *	13
Change Star*	98
Potentially Harmful Sexual Behaviours	7
Difficult Conversations *	18
Complex PTSD and Personality *	9
Right Gear at the Right Time for the Right Task (wellbeing) *	16
What Makes a Good Leader? *	5
Mental Health Safety (for managers)	9
Reflective Supervision (managers and advanced practitioners)	5
Transitional Safeguarding *	5

Key Data – Total

Total number of learning events delivered	65
Total number of attendances at learning events	552
Total number of staff who booked but did not attend	47 (9%)

Signs of Safety

Signs of Safety is the chosen approach and framework used within social care practice to support and assess those people in need of care and support. Frontline practitioners attend a 4-day training programme.

Champions run monthly sessions where a range of practitioners from service areas can share learning and experiences.

The Practice Lead ran quarterly sessions for practice champion groups to enable focussed appreciative enquiry surrounding what works well and what barriers they experience. However only 29% of the total champion network attended.

To further develop their understanding and use of this approach, staff have access to additional support materials, via a Signs of Safety shared SharePoint portal, Signs of Safety Lead, Champions, and Team Managers.

Social Care Training purchase licences for staff to enable direct access to resources from Signs of Safety, which are not available in the public domain. This is called the Signs of Safety Knowledge Bank. We will be renewing this for the 2023/2024 year.

Special Events

Journal Club:

Each month a journal article is presented in an online group forum, followed by questions and discussion. The subject themes change monthly and for example, can range from Polyvagal Theory through to Life Stories in Learning Disability Research. The sessions are organised by the Northumberland Emotional Wellbeing Support Team (NEWST). 11 sessions have been attended by various practitioners including, Senior Managers, Team Managers, Social Workers, and Social Work Support Assistants.

‘This is so useful so that we can share thoughts and ideas between each other’

‘It is a great opportunity to reflect and listen to other people’s reflections on relevance to practice’

Access anytime:

A suite of ‘access anytime’ recorded webinars are available for practitioners to utilise at a time that is convenient for them and/or used for team learning events.

Access Anytime	
Subject	Views
Signs of Safety Bitesize	0
Managing Conflict Masterclass	55
Advanced Managing Conflict Masterclass	29
Effective Meetings	10
MCA Fundamentals	0
Caring for Transgender or Gender Diverse Children and Young People	8
Perinatal Mental Health	0

Service Area Information

- **Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE)**

Dedicated training is provided to Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW) in their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE). 16 NQSW’s joined Children’s Services in Northumberland County Council this year. Where the table below denotes more than 16 in attendance, this indicates attendance from social workers from a previous cohort who were unable to attend their original planned session. In addition to this dedicated plan below, additional learning opportunities are provided such as planned talks, group supervisions, shadowing, and networking. The newly qualified social workers also have 0.5day/per week protected time made available to undertake personalised continued professional development activities.

Assessed and Supported Year in Employment – planned training activity	
Subject	Total Attendance
Child and Family Assessment	16
Chronology	16
Mind of My Own	16
Talking Toolkit	18
Mind Your Language	14
Preparing a Child or Young Person for A Child Protection Medical Assessment	21
Seeking feedback from those people we support	11
Working with Resistant and Uncooperative Families	15
County Lines Briefing by Detective Chief Inspector Intelligence – Force Coordination and Operations	10
Welfare Rights Training	16
ICS Systems Training	16

‘ASYE Academy is an expectational experience that promotes success in the role of Social Work. Without the support from the Academy in the first 6 months, the transition from student to qualified social worker would have been very challenging.’

‘I found the ASYE programme to be very supportive.’

- **Pre-birth and Parent Assessment**

The dedicated service areas of pre-birth and parent assessment teams commissioned training for their staff aligned to the specific needs of those people in need of care and support. Training included topics in the following subject areas:

- Shame
- unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- pre-birth assessments
- early permanence
- support for women who have had or are at risk of having more than one child removed from their care
- helping families put positive lifestyle changes into practice, including training to deliver this in-house, and
- a social work leadership pathways programme for the Team Manager.

- **Northumberland Adolescent Service**

The dedicated service area of Northumberland Adolescent Service (NAS) commissioned training in various subject areas including:

- diversity
- Inclusion
- bias
- race awareness.

Evaluation of Training

Post Course evaluation is sought immediately after the training event to capture initial feedback. We recorded a 9% return rate of post course evaluations. This figure may seem low in relation to the number of attendances; however, we believe the responses are a true reflection of the learner experience by those who took the time to respond.

‘I was involved in the role play part of the training, giving me the opportunity to explore the court arena is a safe place’ (Court Skills)

‘This course was brilliant. It gave my further knowledge of safeguarding and collaborative good practice. It gave me strategies to use.’ (Contextual Safeguarding)

Quality Standard	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
The trainer/s were knowledgeable about the topics covered	98%	2%		
The training was relevant to my role	84%	14%		2%
I was able to contribute and felt listened to, respected, and valued	86%	10%	2%	2%
The training will have a positive impact on my practice	82%	14%	2%	2%

‘I will aim to make my transition work more inclusive and focused on what is in the best interest of the young person.’ (Transitional Safeguarding)

“Raised my awareness so that I can be more vigilant in my practice” (Criminal Exploitation)

Impact Evaluation

During the year we introduced an Impact Evaluation process to capture the impact the learning has had on frontline practice. Electronic surveys are sent to delegates approx. 2 months after the event. Unfortunately, return of impact evaluation surveys are low and therefore it is difficult to measure the impact of learning on practice to any significant

degree from returned surveys alone. However, we believe the responses received are a true reflection of the learner experience by those who took the time to respond.

During the year we have undertaken targeted Impact Evaluations in relation to several areas including:

- Criminal Exploitation
- Vulnerability Not Age
- Contextual Safeguarding
- Signs of Safety
- C.A.R.E
- Trauma Informed Practice

We are constantly seeking ways to encourage increased responses to surveys and will continue to monitor and report accordingly.

‘I now know how to spot the signs, and the terminology used by young people which will help me to recognise when young people may be involved in exploitation.’
(Criminal Exploitation)

‘Since this training I have realised just how vulnerable a Mum is. The training changed the way I look at the situation, how I deal with the family especially the mother’
(Vulnerability Not Age)

‘As a consequence of attending this course we are looking to develop our in-house ICS system to record these instances’ (Contextual Safeguarding)

‘The young person has just left school with good grades, and has just accepted an apprenticeship, and is full of empathy, compassion, and good manners. It’s lovely to see the kids thriving’ (Signs of Safety)

‘Promoted the parents mental health. The family dynamics have changed for the positive – rules and routines in place and a happier environment’ (C.A.R.E)

‘Decreased her incidents of self-harm due to the approach and understanding that I have been able to show her’ (Trauma-Informed)

‘I recognise when I need to take a break and look after myself which helps me to continue with my role’ (Trauma-Informed)