**Practice Note for all Practitioners*,*** Managers **and Staff:**

**Introduction to our Practice Framework and Model**

**Our Practice Framework and Model**

Sandwell Children’s Trust has developed its own Practice Framework and Model to ensure that we have a consistent approach when working with our children, young people, young adults and their families. The Practice Framework and Model provides us with a thinking framework and has 12 parts which include 3 Overarching Principles and 9 elements (3+3+3). These parts are based on good practice principles and need to be considered whenever we are completing assessments, developing, updating and reviewing plans with our families and their network.

Our Practice Framework and Model has been developed in consultation with children, families and practitioners in Sandwell and reflects our values within the Trust. We have developed wheels to illustrate the different parts of what we do and what we need to think about which come together when we work with families. Good and outstanding practice is supported by ensuring that as part of the work that we do when following processes **at the same time** we think about the work with our children, young people and families. In doing so, it results in improved practice and outcomes for children, young people and young adults.

This practice note outlines why we have developed the practice wheels to illustrate what we do and what we need to think about whilst working with our families. Next, the different parts of the Practice Framework and Model are outlined including how using them when working with families can strengthen our practice with links to other practice notes. By bringing the wheels together, the note shows us we can implement and embed the Practice Framework and Model in our work with families by consistently reflecting on the quality of our practice particularly within reflective spaces such as supervision whilst providing good practice points and further reading.

**What is our Doing Wheel?**

In Sandwell, we have developed a **doing wheel** to show the process that we follow in practice when working with our families. With the child at centre (yellow), we follow a continuous process of undertaking assessments, plans, updating plans and reviews (in the blue circle). If we remain involved with families after the review, we follow the same process again.

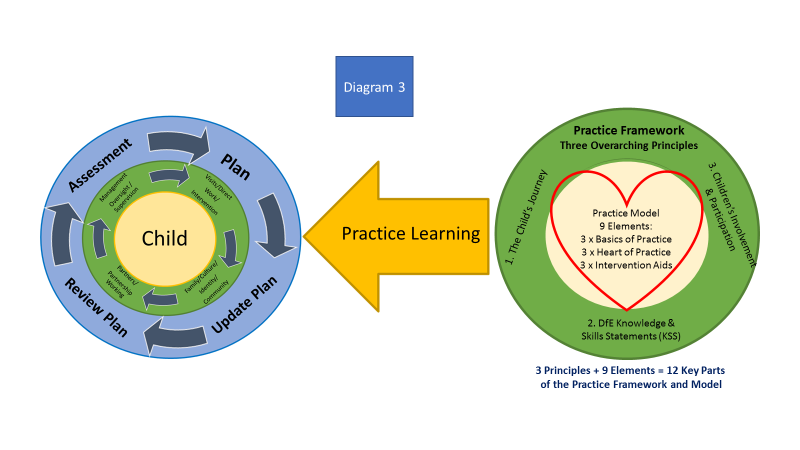
For these processes to be robust, whenever we undertake a part of the process such as an assessment or a plan with families, we need to use all the parts in the green to strengthen the work we do. For example, when completing an assessment for it to be robust it requires good management oversight and supervision, regular visits, direct work and intervention, understanding the family, their identity, culture, and communityand partners and partnership working.

When we complete our assessment, and move around the circle to the plan, once again for it to be robust all the parts on the green are required and so on. Putting the work we do in a cycle shows us visually all the parts of the process with the arrows in the wheel reflecting the direction of travel and the movement required to progress the help and support with our families. Therefore, it is referred to as our ‘doing wheel’. All the stages of this wheel need to be undertaken ‘with the family’ such as developing a plan rather than being ‘done to the family’.

Our doing wheel also includes the important step of updating the plan with families after it has been developed and before it needs to be reviewed. Updating the plan with families and professionals is important when building relationships, measuring progress and reducing drift and delay for children, young people. Working with families in this way is more inclusive and means that we adopt an empowering approach. It means that when as we provide help and support to address needs and risks to families at some of the most difficult points in their lives we are supporting them to think about their own solutions reducing the need for continued professional involvement unless it is necessary.

**What is our Practice Framework and Model ‘thinking wheel’?**

The Practice Framework and Model is our thinking wheel and is used when we are doing the work with our families. Our thinking wheel in green captures all the twelve parts of the Practice Framework and Model. When we think about each of the 12 parts, this helps us to inform our understanding about what is happening for a child, the impact on them, and what change is required to make a difference to children’s/young people’s/young adults’ lives.

There are 3 overarching principles that relate to our Practice Framework which are illustrated in the green circle. At the heart of our thinking wheel, there are 9 elements which include our 3 Basics of practice, our 3 Heart of Practice and finally the 3 Intervention Aids. Working with families using our Practice Framework and Model enables us to evidence how we have thought about the help and support that is needed based on an understanding of the child, young person, young adult and their family.

By using the approach, it supports us when we are working with families to think about the quality of our intervention and the support that has been provided. It also helps us to demonstrate how we have thought about how we have been working with families in reviews, forums such Legal Planning, Directors Resource Panels and in a few circumstances should we need to go to court.

Our Practice Framework and Model provides us with a way to structure what we think about when working with our families. The next section outlines the different parts of the Practice Framework and Model, illustrates how these can be used to strengthen what we think about when working with families and provides links to Practice Notes which provide further information can accessed. In the next section, diagrams are provided to illustrate the elements of the Practice Model in more detail.

**The 3 Principles of the Practice Framework**

There are three overarching ‘principles’, which are a **foundation** that support all of our work with children, young people and their families. The next section outlines what they are and how they can strengthen our practice with links to other Practice Notes for further information

**PRACTICE FRAMEWORK AND PRACTICE MODEL (3+3+3)**

**3 OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES**

**Principle 1 - Child’s Journey into practice**. Understanding the Child’s Journey in our service means that we think at the beginning of our involvement where they have been in the service (and any other authorities e.g. Dudley, Nottingham, Birmingham) and what it might mean for them now. The map of the Child’s Journey was developed with children and practitioners and can be used with children and families to explain SCT processes in a visual way. Used with the Process Maps it also helps us to understand how these fit into the child and families’ journey whilst we are working with them. It ensures that children/young people/young adults always know what is happening and what to expect as we work together to achieve permanence within the child’s timescales (see Practice Note on the Child’s Journey).

**Principle 2 - Children/Young People’s Participation.** This relates to the 4 x I’s - Involve, Inform, Invest, Influence when used consistently, will help to embed the voice of the child across practice, ensuring that all SCT staff understand the importance of the child’s voice. (See pages 10-15, Practice Framework Booklet, March 2020 and Practice Note of Children/Young People’s Participation).

**Principle 3 - Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS)**. The KSS were developed by the Department for Education and are a set of national standards of practice for practitioners, practice supervisors and practice leaders. It is important that practitioners think about how the KSS relate to the work that we are undertaking with a child and their family. (See pages 54-92, Practice Framework Booklet, March 2020 and the Practice Note on the KSS).

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**How does thinking about the Practice Framework support your practice?**

By considering the Practice Framework as the foundation that supports our work it helps us think about how we work with families to achieve permanence and parallel planning the child’s timescales for change. Understanding the child’s journey through our service helps us to also think about how we have worked with the family as well as whether support has been provided at the right level to provide the necessary change.

Children/Young People’s participation helps us to think about how we will use the 4 x I’s - Involve, Inform, Invest, Influence based on a good understanding of their culture, identity, family and community to engage them in a meaningful way. Finally, the KSS, support us to reflect on various aspects of the work we are undertaking with a child and their family from the perspective of practitioners, Supervisors, Managers and Leaders.

**The Practice Model (3+3+3)**

The Practice Model includes 9 elements which are split into three groups which sit underneath the three overarching principles. The Model includes: the 3 Basics, 3 models at the Heart of Practice and our 3 Intervention Aids.

**The 3 basics**

The 3 basics form a triangle and are designed to work together to support a framework for our intervention with a child/young person/young adult and their family. Before starting to plan our work with the child/young person/young adult and their family we must ensure we are familiar with the basics. By understanding the basics, where these can be accessed, and how these can be used in practice will ensure that our assessments, plans, updating plans, reviews, decision making and interventions with families are more robust and evidence best practice.



**The ‘3 Basics’**

* **Element 1 refers to Process Maps and Practice Guidance.**
* **Element 2 relates to the Trust Practice Standards.**
* **Element 3 refers to the Service Practice Standards**

The 3 basics form a triangle and are designed to work together to support a framework for our intervention with a child/young person/young adult and their family.

Before starting to plan our work with the child/young person/young adult and their family we must consider elements 1 -3, which are all designed to support and strengthen the work we do with families and improve the outcomes for children (see Practice Note on ‘the 3 Basics’).

**How does thinking about the 3 basics support your practice?**

The ‘**3 Basics’** have been developed to support practitioners to **think** about the planning and preparation **before** starting to plan our work with the child, young person, young adult and their family and applying our ‘3 Heart of Practice’ and ‘Intervention Aids’. These are all designed to support and strengthen the work we do with families and the outcomes for children. It means that by referring to them we understand what needs to be completed.

Information relating to ‘the 3 Basics’ can be accessed from the Learning and Development Hub**.** Our Practice Standards help us think about how well we need to complete our work with families. Process maps are linked to the ‘Child’s Journey’ and support us to think about what we need to do, when and who does it. Practice Notes are quick guides to support our practice and have been developed to provide guidance on how and why we undertake our work**.**

**The 3 Heart of Practice**

At the heart of our practice is Strengths Based Practice (Element 4), Relationship-Based Practice (Element 5) and Trauma Informed Practice (Element 6), which need to be used together to support our thinking throughout our work with children, young people and families.



**The ‘Heart of Practice**

**Element 4 considers ‘Signs of Safety’** as a strengths-based model of practice used within the Trust. This approach focuses on exploring with the child, young person or young adult and family their strengths and what they do well, to support change in the things that we are concerned about (see Practice note on Signs of Safety).

**Element 5 refers to ‘Relationship-Based Practice’** which is about practitioners and managers taking the time to get to know the child and family and explore the current concerns and the risks (see Practice Note on Relationship Based Practice.

**Element 6 relates to ‘Trauma Informed Practice’**. Practitioners should develop an understanding of direct and indirect childhood experiences that are stressful or traumatic and can have an impact on children and young people. These are referred to as Adverse Childhood Experience (ACEs) (see Practice Note Trauma Informed Practice).

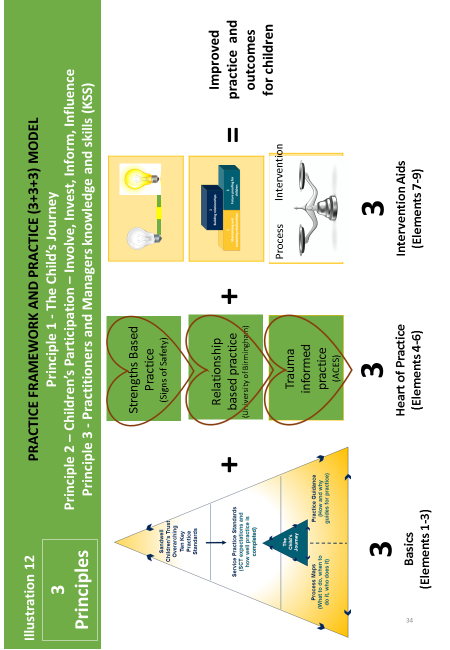
**How does thinking about ‘the Heart of Practice’ support your practice?**

By considering **the ‘Heart of Practice’** highlights the importance of using a Strengths Based approach (Signs of Safety), Relationship-based Practice and Trauma Informed Practice which are all the things we need t think about when working with families. Focusing on strengths when working with families enables us to work with them to focus on resources as well as risks.

In Sandwell, we think that for us to work in this way, our ability to develop enabling relationships with our families with different experiences and communities is important. This helps us to understand the child’s journey, culture in the context of their family, identity and community which supports us to understand what adjustments need to be made to our practice to ensure they are meaningfully engaged. Finally, by being aware of the impact of any experiences that may have had a traumatic effect on the child, young person and their family within their network and wider context enables us to work with them in a sensitive and effective way.

**The 3 ‘Intervention Aids’**

Within our Practice Framework and Model, there are three Intervention Aids; the Light Bulb Principle (element 7), the Building Blocks (element 8) and the Scales (Element 9). The Intervention Aids are visual and help practitioners to strengthen their practice by getting the balance right in offering and intervening with children and families that will have an impact on them in a meaningful, and long-lasting way.



**Section 3 – ‘Intervention Aids’.**

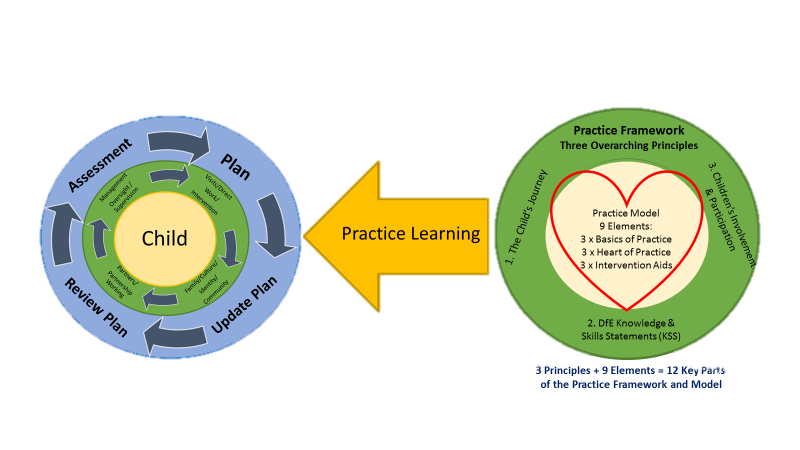
**Element 7** is the ‘Lightbulb Principle’, whichwill help practitioners to consider what effect their interventions are having on the child and their family and reflect on if a different approach is needed.

**Element 8** are the ‘Building Blocks’, which will help practitioners consider the importance of good relationship building with a child their family. It highlights the different stages of relationships. By building a trusting relationship with the family, understanding their strengths, family networks and the life history of each family member, the intervention is more likely to be successful. When we are thinking about ending our involvement and relationship with the child/young person/young adult and their family that the plan that we have worked on together has made a difference to a child.

**Element 9** illustrates the ‘Scales’ as a reminder to practitioner that there is an equal balance between what we have to ‘do’ with a family (process) and the things that we offer (intervention) to children and their families.

**How do the ‘Intervention Aids’ support your practice?**

**‘Intervention aids’** are the things we need to think about, before, during and towards the end of our work with children and families. The aids can be used as prompts and reflective questions that will help practitioners and Managers to reflect upon what effect their interventions are having on the child and their family and reflect on if a different approach is needed. This supports consistent reflection, critical thinking and analysis. These can also be used individually, during supervision between Practitioner and Manager and help consider how to apply a balance between processes and interventions when working with children and their families (see Practice Note on Intervention Aids). As visual aids they can support reflection using our different learning styles when thinking about the quality of our intervention.

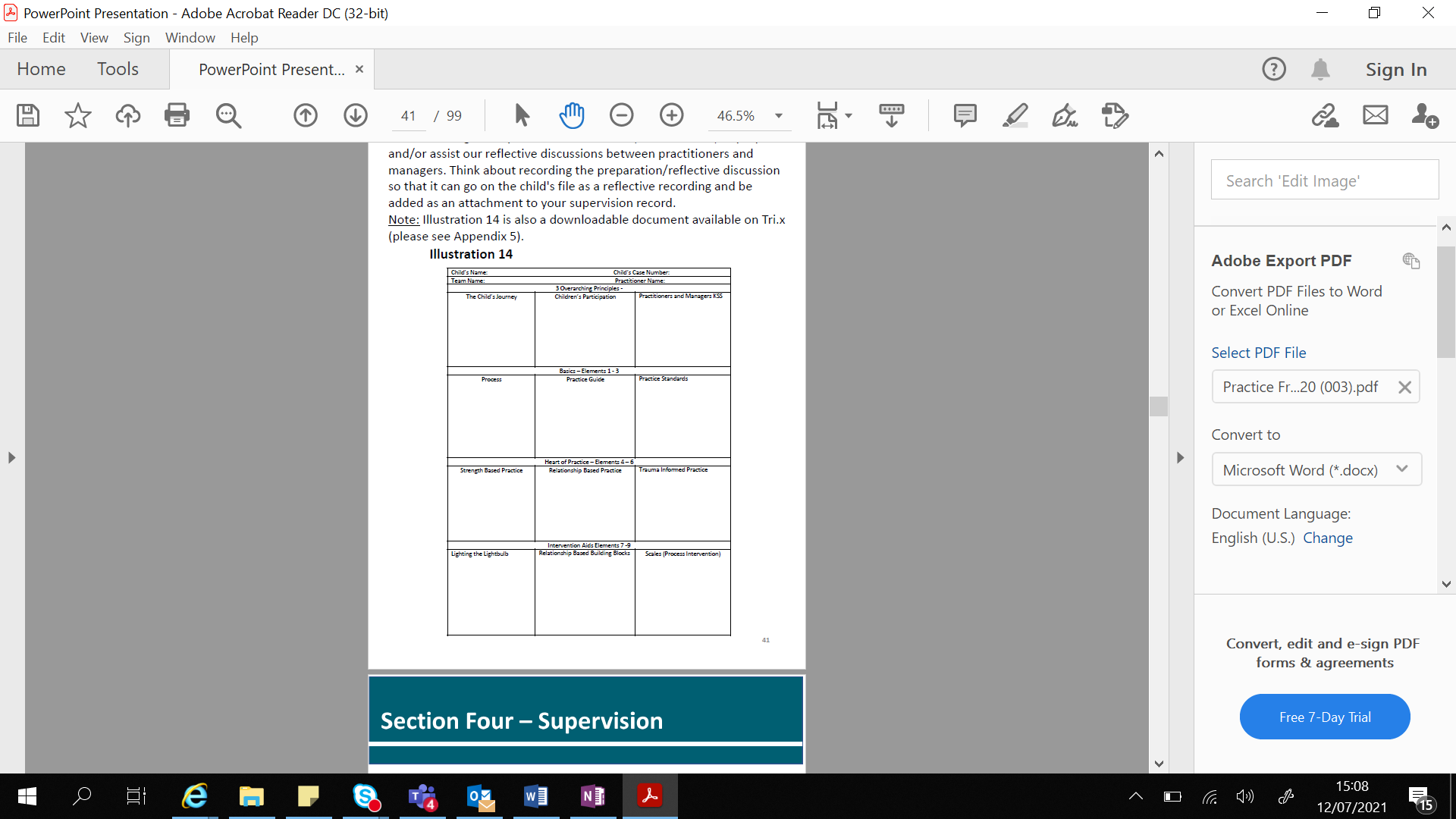
**How using our doing and thinking wheels come together to support good practi****ce?**

Good practice is supported by ensuring that both wheels come together to support our practice. As illustrated in the diagram to the left, using the Practice Framework and Practice Model will support our ‘thinking’ about how to work successfully with a child/young person/young adult and their family.

By considering these different elements as part of the work that we do it enables us to think about the impact in relation to our practice and the outcomes for our families.

**Using our Practice Framework and Model in supervision**

Using reflective spaces especially supervision is important to strengthen our skills in consistently applying our Practice Framework and Model and embed it within our practice. Using the Practice and Framework to structure will how we think about the quality of our interventions with families can be helpful when we are undertaking assessments, plans, updating and reviewing.

The Practice Framework and Practice Reflective Questions includes 106 questions that are relevant to each part of the Practice Framework and Model and can be used within supervision, group supervision and our safe spaces to help us undertake an appreciative enquiry.

These questions provide a framework to develop our skills in critical thinking and analysis in terms of our intervention with a child/young person/young adult and family (See pages 42-50 Practice Framework and Model Booklet).

By using reflective questions supports us to consistently think about how we are providing the help and support whilst enabling us to reflect our own practice approach and how we might relate different individuals and families for several reasons. It means that we can think about what has resulted in us being able to develop enabling relationships and what might be a barrier when working with some families which we sometimes refer to being ‘stuck’.

In Sandwell, our Practice Framework and Model not only relates to the help and support we provide for our families but also reflects our values within the trust. For staff within our Sandwell family, it means that we focus on our strengths, work in a relational way, understand and respond to the complexities of our work whilst having courageous conversations if things need to be improved.

**How can I evidence this work on the child/young person/young adults file?**

* Use parts of the Practice Framework and Model in the different stages of the work that you do with families, which includes assessments plans, updating plans and reviews.
* Use the supervision format to help you to prepare for supervision, to ensure that every child and young person that we work with remains at the centre of interventions.
* Case notes to include which part of the Practice Framework and Model have been used within the home visit, meeting etc and what impact this has had.

**Further information and reading**

* Practice notes have been developed relating to all 12 parts of the Practice Framework and Model and are referenced throughout. These include the Child’s journey, Children’s participation, KSS, the three basics, Strengths based practice (Signs of Safety, Relationship Based and Trauma Informed Approaches, and the 3 Intervention Aides. In addition to this, Practice Notes have been developed on Relationship based practice and Cultural Genogram are available on the Learning and Development Pages.
* Practice Notes have also been developed in relation to every part of the ‘doing wheel’ the process. These include: Assessments, Plans, Updating Plans and Reviewing Plans, Management Oversight and Supervision, Visits, Direct Work and Intervention, Family, culture, identity and community and partners and partnership working. These are available on the on the Learning and Development Pages.
* The Practice Framework and Model Booklet and Sandwell Practice Standards and Process Maps available on Learning and Development Hub.
* Practice Learning Workshops take place monthly in Sandwell and there are several titles of the workshops which either reflect the different parts of the Practice Framework and Model. These include: An Introduction to the Practice Framework and Model, Cultural Competence, Cultural Genograms, Impact Chronologies, Voice of the Child, (see the Learning and Development Page and Info Bursts).

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**Authorised by:** Beyond Auditing Practice and Development Team: Pauline Dunkwu