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Please ask for: Gail Hancock

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Our Ref: GH/jp

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Date: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Dear Colleagues

**Re: Social Graces, Language that Cares and Life Story Work**

The Leadership Team agenda discussion about the impacts of Social Graces, Language that Cares and Life Story activity is outstanding. To fully involve Service Managers as well as Heads of Service in the discussion and to agree actions arising from the impact reports, this has been placed on the agenda for 14 July 2021.

In the coming month please can you encourage and facilitate further discussion in your teams / services to explore how you are using these tools, and any other appropriate resources, to support and evidence *'improvement to the quality and performance of our social work practice'*?

Linked to our increasing promotion of systemic practice principles and the first cohorts from Gloucester Locality Teams starting the formal and accredited systemic practice training, we want to ensure that key resources and the expectations that go with them are used effectively, sustainably and confidently across the service.

The summary report highlights how using the Social Graces framework as a way to identify barriers to communication and opportunities for dialogue with children and families and how this has been acknowledged as a useful and effective tool. Similarly, staff have stated they understand and welcome the emphasis on Language that Cares and the Life Story work initiative. However, Other information on case files indicates we don't yet have a consistent or confident approach to evidencing this and some uncertainty about what's required.

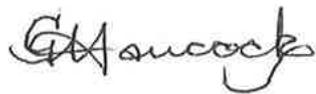
Amongst the actions identified in the summary report there are key activities that can take place in teams now and over the next month you are being asked to progress the following:

- Direct PSW contacts with APs and teams to explore how to use Social Graces in every day practice.
- Continue the identification and collation of good practice examples for wider discussion and inclusion in the SEF refresh.
- IRO's and CP chairs to ensure that attention is paid to diversity throughout all plans and reviews.
- Encourage more teams to add the 'Language that Cares' logo and banners to meeting agendas and recording documents and actively reflect this in everyday practice when speaking with and about care experienced young people.

- Encouraging teams to have Life Story work as a regular discussion point on team and service meeting agendas to discuss practice and share Life Story work examples to encourage good and better practice.
- Include Life Story work as an integral part of children's placement planning meetings to evidence the direct work that has taken place and the impact this has had to help the child understand what has happened, explore their views, wishes and feeling about this and clarify the decisions that have been taken and confirm the rationale for this.
- The use of Social Graces, Language that Cares and Life Story work should be incorporated into every team's action plan.

Can you please make sure you read the summary report and are able to identify the key barriers and opportunities to evidencing the impact of these activities. Please explore and think about the impact of these on practice and performance in your teams and services prior to the Leadership Team Meeting on 14 July 2021? Rob T will contact Service Managers in the coming weeks to provide any teams with additional support and/or information if this is helpful.

Kind regards



Gail Hancock  
**Interim Director for Children's Safeguarding and Care**



Rob Tyrrell  
**Principal Social Worker**