

To:

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Please ask for: Gail Hancock

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Our Ref: GH/jp

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Dear colleagues

Re: Visiting and Direct Work with Children and Young People

I hope you are keeping safe and well and starting to take some positive, yet appropriately cautious, steps out of lock down number three.

Hopefully, you will have seen the updated version of our Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP) with the overall aim to ensure we '**deliver consistently good services, so children are safer, sooner**'.

As you will be aware, a key AIP priority is to improve the quality and performance of our social work practice in line with the Practice Fundamentals Tool. Critically, this requires us to pay particular attention to the building blocks of effective practice which focuses heavily on visiting and direct work and the need to be timely and purposeful to champion the voice of the child and young person.

Over recent months, there has been increasing activity and information sharing to support and enhance our practice in relation to visiting children, young people and their parents and carers. These have included:

- Development of the initial visit pack with Advanced Practitioners and development of resources accessible on Tri- X to support more effective and relationally focussed work
- Revision of our entry to care guidance and documents including focussed materials for children to support better moves to and from care – also available in the Tri-X resource library.
- An informative campaign by Ambassadors to promote 'Language that Cares' across all activity and recording about children and young people. This has included several presentations, , videos, printed resources and direct contacts with teams across the service to encourage dialogue and support practice change.
- Review and revision of our direct work tools and guidance, further informed by a specific project to promote life story work with children. New resources are now centrally located in the Tri-X resource library.
- Podcasts produced by Ambassadors practitioners highlighting direct work in practice and detailing the impacts of this on relationships with children.
- Re-launching the Participation Champion network which now has 50 members and supports regular discussion and examples of effective direct work from each team.

- Webinars and additional resources on use of the 'Social Graces' to inform and encourage a more confident exploration and language about diversity within our contacts with children and families and in supervision and team reflective discussions.

The AIP outlines how we are progressing a quality assurance initiative to test the impact of the 'Social Graces' training to improve practice about difference and diversity, explore examples of best practice in respect of life story work to help children achieve a secure understanding about their past, present and future and finally to evidence the impact of the Ambassador's 'Language that Cares' campaign focusing on language that is used to speak with and about children and young people.

Please can you make sure that you are aware of the relevant initiatives and resources and how to access the new resources on Tri-X. It is important that you continue to use these and record examples of the impact and outcomes that are achieved with children and young people you are supporting. Every effort should be made to listen, clarify and confirm the child and young person's voice and perspective as this is so important to help sort out any muddles and confusion they may have or harbour about what has happened in their life and the decisions that have been/are being made to address their needs, risks and circumstances.

I am aware here have been many positive examples of creative, relational and inclusive practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please make sure that these are highlighted to Rob Tyrrell, Principal Social Worker, as we are seeking to showcase best practice examples in our Self Evaluation for the upcoming Ofsted inspection which we anticipate may take place in the Summer term.

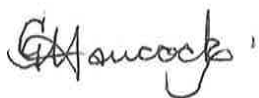
Information about these new resources has been sent to all staff in previous emails, the links are included here again to support further awareness and involvement:

- The **Entry to Care Pack** aims to provide you with the necessary tools to enable timely and well planned moves for children and young people. The pack will help to promote a consistently high standard of practice and avoid unhelpful variability and contradictions in respect of the information we share.
- The **Visit Pack** has been developed in consultation with Advanced Practitioners from our Assessment Teams and aims to provide you with the necessary tools to enable purposeful and effective visits to children, young people and their families, particularly when this is an initial visit or you are meeting for the first time. The pack will help to promote a consistently high standard of practice and avoid unhelpful variability and contradictions in respect of the information we share. The pack contains everything you will routinely need to have to establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Both packs can be accessed in the Tri-X Resource Library by using the following link:

https://gloucestershirechildcare.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html

Thank you for your continuing commitment and hard work to support Gloucestershire's vulnerable children and children – this is very much appreciated.

Kind Regards



Gail Hancock
Interim Director for Children's Safeguarding and Care