



Outcome statements and guidance

Early Professional Development
2011-13 edition

Foreword

Social workers make a vital contribution to improving outcomes for some of our most vulnerable children and young people. The Munro Review published in May 2011 affirmed that social workers should be supported in their careers and be clear about what they need to achieve. It acknowledged that social workers and their employers should be supported to do this.

We developed the Early Professional Development programme with employers in the first half of 2009. They told us they wanted a common framework to support the development of social workers after their NQSW year. It was important to them that this was flexible enough to be used within their existing organisational policies and procedures.

What we learnt from working with employers and listening to your experiences of EPD has contributed to the Social Work Reform Board's development of the Professional Capabilities Framework and other key reforms.

We are delighted that you have chosen to work with us to support your social workers through the EPD programme. By April 2012, our social work programme will move into the Department for Education (DfE). We continue to welcome your feedback as we discuss with DfE how the sector should best be supported in future.



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The purpose of the guidance

The EPD outcome statements have been developed in consultation with social workers, their managers, employers and other professionals. The purpose of the guidance is to help social workers understand what can be expected of them in the second and third years of their professional career. The expectations at this stage of professional development are greater than those made of newly qualified social workers (NQSWs). This supporting guidance covers the six outcome statements that have been developed to guide thinking, professional behaviour, skills, knowledge and professional values.

Background

The children's workforce operates within a complex legislative and policy context, with strong social, economic and political drivers. Social workers need to work to a range of legislative and statutory guidance and this should be underpinned by the value base and principles that are part and parcel of being a professional social worker.

The EPD outcome statements are designed to be used by social workers and their supervisors in all settings where children and young people are the focus of the social work task.

Introduction

The EPD programme has been developed for social workers who have completed the NQSW programme and are entering year two of employment. It aims to help social workers develop into more confident and autonomous professionals.

Throughout the EPD programme it is important that the social worker understands that the focus of their activities is safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Central to this is the need for social workers to spend time working directly with children and young people as well as their families and carers. They must also work holistically and in partnership with a range of other professionals in order to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people.

The social worker needs to be proactive and creative in finding and using opportunities for learning. Employers have made a commitment to supporting the EPD programme, and the outcome statements have been designed to be achievable in any social work setting. At this stage in their professional career it is also important that social workers take responsibility for seeking opportunities that enable them to enhance their professional development and develop the level of competence expected of them. Learning opportunities should be considered in the widest possible sense, for example by looking for ways to complement formal training through networks and other professional experiences.

The EPD social worker is expected in their second and third years of practice to develop their understanding of the theoretical models that underpin their work and some of the associated techniques. Attachment theory and systems theory are some examples of these but there are others, and the EPD social worker should select with their supervisor the most appropriate theory that corresponds directly with the context of their work.

In years two and three it is expected that the EPD social worker will further develop their ability to use assessment tools, like those used in the NQSW programme, to meet the expectations of each of the outcome statements. Examples of these can be found in the section on legislation and statutory guidance.

Depending on settings the EPD social worker may be required to use a variety of communication methods. It is therefore important that the method chosen is suitable for the work being undertaken and those with whom they communicate. For example, a social worker may choose to use play to aid their communication with children. It is important that they develop knowledge and skills of the various techniques that are available.

Critical areas of practice

The outcome statements are underpinned by five critical areas of practice that are an inherent feature of each of the outcome statements. The core requirement of the EPD programme is that the social worker can demonstrate analytical and critical thinking as well as sound judgement in each of the critical areas of practice detailed below:

Assessment skills

Assessment skills underpin all the outcome statements. Assessments should be comprehensive, based on sound judgements, encompass complexity and incorporate new information that emerges over the assessment period. Social workers should apply critical reasoning and demonstrate a theoretical evidence base to their assessment. Social workers need to critically analyse information and challenge assumptions and consider both the manifestation of the presenting problem and the underlying issues. The assessment must consider any emerging issues, including those that may not be presenting as a problem but could escalate without family support or intervention.

Assessments often cross the boundaries of teams and agencies. Understanding and acting on the assessment made by someone else is an important challenge. Understanding the interplay between two or more assessment types or processes is a skill for a social worker to develop as they manage more complex cases. This encompasses specialist assessments but also other assessments that may provide information about a child's family, for example, a mental health assessment of an adult carer or an assessment of a disabled sibling.

Report writing and recording skills

Report writing and recording skills need to be demonstrated across all of the outcome statements. Written and verbal reporting must reflect the analytical process that a social worker adopts as a core part of their practice, commencing with collection of information and critical analysis of findings, through to developing recommendations.

Within this EPD social workers should show a clear understanding of the ways to manage confidentiality in reports and case recording and ensure that agency information sharing protocols are reflected in practice. All recording should reflect an anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory professional value base.

The social worker should be able to complete 'first draft' written reports with minimal support from a supervisor. It is not expected that they will be autonomous at this stage but the social worker must be able to produce a fit for purpose report that can be further developed with the supervisor if needed. The style of reporting needs to be matched to its audience (e.g. Court, feedback to child or young person, or a professional referral for services). Electronic and paper records should also be seen as a critical part of the social work tasks, be completed in a timely and accurate manner and written in a style that is accessible to the child or young person.

Multi-agency or multi-team practice

Multi-agency or multi-team practice recognises that no single individual or agency can safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or young person. Delivering holistic services that recognise the child's best interest as paramount requires confident and competent multi-agency/team practice. A critical part of achieving this is being able to maintain the child or young person's welfare as the focus of all professional interactions.

The EPD social worker should at this stage be asserting themselves in the multi-agency context, communicating effectively with other practitioners and professionals by listening and ensuring that they are being listened to. They must also be able to understand the roles of other agencies and local procedures on safeguarding and child protection and variations in use of terminology. They must be able to form relationships with other professionals and work in a team context, forging and sustaining relationships across agencies and respecting the contribution of others working with children, young people and families. The EPD social worker must be proactive and assertive with action and professional opinion, and be prepared to put forward professional judgements.

The EPD social worker is expected to be proactive in involving the right professionals in supporting the child or young person and their family. They must recognise their own role and provide timely, appropriate and succinct information to enable other practitioners to deliver their support to the child or young person, parent or carer.

Peer support and supervision

At this stage supervision should be used not only for support, counsel and direction but also to explore ideas that shape and inform approaches to practice. Critical reflection also has a crucial part in practice development and feedback from peers externally and internally can be beneficial in this stage of development. It is equally important that EPD social workers continue to challenge themselves and their practice by liaising with peers and seeking out new ideas and experiences. This will increase scope of their knowledge and the range of approaches and analysis available.

Anti-discriminatory and culturally sensitive

The social worker needs to ensure that their practice continues to be anti-discriminatory and culturally sensitive. There is an expectation that the social worker has an awareness of self and impact on service users and an understanding and application of anti-discriminatory practice concepts. They should be able to ensure social work practice is culturally sensitive and appropriate and be able to draw in alternative professionals if personal impact on the family is resulting in delay or engagement difficulties. Their direct work should show a cultural sensitivity as well as consideration of the 'best' professional to engage with the family on the basis of anti-discriminatory practice and the impact of power and oppression in the professional relationship.

The outcome statements

The outcome statements are designed to help a social worker think about the activities they will undertake over a two-year period that will demonstrate their skills and knowledge development. At the start of the EPD programme the outcome statements should act as a prompt to individual development plans that will enable the social worker at the end of the programme to evidence their personal development and career progression.

There are six statements that comprise the EPD outcome statements. They incorporate the NQSW outcomes as underlying principles and build on the next level of professional competence that can be expected at this stage of a social worker's professional development.

The statements complement the final report of the Munro review that was published in May 2011. In its response to Munro, the government set a goal for a system which, among other things, places greater trust in professional judgment; where risk and uncertainty are managed more smartly; where continuous learning and improvement are the norm; and where children and young people's wishes, feelings and experiences are placed at the centre. The EPD outcome statements very much support this desire for a system characterised by:

- children and young people's wishes, feelings and experiences placed at the centre;
- a relentless focus on the timeliness, quality and effectiveness of help given to children, young people and their families;
- the availability of a range of help and services to match the variety of needs of children, young people and their families;
- recognising that risk and uncertainty are features of the system where risk can never be eliminated but it can be managed more smartly;
- trusting professionals and giving them the scope to exercise their professional judgment in deciding how to help children, young people and their families;
- the development of professional expertise to work effectively with children, young people and their families;
- truly valuing and acting on feedback from children, young people and families; and
- continuous learning and improvement, by reflecting critically on practice to identify problems and opportunities for a more effective system.

The statements are made up of a number of elements, each of which is described as the expected behaviour or skill set, accompanied with some indication of the evidence that can be provided to demonstrate that the skill or behaviour has been achieved.

Social workers undertaking EPD are expected to demonstrate competence against each element in each statement; however, the same evidence may be used to show competence against several elements.

Evidencing the outcome statements

The range of employment contexts and roles undertaken by social workers differ and consequently the documentation required to demonstrate achievement of the outcome statements will vary. The most suitable sources of evidence will be agreed between the social worker and their supervisor.

Each of the six outcome statements is underpinned by a number of elements. Each element provides details about the types of evidence that could be collected to demonstrate the behaviours or skills that are required of an EPD social worker. Further to this, each element also provides a space for you to reflect on your practice and demonstrate your progress by recording where your evidence can be located.

You will need to regularly review your progress against the outcome statements. This should fit with the reviews you have with your supervisor allowing you to identify any challenges you're facing and the support you may need to overcome them.

All outcome statements will need to be fully completed by the end of the two year programme. At the end of your journey on the EPD programme the outcome statements should be completed by you and your supervisor as a record that you have achieved all the EPD outcome statements.

Records you need to complete during EPD

Here is a list of some of the records you need to complete during and at the end of the programme:

Initial and subsequent Training and Development Plans (TDPs)

At the end of your NQSW year you will have completed your TDP, this will help inform your objectives in your initial TDP. This TDP then needs to be reviewed every 3 months. Depending on what training needs you identify and the progress you have made since your last TDP, you may wish to update the existing form or complete a new form as appropriate. The forms can be downloaded from www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/social-work/epd. In appendices 2, 3, and 4 you will also find guidance questions that may help you review the progress you have made when transferring from the NQSW programme onto EPD, as well as during and at the end of the programme.

Supervision record

To be completed monthly for each of your 2-hour professional supervision sessions. The supervision record form can be downloaded from

www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/social-work/epd

Outcome statement 1: Information gathering

Description of the overall outcome

Respond to the complex needs of children, young people and their families or carers by gathering information at the outset of the case and throughout the period of involvement. Summarise the presenting and emerging information both about risk of significant harm to a child or young person and the child's developmental needs. Produce assessment reports of the required quality that include the critical information which has been analysed, leading to conclusions and decisions that are able to represent the agency in statutory, organisational and local multi-agency fora.

Context

The context in which you practice social work will depend on both your employer and the area of work. It is important that you work with your manager to describe the context of your work, job title and team name including the type of role you play and a description of the main social work tasks that you undertake.

Scope

Information gathering is a critical aspect of supporting children and young people, and their families and carers, by identifying issues and concerns, strengths and risks of significant harm. Information gathering processes must be robust, consistently applied, open to challenge, and timely. Information is gathered over the span of a case, and should be the evidence base for analysis, recommendations and implementation. The social worker should be able to communicate their findings to a range of audiences as required, as a synopsis rather than a narrative. The social worker should consistently identify gaps of knowledge in a case, particularly when considering risk of significant harm and the role and responsibilities of adults with parental responsibility and other people central to a child's life. Where information cannot be gathered, this should be recorded as robustly as information that can be collected.

The expectation of gathering information at EPD level differs from that of NQSW in the following areas:

- The social worker can work with cases presenting greater levels of complexity during the information gathering process.
- The social worker is able to continually re-evaluate information and establish new lines of enquiry over time.
- The social worker can work autonomously but makes appropriate use of peers, professional networks and supervision to explore analysis, information sources, reporting and recommendations.
- The social worker can identify information about risk factors, immediate and emerging, to competently assess both actual and potential risk of significant harm to the child or young person.
- The social worker can collect, collate and communicate information in a manner that is fit for purpose with minimal guidance from a supervisor.

The scope of the outcome at EPD comprises four elements which are described in detail in the next section.

Specialist knowledge

Depending on the employment context, there is an expectation that the EPD social worker will develop specialist knowledge in at least one theoretical model, a particular assessment tool or a communication method. This is to be agreed between the social worker and their supervisor at the commencement of EPD and recorded as part of the evidence.

At the start of the EPD process, a social worker should identify additional or new areas of specialist knowledge they would like to develop over the course of the programme. It is important that this is agreed with their supervisor, ensuring that the work setting can provide the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the stated specialist knowledge.

By the end of the EPD process, a social worker should be able to clearly articulate and demonstrate the specialist knowledge they have gained in the area of information gathering.

Outcome statement 2: Analysing information and making recommendations

Description of the overall outcome

Collate relevant information and critically analyse the findings. Develop recommendations based on professional knowledge, skills, and judgement.

Context

The context in which you practice social work will depend on both your employer and the area of work. It is important that you work with your manager to describe the context of your work, job title and team name including the type of role you play and a description of the main social work tasks that you undertake.

Scope

Analytical skills are amongst the most important skills a social worker demonstrates as part of their work. Critical analysis goes beyond drawing together information gathered from clients and colleagues, and begins to seek the meaning and impact of this information when considered together. Analysis should seek to identify the root cause of concern, considering both the presenting and underlying issues, and will inform assessments. Analysis should be based on sound evidence, but move beyond statement of fact towards professional judgement of the situation or case.

The analysis should identify the relevant legal, professional and evidence-based practice justifications for arising recommendations. Recommendations should be based on objective evidence and analysis gathered during the information gathering stage and drawn from the body of the report. The analysis and recommendations must be robust enough to hold up to critical review and potential rebuttal from the different parties involved. The line of enquiry should be clearly visible from the initial concerns, through the assessment process to the conclusion and recommendations. Without quality recommendations, there is little chance of achieving the required change. Good recommendations define and prioritise action. Each recommendation should address one specific issue only. Each recommendation may propose one or more specific actions but these should each be clearly defined and separated.

The expectation of EPD analysis and recommendations differs from that of NQSW in the following areas:

- The social worker can demonstrate a greater level of skill in preparing and presenting analysis and related recommendations.
- The social worker can work autonomously but makes appropriate use of peers, professional networks and supervision to explore analysis, information sources, reporting and recommendations.
- The social worker identifies as confident in demonstrating evidence-based critical analytical skills and takes ownership of their analysis and recommendations.
- The social worker can produce analytical reports and recommendations that are fit for purpose and do not require re-working.

The scope of the outcome at EPD comprises seven elements.

Specialist knowledge

Depending on the employment context, there is an expectation that the EPD social worker will develop specialist knowledge in at least one theoretical model, a particular assessment tool or a communication method. This is to be agreed between the social worker and their supervisor at the commencement of EPD and should be recorded as part of the evidence.

At the start of the EPD process, a social worker should identify additional or new areas of specialist knowledge they would like to develop over the course of the programme. It is important that this is agreed with their supervisor, ensuring that the work setting can provide the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the stated specialist knowledge.

By the end of the EPD process, a social worker should be able to clearly articulate and demonstrate the specialist knowledge they have gained in the area of analysing information and making recommendations.

Outcome statement 3: Planning, implementation and review

Description of the overall outcome

Build on assessment and analytical skills and set quality recommendations; make decisions and develop a plan of action to support children, young people and/or their families to achieve change. Assessment findings inform the plan, and the plan sets out who is responsible for undertaking actions, and by when. Implementation of a plan consists of timely evidence-based interventions which are clearly linked to improved outcomes for the child or young person. The review process provides the opportunity to ensure the child or young person's developmental needs and outcomes are being met, and if not, what needs to be changed in the plan.

Context

The context in which you practise social work will depend both on your employer and the area of work. It is important that you work with your manager to describe the context of your work, not just your employer, job title and team name but the type of role you play and a description of the main social work tasks that you undertake.

Scope

A challenge for many social workers is developing an achievable plan that is outcome focused and addresses the child or young person's assessed developmental needs with appropriate resources.

Plans should reflect the findings, critical analysis and recommendations from the assessment. These plans should focus on outcomes and meeting the child's developmental needs. Plans should address concerns about risk of significant harm and build on family strengths. The wishes and feelings of the child or young person should be taken into account throughout the planning, implementation and review processes and family or carer involvement should also be evident.

In implementing plans, the social worker should demonstrate a range of skills and evidence-based practice, to support individuals and families to bring about the desired changes. It is critical that implementation of plans for children, young people and families are not allowed to drift, and the social worker must take responsibility for keeping up pace and driving the implementation to fit with timely delivery of improved outcomes. It is easy for momentum to be lost and the social worker must attend to this issue in order that delay for children is avoided. Reviews require adequate preparation to ensure they are complete, are based on up-to-date information, involve all named parties to the plan; measure progress (or lack thereof); and have the capacity to make changes as necessary. The review must always focus on whether the outcomes for the child are being achieved in a timely manner. Planning, implementation and review stages all represent opportunities to consider possible referrals to other services to achieve the planned outcomes, and the social worker should lead on (or identify the lead for) co-ordinating the range of services provided to the family.

The expectation of EPD planning, implementation and review skills differs from that of NQSW in the following areas:

- The social worker takes a holistic and systems approach to service delivery and can work seamlessly and confidently between planning, implementation and review stages, demonstrating skills which achieve goals and outcomes for the child/young person and family.
- The social worker is able to act as the lead between professionals in implementing changes in cases subject to multi-agency or multi-discipline team involvement.
- The social worker demonstrates a greater ability to autonomously involve the child or young person in planning, implementation and review.
- The social worker can produce plans and review reports that are fit for purpose and do not require re-working.

The scope of the outcome at EPD comprises seven elements.

Specialist knowledge

Depending on the employment context, there is an expectation that the EPD social worker would develop specialist knowledge in at least one theoretical model, a particular assessment tool, a communication method or within a specialist context. This is to be agreed between the social worker and their supervisor at the commencement of EPD and should be recorded as part of the evidence. At the start of the EPD process, a social worker should identify additional or new areas of specialist knowledge they would like to develop over the course of the programme. It is important that this is agreed with their supervisor, ensuring that the work setting can provide the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the stated specialist knowledge. By the end of the EPD process, a social worker should be able to clearly articulate and demonstrate the specialist knowledge they have gained in the area of planning, intervention and review.

Outcome Statement 4: Working directly with the child, young person and their families or carers

Description of the overall outcome

Work directly with children, young people or families to gather information, identify strengths, difficulties and risk of significant harm, develop and implement plans, and build capacity to achieve goals. Be an advocate for the best interests of a child or young person and promote positive family functioning and improved outcomes by working in partnership with children, young people and their families and carers. Within a statutory setting, recognise that the statutory responsibility of the social worker is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child or young person.

Context

The context in which you practise social work will depend on both your employer and the area of work. It is important that you work with your manager to describe the context of your work, job title and team name including the type of role you play and a description of the main social work tasks that you undertake.

Scope

Direct work with children, young people and their families or carers is a critical aspect of social work. In children's services, direct work should be focused on the developmental needs of the child or young person, should be outcome and solution-focused, and should start with the assessed needs of the child. It should be a dialogue between the social worker and the child or young person, with a focus on building rapport and gaining trust and respect between both parties. The process is more than filling out forms and is an opportunity to gain a clear understanding of the current situation; the capacity and motivation of the child or young person and their families to build and maintain the required or desired change; and to measure progress towards the stated goals. Direct work also needs to be recorded in case files to reflect the purpose and achievement of this work.

The expectation of EPD direct work differs from that of NQSW in the following areas:

- The social worker can work with cases presenting greater levels of complexity or need, including family relationships, child development, community networks, and/or links between services.
- The social worker can work with the child or young person and family to build a partnership approach and encourage their active involvement in the development of plans.
- The social worker can work autonomously but makes appropriate use of peers, professional networks and supervision to plan and undertake direct work.
- The social worker is confident in being able to lead direct work, and manage new information within the client meeting in order to ensure direct work is timely, sensitive, and outcome-focused but adheres to statutory requirements.

The scope of the outcome at EPD comprises four elements as set out in detail below.

Specialist knowledge

Depending on the employment context, there is an expectation that the EPD social worker will develop specialist knowledge in at least one theoretical model, a particular assessment tool or a communication method. This is to be agreed between the social worker and their supervisor at the commencement of EPD and should be recorded as part of the evidence.

At the start of the EPD process, a social worker should identify additional or new areas of specialist knowledge they would like to develop over the course of the programme. It is important that this is agreed with their supervisor, ensuring that the work setting can provide the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the stated specialist knowledge.

By the end of the EPD process, a social worker should be able to clearly articulate and demonstrate the specialist knowledge they have gained in the area of direct work with children, young people and their families or carers.

Outcome statement 5: Safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of children and young people

Description of the overall outcome

Promote the welfare of children and young people, and where necessary, respond to safeguarding and child protection concerns by identifying and exploring concerns and risk of significant harm (as defined by the Children Act 1989). Manage risks of significant harm either through providing support to the family or use of statutory powers. Work as part of a multi-agency team to support the child, young person or family within the broader community to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child or young person.

Context

The context in which you practise social work will depend on both your employer and the area of work. It is important that you work with your manager to describe the context of your work, job title and team name including the type of role you play and a description of the main social work tasks that you undertake.

Scope

Safeguarding is an important part of integrated working, characterised by professionals working together with the child at the centre of all activities to help identify their holistic needs earlier to improve their life outcomes. Safeguarding is seen as part of a continuum, where prevention and early intervention can support children and families and avoid a problem turning into a crisis.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority, working in partnership with other public organisations, the voluntary sector, children and young people, parents and carers, and the wider community. The government defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child as the process of protecting children or young people from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006: 27). Safeguarding moves beyond child protection and seeks to promote the welfare of children and young people in a broader context, and means being able to identify when a child or young person is not meeting their developmental potential, or when their health or development is impaired, and sources of help for them and their families are not being used.

In safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child or young person, a social worker must constantly review where the family is on the spectrum between family support and child protection. The Assessment Framework is an essential tool to support the assessment and ongoing reassessment of risk of significant harm to a child or young person, by steering the social worker's practice in gathering information and making decisions based on these findings. Social work seeks to identify and prevent the abuse of children and young people; this encompasses protection from physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. The

Children Act 1989 outlines the action that should be taken when a child or young person is deemed to be at significant risk of harm.

When considering child protection, core assessment should be based on sound evidence and analysis, and tools should be used to inform rather than replace professional judgement. There should be a common language of risk between all professionals and a common understanding of the main concepts. The core assessment is integral to the overall management and minimisation of risk and should be seen as the first stage of the risk management process rather than a discrete process.

The scope of this statement includes both risk assessment (through the processes of the core assessment and S47 of the Children Act (1989)) and risk management. A core assessment by itself will not prevent risk, it will identify the probability of harm, assess its potential impact on key individuals, and pose intervention strategies which may diminish the risk or reduce the harm. Risk management is the process by which risk is monitored and restricted. The expectation of an EPD assessment differs from that of NQSW in the following areas:

- The social worker can work with cases presenting greater levels of complexity and risk of significant harm to the child, including child functioning and development, family relationships, and parental or carer motivation to provide safe and consistent care for the child and their capacity to do so.
- The social worker is able to continually re-evaluate information and establish new lines of enquiry with regard to risk factors, recognising that the signs of abuse may be subtle and non-verbal.
- The social worker can clearly understand the difference between child protection and safeguarding work, to recognise if thresholds for child protection concern have been reached and the case changes from family support to child protection, and take appropriate action (including referral to a statutory agency).
- The social worker can work autonomously but makes appropriate use of peers, professional networks and supervision.
- The social worker can identify risk factors, immediate and emerging, to competently assess both actual and potential risk of significant harm to a child or young person.

The social worker can produce assessment reports that are fit for purpose and do not require re-working by a supervisor or line manager. The scope of the outcome at EPD comprises seven elements.

Specialist knowledge

Depending on the employment context, there is an expectation that the EPD social worker would develop specialist knowledge in at least one theoretical model, a particular assessment tool or a communication method. This is to be agreed between the social worker and their supervisor at the commencement of EPD and should be recorded as part of the evidence.

At the start of the EPD process, a social worker should identify additional or new areas of specialist knowledge they would like to develop over the course of the programme. It is important that this is agreed with their supervisor, ensuring that the work setting can provide the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the stated specialist knowledge.

By the end of the EPD process, a social worker should be able to clearly articulate and demonstrate the specialist knowledge they have gained in the areas of safeguarding and child protection.

Element 5.1: Identifying and clearly articulating concerns, and taking appropriate action (including making referrals).

| Behaviours/Expertise/Skills | Evidence – How you would know you had achieved the required standard | Comments and location of evidence |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding what is meant by safeguarding and child protection, and the different ways in which children and young people can be harmed (including by other children and young people and through the internet). • Making considered judgements about how to act to safeguard and promote a child or young person’s welfare, where appropriate consultation with the child, young person, parent or carer informs your thinking. • Knowing when it is inappropriate to consult with a child, young person, parent or carer. • Understanding the key role of parents and carers in safeguarding and promoting children and young people’s welfare and involving them accordingly, while recognising factors that can affect parenting and increase the risk of abuse to a child or young person (for example, domestic violence). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge and appropriate application of the Children Act 1989. • Demonstrate knowledge of the processes for reporting incidents or unexpected behaviour. • Work as part of the team to give regard to and record the child or young person’s wishes and feelings, and to understand and take account of the views of those adults with parental responsibility or a significant caring role in the child or young person’s life. • Clear and concise referrals made to the appropriate agencies. • Evidence of appropriate use of consultation with managers and other agency staff. • Taking the appropriate action when there is an insufficient response from other organisations or agencies, while maintaining a focus on what is in the child or young person’s best interests. | <p>Comments:</p> |

Element 5.1 (continued): Identifying and clearly articulating concerns, and taking appropriate action (including making referrals).

| Behaviours/Expertise/Skills | Evidence – How you would know you had achieved the required standard | Comments and location of evidence |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to recognise when a child or young person is in danger or at risk of harm, and take action to protect them, including immediate referral to the correct agency or team. • Giving regard to and recording the child or young person’s wishes and feelings, unless they are not able to do so by virtue of age or understanding. • Having the confidence to represent actively the child or young person and her/his rights. • Having the confidence to challenge your own and others’ practice. • Having awareness and basic knowledge, where appropriate, of the most current legislation regarding the safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children and young people. | <p>As above</p> | <p>Supervisor sign-off:</p> |

Outcome statement 6: Professional development

Description of the overall outcome

Demonstrate a commitment to improving social work knowledge and skills, and thereby professional practice, via a variety of formal and informal learning and education opportunities. This includes identifying individual needs but also acknowledging and addressing gaps identified by other practitioners/supervisors. The social worker is able to take responsibility for their professional development.

Context

The context in which you practice social work will depend on both your employer and the area of work. It is important that you work with your manager to describe the context of your work, job title and team name including the type of role you play and a description of the main social work tasks that you undertake.

Scope

The need for ongoing professional development reflects the dynamic nature of the social work profession, for example with changes in legislation and priorities. Social workers need to identify their developmental needs on an ongoing basis through their career, in conjunction with their employer, to meet the requirements of their profession. Continuing professional development for social workers is set within a UK-wide framework of post qualifying education and training and forms part of the requirement for registration as a social worker. Formal and informal professional development opportunities will be used to demonstrate recognised standards of competence. Undertaking professional development is a means of raising the status and profile of social work by demonstrating the commitment of its workforce to developing and applying skills and knowledge relevant to work with children, young people and families. Professional development opportunities can help ensure common minimum standards across a wide variety of social work settings.

The expectation of an EPD assessment differs from that of NQSW in the following areas:

- The social worker can independently reflect on their practice and competence and identify learning needs and a range of ways these might be met.
- The social worker is able to consistently access appropriate peer and managerial support to develop professionally.
- The social worker is able to build autonomously a professional development plan in line with their agency's requirement and systems.

The scope of the outcome at EPD comprises six elements.

Specialist knowledge

Depending on the employment context, there is an expectation that the EPD social worker should develop specialist knowledge in at least one theoretical model, a particular assessment tool or a communication method. This is to be agreed between the social worker and their supervisor at the commencement of EPD and should be recorded as part of the evidence. At the start of the EPD process, a social worker should identify additional or new areas of specialist knowledge they would like to develop over the course of the programme. It is important that this is agreed with their supervisor, ensuring that the work setting can provide the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the stated specialist knowledge. By the end of the EPD process, a social worker should be able to clearly articulate and demonstrate the specialist knowledge they have gained in the area of professional development.

Element 6.4: Organisational skills.

| Behaviours/Expertise/Skills | Evidence – How you would know you had achieved the required standard | Comments and location of evidence |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing workload to ensure relevant training and professional development is undertaken. • Ensuring time is made to reflect on case work and professional development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good use of diary/calendar time to meet workload and development requirements. • Self-reflection notes from the social worker. | <p>Comments:</p> <p>Supervisor sign-off:</p> |

Element 6.5: Applying theoretical knowledge.

| Behaviours/Expertise/Skills | Evidence – How you would know you had achieved the required standard | Comments and location of evidence |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking appropriate training/professional development and applying new knowledge to practice. • Including application of frameworks, risk assessment models and theory as applicable to the development of specialist knowledge identified above. • Using assessment tools such as Questionnaire and Scales (DH, Cox and Bentovim, 2000) which accompany the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that assessment has been informed by an appropriate framework, model or theory. • Evidence that assessment has been informed by the social worker’s own knowledge base. | <p>Comments:</p> <p>Supervisor sign-off:</p> |

Appendix 1

Legislation and statutory guidance

- The Children Act 1989 and Regulations and Guidance
 - Volume 2: The Care planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations and Guidance 2010
 - Volume 3: Planning Transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers: Statutory Guidance on the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010
 - Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011 - statutory guidance on the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
 - Volume 5: Children's Homes 2011 - Statutory guidance on the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 (Amended)
 - Care Standards Act 2000
 - Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (DfE, 2011) (amended)
 - Children's Homes: National Minimum Standards (DfE, 2011) (amended)
- Education Act 1996
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DH et al, 2000)
- Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (DCSF, 2010)
- Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (England) (2001)
- Promoting the health and well-being of looked after children (DH et al, 2009)
- GSCC Codes of Practice for social care workers and employers (GSCC, 2004 updated 2010)
- Children Act 2004
- Independent Reviewing Officer Handbook: Statutory guidance for independent reviewing officers and local authorities on their functions in relation to case management and review for looked after children (DfE, 2010)
- National Standard for Youth Justice Services (2009)
- The CAMHS Standard of the Children's National Service Framework Code of Practice on Special Educational Needs (2004)
- Review of Children's Cases Regulations (HM Government 1991) and Review of Children's Cases (Amendment) (England) Regulations (2004)
- Get it Sorted: Providing Effective Advocacy Services for Children and Young People Making a Complaint under the Children Act 1989 (DfES, 2004)
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Duty to provide information, advice and assistance: Guidance for local authorities childcare (DCSF, 2006)
- Information sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers (HM Government, 2008)
- Information sharing: Further guidance on legal issues (HM Government, 2006)
- Information sharing: case examples (DCSF, 2008)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government, 2010)
- Childcare Act 2006 (section 12)

- Childcare Act 2006 (Provision for Information to Parents (England) (Regulations 2007)
- Common Assessment Framework for children and young people: Practitioners' Guide (CWDC, 2009)
- The Public Law Outline (Ministry of Justice 2008)
- Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 1 (Court Orders) (DCSF 2008)
- Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures
- "Onset" and "Asset" Youth Justice assessment tools

The Children's Workforce Development Council leads change so that the thousands of people and volunteers working with children and young people across England are able to do the best job they possibly can.

We want England's children and young people's workforce to be respected by peers and valued for the positive difference it makes to children, young people and their families.

We advise and work in partnership with lots of different organisations and people who want the lives of all children and young people to be healthy, happy and fulfilling.



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