



Department  
for Education

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**Respond by 9 October 2014**  
**Ref: Department for Education**

# **Knowledge and Skills for Child and Family Social Work – Consultation Proposal**

# Knowledge and Skills for Child and Family Social Work - Proposal

**To** Social workers, local authorities and local authority (LA) representative bodies, other employers of social workers (private, voluntary and independent), children and young people, higher education and further education institutions and their representative bodies.

**Issued** 31 July 2014

**Enquiries To** If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the Department for Education on 0370 000 2288 or e-mail: [KnowledgeAndSkills.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:KnowledgeAndSkills.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk)

If your enquiry is related to the Department's e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the Ministerial and Public Communications Division by e-mail: [consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact Us'](#) page.

## 1 Introduction

**1.1** In February 2014 the Department for Education (the 'Department') published Sir Martin Narey's independent review of the education of children's social workers, 'Making the education of social workers consistently effective'. In his report Sir Martin identified the need for a single, concise document setting out what a newly qualified social worker needs to know and be able to do. He suggested that the Chief Social Worker (Children and Families) take the lead in drafting such a document.

## **2 Summary of the proposal**

**2.1** The Department is seeking views on the draft statement of knowledge and skills:

- As a statement of what a child and family social worker needs to know at the end of a first year in practice; and
- As a statement to inform what is taught on qualifying programmes to properly equip those studying to become effective child and family social workers.

**2.2** The knowledge and skills statement will be used to enable child and family social workers to understand more clearly what is expected of them as practitioners. Employers will be able to identify where social workers have achieved the requisite knowledge and skills and identify and put in place support to help them to do so.

**2.3** Working with employers, our proposal is for newly qualified child and family social workers to be assessed against the statement of knowledge and skills. Ministers have, at the same time of launching this consultation, announced a further year of funding for the 'Assessed and Supported Year in Employment' to support employers in this work.

**2.4** In addition, we plan to use the knowledge and skills to develop a new 'Approved Child and Family Practitioner' status test which we will pilot early in 2015. Our intention is that social workers working in defined areas of statutory children's services will need to have this status to provide assurance to employers, the public and government. We will provide further information about the pilot in the autumn, and following the pilot, will consult on the proposals arising.

### **3 Background to the consultation**

- 3.1** The Knowledge and Skills for Child and Family Social Work was written by the Chief Social Worker with input from over nine hundred and fifty frontline child and family social workers, to help ensure that it reflects what social workers have to do on a day to day basis.
- 3.2** Sir Martin Narey, in his review of social work education, recommended that this statement should be drafted by the Chief Social Worker to assist in the development of current qualifying programmes, towards greater specialism in child and family social work.
- 3.3** While the statement is not a curriculum document, we would like social work qualifying programmes to use it to shape courses. We will explore with the Department of Health and the professional and regulatory bodies for social work how the Knowledge and Skills for Child and Family Social Work can inform the Standards of Proficiency, the Quality and Assurance Agency Benchmark Statement and the Professional Capabilities Framework.
- 3.4** We are working with the College of Social Work and seeking their advice on how the draft Knowledge and Skills for Child and Family Social Work will link to the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF).
- 3.5** Employers and social workers will also be able to use the statement to be clear about what is expected from every child and family social worker by the end of their first year of practice.
- 3.6** A number of standards and guidance documents have been in existence for several years, however, this is a statement dedicated to setting out specifically what a child and family social worker needs to know and be able to do.

### **4 How To Respond**

- 4.1** Consultation responses can be completed online at <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/>  
by emailing [KnowledgeAndSkills.CONSULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:KnowledgeAndSkills.CONSULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk); or

by downloading a response form which should be completed and sent to:

Social Work Reform Unit, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT.

## **5 Additional Copies**

- 5.1** Additional copies of consultation documents are available electronically and can be downloaded from the Department for Education e-consultation website at: <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/>

## **6 Plans for making results public**

- 6.1** The results of the consultation and the Department's response will be published on the DfE e-consultation website in autumn 2014.