Department for Education

National assessment and accreditation system (NAAS): delivery evaluation of phases 1 and 2

Research report

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Contents

List of figures

List of tables

Executive summary

This report presents findings from the evaluation of the implementation and delivery of the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) phases 1 and 2.

NAAS is a new assessment and accreditation system for child and family social workers. It is designed to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge and skills against the child and family social work Post-Qualifying Standards (PQS), formerly known as the Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS). The Government's vision is that NAAS will support the delivery of children's services by encouraging social workers to continue development and maintain the knowledge and skills for effective practice as they progress through the profession.

NAAS has been rolled out in phases. Phase 1 includes five local authorities (known as 'Group 1') and began in July 2018. Phase 2 includes Group 2 (16 local authorities/trusts that began assessments in October 2018) and Group 3 (34 local authorities/trusts that began taking assessments in June 2019).

Aims and objective of NAAS

The overarching objective of NAAS is to improve outcomes for children and families. To do this, NAAS aims to:

- provide social workers with a better understanding of their current level of knowledge and skill and highlight areas for further development.

- support employers to raise the national standard and consistency of practice.

- ensure employers better understand their workforce development needs through the practice endorsement processes including supervision, performance management and learning and development.

Summary of research approach

The research aimed to help inform policy decisions about the future expansion of NAAS. It involved several stages of quantitative research - including a baseline survey conducted before any assessments were carried out in NAAS local authorities/ trusts, and a follow-up survey conducted four months after the baseline survey closed. Qualitative research was conducted at three stages within each of the Group 1 and 2 local authorities/trusts. The research also included a survey of staff in local authorities that were not part of the phased roll out of NAAS. It should be noted that due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, only limited research was able to be conducted among the Group 3 NAAS local authorities.There was

also some early Value for Money (VfM) analysis within Group 1 which can be seen in section 4 of the report[1].

Process of implementing and delivering NAAS

NAAS is a major change programme, with a significant amount of resources, capabilities and timescales required for implementation. These resources come from a broad range of organisations and individuals, including DfE, the local authorities, the NAAS Delivery Partner and child and family social work staff.

In summary[2]:

- The majority of Group 1 and 2 local authorities/ trusts initially reported that they had found it difficult to get engagement, or commitment from staff to get involved with NAAS.

- There was limited prescription given to local authorities in how they delivered NAAS, particularly for Group 1. This was to allow local authorities/ trusts to create their own approaches and evaluate what worked well and what did not. A wide variety of approaches were therefore taken to practice endorsement. Evidence gathered from interviews with assessed candidates, revealed that several local authorities/trusts were conducting limited to no scrutiny or assessment of practitioner skills before endorsing them to take part in an assessment.

- Where practice endorsement was used as a credible tool for assessing skills against the PQS, it was usually seen as helpful by the assessed social worker. Many practitioners referenced that they felt the work and reflection about their ability relative to the PQS- that they did as part of the endorsement process- felt more beneficial than the assessment itself. It was however noted that having the assessment was the driver for all the other reflective activities.

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[1] This analysis should be treated with some caution as it is based on a sample size of five local authorities (out of 69 local authorities participating in NAAS) and is assessed alongside many other contextual factors (e.g. involvement in any other reform or 'innovation programme').

[2] The majority of findings in this summary are from qualitative interviews and focus groups. Qualitative research sets out with the goal of 'in depth understanding'. It does not set out to estimate proportions and percentages of survey respondents that provide a certain response. The analysis here will typically report where there was a noticeable trend in responses but does not provide numbers.

- The general perception among local authority leads and assessed practitioners was that the NAAS Coordinator played an essential role in implementation and delivery of NAAS within each local authority/trust.

- In the Group 1 and 2 follow up surveys, about six in ten survey respondents (including: those that had undertaken the assessement, those that had not yet but were planning to, and those that were not planning to take the assessment) had received training or support about NAAS. The majority felt that this training was helpful.

- Additional information (such as toolkits) that were provided by DfE within Phase 2 to all local authorities/trusts engaged with NAAS, were generally felt to be beneficial by assessed practitioners. As part of their preparation for the assessment, the majority of endorsed staff had read, or planned to read, the PQS and do NAAS practice questions.

- Overall feedback on the organisation and format of the assessments was positive. Feedback on the overall organisation of the assessment centres and the support provided by the NAAS Delivery Partner who organised and conducted the assessments was positive. Awareness of how NAAS was being introduced in the local area was higher in Group 3 (54%) than in Groups 1 (43%) and 2 (45%).

Value for Money analysis

London Economics conducted an early Value for Money (VfM) assessment of the set-up and delivery costs associated with NAAS. They based the analysis on cost survey returns from Group 1 local authorities and comparison of outcomes with other comparable local authorities not engaged in the programme (the 'control' group).

In summary:

- The early assessment of the VfM analysis suggests the introduction of NAAS was associated with a number of positive impacts on specific child outcomes in Group 1 authorities including a relative reduction in the rate of children looked after (per 10,000) and the rate of child protection plans (per 10,000) amongst the Group 1 local authorities compared to the control group. NAAS was also associated with an impact on some social worker outcomes (including relative reductions in the vacancy rate for social workers and the reliance on agency staff) in Group 1 authorities.

- The indicative results suggest that for every £1 spent by the Department on the set-up and delivery of NAAS in the Group 1 local authorities up until 2019, cost savings of between £2.03 and £2.28 were realised.

It is important to note that this is an early assessment of the costs (based on survey data) and Value for Money (at a very early stage of NAAS), which is based on a small sample of five local authorities in Group 1. The methodology carried out to do this analysis was robust but, due to the sample size and the early stage at which the research was conducted, the findings should be treated with some caution.

Perceived initial effects and challenges of NAAS

This section of the report looked at two elements of the early impacts of NAAS: (i) perceptions among those involved in Child and Family Social Work of what the initial effects and challenges have been; and (ii) perceptions and expectations of the likely future effects of NAAS.

- There was a real variety in terms of how well the PQS were embedded into practice. However, the general view across leaders of all the local authorities/ trusts in groups 1 and 2 was that NAAS had driven the urgency and pace of embedding the PQS across local systems. Leaders in local authorities/trusts also said that NAAS had provided a level of external scrutiny to review and ensure consistent practice across the workforce.

- Having the mechanisms to evaluate performance against the PQS (through the practice endorsement and assessment preparation) were commonly seen as the most beneficial aspect of NAAS by practitioners. There was a common theme amongst those interviewed that although the PQS were not new to child and family social work, they had little traction amongst staff apart from those who had been through ASYE.

- The NAAS results letter was criticised by practitioners and managers for lacking detailed information about development needs. There had been an expectation that the results would highlight specific development needs, and then recommend relevant tools/resources required to meet these. The level of detail provided was seen to be insufficient to help drive improvements in CPD.

- About a quarter of respondents (23% in the Group 1 baseline and 22% in the Group 2 baseline) felt that NAAS would help improve their ability as a social worker. This was higher at 36% in Group 3.

- There was some evidence in the interviews of Group 1 and Group 2 leaders and workforce development teams that NAAS prompted them to reflect on their authority's wider learning culture and staff needs. Some leaders felt that NAAS had drawn their attention to the usefulness of observation and simulated practice, and this could have wider use in their workforce strategy to ensure social workers' practice was reviewed, in addition to their existing internal auditing measures.

- Across Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities/ trusts, the influence of NAAS on Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and learning was largely seen in providing opportunities for learning and self-reflection within the practice endorsement process, and NAAS assessment preparation.

- From the workforce perspective, assessed staff often felt that there was very little support and reflection post-assessment if they had met the accreditation. NAAS assessed staff commonly felt that the assessment had provided validation of their current practice, but then it was "back to practice as usual" without any tools/procedures to pursue further learning.

- Leaders had generally heard from colleagues and staff that undergoing NAAS had been a positive experience to reflect on practice, and that the validation of an accreditation had increased some practitioners' confidence in their own practice. Some practitioners felt that initial boosts to confidence were short lived where there were limited processes for discussion post results, or formal recognition procedures in place for going through the process.

- There was little indication of a perceived impact on career development and progression for people within Group 1 local authorities. There was more evidence of an influence within Group 2 local authorities/ trusts (and Group 3 through the baseline survey). The main direct change in some Group 2 local authorities/ trusts was to align NAAS assessment outcomes to progression pathways and increased pay. Generally, it was felt that introduction of NAAS within the local authority/trust had limited impact on the morale of the wider non-assessed workforce.

In conclusion, whilst it was initially difficult for some Group 1 and 2 local authorities/trusts to get initial engagement and commitment from staff to be involved in NAAS, once they had buy-in from practitioners, NAAS was generally viewed to be beneficial by frontline staff, managers and local authority leaders. The indicative early findings from the Value for Money analysis in Group 1 also suggest that NAAS is associated with a saving of £2.03 and £2.28 for every £1 spent on the programme.

The general trend in results from the staff surveys in terms of attitudes towards NAAS was positive, albeit starting from a relatively low baseline of support. The proportion of survey respondents that agreed NAAS will be positive for them rose from 26% at the Group 1 baseline to 30% at the Group 2 baseline and 44% at the Group 3 baseline. Similarly, the proportion that agreed NAAS will have a positive impact on children and families in their local area rose from 17% at the Group 1 baseline to 21% at the Group 2 baseline, to 33% at the Group 3 baseline.

1. The theory and design of NAAS

This report presents findings from the delivery evaluation of the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) following completion of Group 1 and Group 2 research.

NAAS is a new assessment and accreditation system for child and family social workers. It is designed to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge and skills against the child and family social work Post-Qualifying Standards (PQS), formerly known as the Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS). The Government's vision is that NAAS will support the delivery of children's services by encouraging social workers to continue development and maintain the knowledge and skills for effective practice, after qualifying and entering the profession.

Aims and objectives of NAAS

The overarching aim of NAAS is to improve outcomes for children and families. In order to achieve this,NAAS aims to:

- provide social workers with a better understanding of their current level of knowledge and skill and highlight areas for further development.

- support employers to raise the national standard and consistency of practice.

- ensure employers better understand their workforce development needs through the practice endorsement processes including supervision, performance management and learning and development.

The Department for Education aimed to take an iterative, test, evaluate and change approach to the delivery of NAAS. This style of delivery shaped the phased approach taken by the Department to deliver NAAS and helped to ensure it was able to refine the Proof of Concept model of delivery and develop a support package in partnership with the sector.

Development of NAAS

NAAS has been developed to enable child and family social workers to further develop their skills and knowledge in order to improve outcomes for children and families.

NAAS is part of a wider range of reform and innovation programmes within Children's Social Care[3] developed as part of the Putting Children First programme. [4] Putting Children First described a sector where "The majority of local authorities still struggle to provide consistently effective core social work practice".

KPMG led a consortium that ran the NAAS 'Proof of Concept' testing among staff from 22 local authorities between March 2015 and April 2016. [5] The Proof of Concept developed, tested and suggested revisions to the mode of assessment.

This was followed by a consultation in 2016. The Government response to the consultation was published in December 2017. [6] One of the key outcomes from the consultation was the proposal to use a 'phased roll-out' to properly test the delivery of NAAS, and address any initial issues, before progressing with the future expansion of NAAS. NAAS has been rolled out in phases. Phase 1 began in July 2018 with five local authorities (known as Group 1). Phase 2 includes Group 2 (16 local authorities that began assessments in October 2018 and Group 3 (34 local authorities/trusts that began taking assessments in June 2019).

Changes from intended delivery

The initial aim was for Phase 2 to run after the completion of Phase 1 to allow feedback and learning ('alpha-beta' testing) from Phase 1. The initial 'alpha-beta' testing that was intended to be taken between Phase 1 and Phase 2 was planned to help DfE understand the enablers and challenges for implementing NAAS by allowing ideas and innovative approaches to emerge, which would be evaluated and go on to inform any recommended approaches for Phase 2.

Due to lower than expected numbers of social workers coming forward to be assessed at the start of Phase 1, (which involved 5 local authorities in what we refer to as 'Group 1') and a willingness to participate among the Phase 2 sites, a small number of Phase 2 sites launched earlier than planned. This allowed DfE to assess the early validity of NAAS assessments from a larger sample size of assessed candidates. Phase 2 includes Group 2 (16 local authorities/trusts that began assessments in October 2018) and Group 3 (34 local authorities/trusts that began taking assessments in June 2019).

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[3] Children's Social Care Innovation Programme
[4] Putting children first: our vision for children's social care
[5] Report for social work assessment and accreditation system: proof of concept
[6] Confidence in practice: child and family social work assessment and accreditation system

Fourteen of the Group 3 local authorities are trialling a different approach to NAAS delivery by working in a shared delivery arrangement. This is part of the FutureSocial[7] approach in the West Midlands. The role of FutureSocial is to facilitate and enable regional collaboration and approaches, which will assist and benefit all 14 Local Authorities and Trusts. This is discussed in more detail in section 3 of this report.

Format and process of assessment

NAAS involves four distinct stages of implementation.

1.   Pre-endorsement and selection.

2.   Practice endorsement.

3.   Assessment and accreditation.

4.   Post-assessment support.

The first stage for local authorities/ trusts involved getting ready for a major change program and selecting staff who they thought were ready to take part in NAAS.

For the child and family social workers involved, the system was designed to involve pre-assessment activity, an assessment day and post-assessment activities. The pre-assessment activity includes 'practice endorsement' against the PQS. The aim of practice endorsement is for practitioners and their managers to review current levels of knowledge and skill, against the PQS, and decide, jointly, whether they were ready to progress to assessment.

The assessment day involves:

1. Knowledge assessment: a multiple-choice online assessment of general and applied social work knowledge questions based on the PQS;

2. Simulated Practice Assessment:

    a. Two simulations of social work practice with actors, observed by a practice assessor;

    b. Reflective assessment; a reflective discussion with an assessor about the simulated assessment scenarios;

    c. Timed written assessment based on one of the practice simulations undertaken.

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[7] https://www.wmchildrensservices.org.uk/future-social

The final stage of NAAS is post-assessment learning and development. Each candidate receives a results letter confirming whether they have met the assessment standards and how well they performed against the PQS criteria.

2. Research Method

Kantar's Public Division was commissioned to carry out an independent process evaluation of Phase 1 and 2 of the roll-out of NAAS[8] (the Kantar logic model can be seen in appendix 1). This used a mixed method approach that focussed on understanding implementation and identifying possible improvements and early benefits and challenges. In addition, there was an assessment of value for money. The five broad aims of the evaluation are set out below:

1. Evaluate the implementation of NAAS to provide formative feedback on processes and systems.

2. Maximise learning opportunities, providing real time feedback on improvements to the NAAS system to improve service design and operational delivery.

3. Identify and analyse the implementation and wider costs of NAAS for DfE, the Delivery Partner, local authorities/ trusts and social workers.

4. Translate the evaluation findings into a set of learning tools for the benefit of local authorities and staff in the long-term.

Although not an 'impact' evaluation, part of the research did involve conducting an early assessment of the Value for Money (VfM) of NAAS with Group 1 local authorities and developing a framework to measure longer term impact.

Summary of research approach

Groups 1 and 2 research

The research aimed to help inform the future expansion of NAAS. It involved a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research, alongside early value for money analysis (within Group 1) and development of a framework for longer-term measures of the benefits of NAAS. A high-level summary of the research approach is described below. These will be explained more throughout the rest of this section.

1. Online staff surveys: Conducted at a baseline and follow up point. Amongst group 1 local authorities we also conducted a third survey at a later timepoint. This research has been included in the report and is clearly labelled.

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[8] Kantar's Public Division lead a consortium which includes London Economics and Geraldine MacDonald (Professor of Social Work, University of Bristol). London Economics have responsibility for analysing the cost of NAAS. Professor MacDonald has oversight of research tools, design and reporting.

2. Qualitative interviews with staff: Conducted at multiple timepoints with staff at different levels (senior leaders such as Principal Social Workers and Assistant Directors of Children's Services, managers and practitioners).

3. Delivery model questionnaire: Standard template completed by senior leader at two stages asking about approach to aspects of delivery. The first stage asked about the initial approach to delivery. The second stage asked about whether these had changed over time.

4. Management data analysis.

5. Value for Money analysis (Group 1).

<u>Group 3 research</u>

The initial plan for research among Group 3 local authorities broadly followed the same structure as above. The exception to this was that qualitative interviews would only focus on interviewing the overall coordinator of the 'shared delivery' approach. Fourteen local authorities worked in a partnership called 'FutureSocial'[9]. We interviewed the coordinator to understand more about their shared approach to delivery of NAAS. The baseline staff survey and qualitative interviews were also conducted.

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 in Spring 2020, the remaining research with Group 3 on NAAS was cancelled to align with government guidance on non-essential travel and to allow all local authority/ trust resources to focus on delivery of frontline services. This means that there is no data to allow comparison between the baseline and follow up period for Group 3.

Quantitative research – Online staff survey

The quantitative research involved a two-stage online survey sent to all child and family social workers in the local authority/ trust to measure attitudes and understanding of the system. For each group, there was a baseline survey, undertaken in most cases before any assessments were completed in local authorities/ trusts in that group, and then a follow-up survey sent approximately four months after the baseline survey closed. The majority of questions in the baseline and follow-up questionnaires were similar allowing for comparison of responses to understand change between the timepoints. The follow-up survey had separate

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[9] https://www.wmchildrensservices.org.uk/future-social

modules of questions asked only to those staff that reported they had been assessed.

There was a third survey in Group 1 of assessed staff only, conducted in January and February 2020.

The table below provides information on the date of each survey, number of surveys completed and estimated response rate[10,11]

Caution should be taken as response rates (particularly for the follow up surveys) were relatively low. Attempts were made to maximise response rates where possible. This included producing survey communications (emails and posters) emphasising the importance of the research. Kantar and DfE asked local authorities to send regular survey invitations to their employees and fieldwork periods were extended where possible.

The number of respondents in some of the surveys is relatively small so caution should be taken with the results. Any 'increase' or 'decrease' in survey results that is mentioned in this report is statistically significant (at the $p<.05$ level).

Table 1: Staff survey response rates

Survey type	Dates	Surveys completed	Response rate
Group 1 Baseline	July/Aug 2018	266	20%
Group 1 Follow up	Apr/Jun 2019	107	7%
Group 1 Survey of assessed staff	Jan/Feb 2020	48	23%
Group 2 Baseline	Nov 2018/July 2019	687	19%
Group 2 Follow up	Oct 2019/Jan 2020	387	10%

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[10] Response rate assumptions are based on dividing the number of completed surveys by the headcount of children and family social workers in each area. This may not be the actual number of staff that the survey was sent to.

[11] It is important to note that there was a variation in response rates to each survey by local authorities/ trusts. For example, the Group 2 follow up survey varied from 2% to 19% of staff completing the questionnaire. While the surveys are representative of the 'Group' as a whole it means that it is not possible to confidently report on results for any individual local authority.

Survey type	Dates	Surveys completed	Response rate
Group 3 Baseline	Oct 2019/Jan 2020	765	10%

Generally, survey invitations were sent by each local authority/trust to their own staff[12]. In the Group 2 surveys, each survey respondent provided their HCPC registration number. This information was matched up with the details of assessed social workers to allocate Group 2 survey respondents into 'assessed' and 'non-assessed' categories. The report includes analysis of where the difference in results between the baseline and follow up surveys is different between the 'assessed' and 'non-assessed' survey respondents to provide an indication of where change may be due to participation in NAAS. This was not possible with the Group 1 surveys.

The questionnaires for the Group 2 baseline and Group 2 follow up research can be seen in appendix 2 and 3.

Non-NAAS sites research

An online staff survey was conducted within 37 non-NAAS local authorities that responded to a DfE invitation to participate in this research.

The main objectives of the national non-NAAS sites research were:

1. To provide a baseline against which DfE can measure the benefits, disbenefits and efficacy of NAAS.

2. To explore social workers' views and understanding of NAAS in local authorities/ trusts that were not involved in the phased roll-out at the time, in comparison to the data from the baseline surveys conducted within groups 1 and 2.

The survey opened on Monday 17th June 2019 and closed on Wednesday 14th August 2019. Across the 37 local authorities/trusts, 675 social workers completed the survey (7% response rate).

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[12] Two local authorities in the Group 1 baseline survey provided Kantar with contact details for staff. Kantar sent survey invitations to these local authorities. This approach was discontinued due to the burden it provided to local authorities and desire to remain compliant with GDPR regulations.

Qualitative research

Qualitative interviewing was conducted at three timepoints within each local authority. Timepoint 1 was before staff had been through NAAS assessments, timepoint 2 was around the time that some cohorts of staff had been assessed, and timepoint 3 was conducted about three months after timepoint 2 and designed to understand what changes had occurred in local authorities/ trusts since the assessments.

There were separate interviews for different staff roles (see below).

Table 2: Timepoints for qualitative research

Group	Timepoint 1 Before assessment	Timepoint 2 Soon after assessment	Timepoint 3 Several months after assessment
Senior staff	AD: 1 per LA/ trust NAAS coordinator: 1 per LA/ trust	n/a	AD: 1 per LA/ trust NAAS coordinator: 1 per LA/ trust
Assessed managers	Forum participants	1 per LA/ trust	Forum participants
Non-assessed managers	Forum participants	n/a	Forum participants
Assessed practitioners	Forum participants	1 per LA/ trust	Forum participants
Non- assessed practitioners	Forum participants	n/a	Forum participants

Analysis of the qualitative results was assisted by a 'delivery model' template. The method for collecting this information was a short pro-forma that was emailed to a senior member of staff within each local authority/ trust. The pro-forma asks several questions, including the approach to endorsement and assessment preparation. A follow up version was sent once staff had begun to go through the NAAS assessment to find out if the local authority/ trust had changed their approach, and if so, why. Thematic analysis was conducted on the responses to these pro-formas to understand the different models of delivering each stage of NAAS.

Value for Money analysis

London Economics conducted research and analysis to provide an early assessment of the initial economic costs associated with the introduction of NAAS. This took the form of a questionnaire sent to all Group 1 and 2 local authorities/ trusts which broke down the costs of the different stages of NAAS, as outlined above under the 'Format and process of assessment' section. They also conducted a comparison of the relative outcomes between Group 1 local authorities using publicly available sources and other statistically matched comparable local authorities that were not engaged in the programme (see section 4 of this report for more detail).

This allowed London Economics to provide a cost for delivery of NAAS (based on the data returned to them from the local authorities) and an early estimate of the Value for Money (VfM) of NAAS in Group 1 authorities.

It should be noted that the VfM analysis is based on early comparisons of the impact of NAAS using the data available at the time of reporting. This does not consider any other contextual factors (such as involvement in any other reform or 'innovation programme'). The cost data was based on a survey response from the local authority so should be treated with some caution. Several rounds of clarification calls were made to each local authority to make sure that the data was as consistent as possible.

Reporting notes

As noted above, the majority of results presented here are reported perceptions of NAAS. Given that NAAS is still at an early stage, this evaluation did not seek to provide definitive measures of impact (as most of which will need longer to be measured). It is also important to note that where change between stages (such as a statistically significant increase in agreement to any question in the staff survey) has occurred, it is not possible to directly attribute change to NAAS. There is no true 'counterfactual' in place as NAAS has not been implemented within a 'vacuum' but rather is a part of a larger programme of reform within Child and Family Social Care.

When comparing results across stages, the report looks at the difference within each Group (Group 1 and Group 2) between the baseline and follow up surveys. As discussed above, the approach taken with the Group 2 staff survey allows for comparison of the difference in the results between baseline and follow up for assessed and non-assessed staff to provide an indication of any effect of participation in NAAS. Also, due to the cessation of research fieldwork activities from March 2020, due to Covid-19, there is no follow up survey for Group 3.

Where percentages shown in charts or tables do not total to exactly 100% (or where they do not exactly total to a summary statistic given, such as agree/disagree) this is due to rounding to the nearest whole number, to the exclusion of those who said "don't know" or because participants were able to choose more than one response option.

Where the results for one group of respondents are compared against the results for another group (such as non-NAAS local authorities/trusts compared against NAAS phased roll-out group local authorities/trusts), any differences stated are statistically significant at the 95% probability level, unless otherwise stated. This means that we can be 95% confident that the differences observed between the subgroups are genuine differences in opinions and have not just occurred by chance. Base sizes are relatively small (particularly among the Group 1 follow up survey) so care has been taken to only state change where we are confident it has occurred.

3. Process of implementing and delivering NAAS

As described in section 1, NAAS is a major change programme, with a significant amount of resources, capabilities and timescales required for implementation. These resources come from a broad range of organisations and individuals, including DfE, the local authorities, Delivery Partner and child and family social work staff. In this section we examine the stages of delivery of NAAS, from selection of child and family social workers for assessment, though to the support received once the assessment is completed.

In summary:

- DfE was deliberately not prescriptive about the way Group 1 local authorities selected practitioners for assessment or how they carried out practice endorsement (or conducted the various preparation and post-assessment support activities).

- Group 1 and 2 local authorities/ trusts initially reported that they had found it difficult to get engagement, or commitment from staff to get involved with NAAS. This difficulty in engagement had an impact on the quality of the practice endorsement process as local authorities/trusts focussed more on maximising the volume of candidates being assessed than scrutinising whether practitioners were ready for the assessment.

- There was limited prescription given to local authorities in how they delivered NAAS. Particularly for Group 1. This was to allow local authorities/ trusts to create their own approaches and evaluate what worked well and what did not. As expected, a wide variety of approaches were taken to practice endorsement. There was evidence that several local authorities/trusts were conducting limited or no scrutiny or assessment of practitioner skills before allowing them to take part in an assessment.

- However, where practice endorsement was used as a credible tool for assessing skills against the PQS it was usually seen as helpful by the assessed worker. Practitioners consistently referenced that they felt that the work and reflection about their ability relative to the PQS, that went into the endorsement process, felt more beneficial than the assessment itself. When asked if staff understood why they undertook a practice endorsement form, awareness was high with around eight in ten in the Group 1 and Group 2 follow up surveys.

- The general perception among local authority leads and assessed practitioners was that the NAAS Coordinator played an essential role in implementation and delivery of NAAS within each local authority/trust.

- In the Group 1 and 2 follow up surveys, about six in ten survey respondents had received training or support about NAAS. The majority felt that this training was helpful.

- Additional information (such as toolkits) that were provided within Phase 2, to all local authorities/trusts engaged with NAAS, were generally felt to be beneficial by assessed practitioners. The majority of endorsed staff had read, or planned to read, the PQS and do NAAS practice questions.

- Overall feedback on the organisation and format of the assessments was positive. Feedback on the overall organisation of the assessment centres and the support provided by the NAAS Delivery Partner who organised and conducted the assessments was positive.

- Awareness among staff survey respondents of how NAAS was being introduced in the local area was higher in Group 3 than in Groups 1 and 2.

NAAS has four distinct stages to implementation for any candidate:

1. Pre-endorsement and selection.

2. Practice endorsement.

3. Assessment and accreditation.

4. Post-assessment support.

Initial set-up of NAAS

This section looks at the process of implementing and delivering NAAS. We will be examining the types of models of delivery, the ways in which NAAS is being introduced among leaders and social workers, and the four stages of implementation of NAAS: practice endorsement, preparation for assessment, assessment, and post-assessment.

DfE was deliberately not prescriptive about the way Group 1 local authorities selected practitioners for assessment or how they carried out practice endorsement (or conducted the various preparation and post-assessment support activities). There were expectations for the number of social workers who were put through the assessment by each local authority, but for Group 1 the intention was to allow the local authorities to develop approaches that worked within their existing systems (e.g. dovetailed with their approach to continuous professional development). The initial 'alpha-beta' testing that was intended to be taken between phase 1 and phase 2 was planned to help DfE understand the success factors and challenges for

implementing NAAS by allowing ideas and innovative approaches to emerge, which would be evaluated and go on to inform any recommended approaches for Group 2.

Interviews with leaders in local authorities suggested that this lack of prescription was initially welcomed by local authorities as it allowed them to align NAAS to existing learning and development processes rather than it being mandated that they create new processes and structures.

The stages of delivery overlapped between groups, but in general, there was still an 'iterative' approach taken to delivery. This can be seen from the approach taken to engagement with local authorities, communication about the benefits of NAAS[13] and availability of guidance tools such as the NAAS toolkits[14].

Selecting child and family social workers for assessment

This section looks at the approaches that were taken by local authorities to select child and family social workers for assessment. This section starts by looking at Group 1 (when DfE was generally not prescriptive about the approach taken) and then whether there were any changes in Group 2 where more guidance was provided to the local authorities ahead of delivery.

Approaches taken to selecting staff in Group 1

Local authorities used a combination of approaches to support practitioner engagement with NAAS, including:

- General email sent to all eligible staff asking for volunteers (regardless of perceived readiness).
- NAAS Coordinator or manager individually asking staff who they feel are ready to be assessed to take part.
- Stand-alone self-evaluation approach to evidence preparedness for PQS, intended to be validated by their manager in supervision.
- Embedded self-evaluation approach incorporated into the local appraisal system.
- Incentives to do the assessment and to achieve a "met" result.

Generally, though, in Group 1 self-selection was used in all local authorities to establish which staff members would go through the assessment. For two Group 1

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[13] National assessment and accreditation system: for employers of social workers
[14] Guidance: National assessment and accreditation system (NAAS)

local authorities, there were discussions about who, out of those self-selected, were to go through the assessment. One local authority selected more experienced staff. Their rationale for this was to allow the local authority to learn from the experiences of this group of workers and put in place appropriate support for future cohorts. One local authority encouraged staff of all levels.

Where local authorities/trusts reported that they had initially found it difficult to get engagement, or commitment from staff to get involved, this was primarily for several reasons:

- Difficulties with attendance at meetings to discuss NAAS due to staff having other priorities (e.g. workload or Ofsted inspection).

- Staff not understanding the purpose and benefits of NAAS.

- Staff knowing that NAAS is voluntary and not mandatory meant that some social workers took an approach of 'wait and see' what happens with others, and/or they did not see it as a priority because it was not mandatory.

- The perception that the phased roll-out was a 'pilot' and that NAAS may not continue after the 'pilot' finishes.

This difficulty in engagement often had an impact on the implementation of the practice endorsement process. In some local authorities/trusts the practice endorsement process was less well thought out at the start. This led to the majority of those that volunteered being assessed without any recognisable form of targeted selection, practice endorsement or self-assessment. Whereas, in other local authorities/trusts with a well-developed practice endorsement process, the lack of engagement meant that in an attempt to maximise the number of assessed staff, they compromised their practice endorsement process by passing all staff that agreed to participate straight through to an assessment without any recognisable form of assessing readiness against the PQS. This was not the case for all local authorities/trusts, some did not compromise on the practice endorsement process, even if it meant lower numbers being assessed.

Approaches taken to selecting staff in Group 2

Learning from Group 1 informed a series of 'toolkits' developed by DfE which gave guidance to local authorities on how to select staff, conduct practice endorsement and prepare them for the assessment. Interviews with leaders and practitioners also suggests that self-selection was also the most common approach within Group 2 local authorities.

However, one consistent change in approach to selection in Group 2 was that senior staff volunteered to go through NAAS at the outset within several local

authorities/trusts. In practice this meant that assessed senior staff acted as credible advocates for NAAS and could talk from experience about what would be required and how the assessment day would run. This was felt to give practitioners reassurance in the assessment process, which helped practitioners feel more confident putting themselves forward to the assessment.

> "It was really really helpful; it was a big factor in thinking whether it was something I could do or not." (Assessed practitioner, Group 2, Timepoint 2).

One other approach used in a couple of Group 2 local authorities, which leaders in those local authorities said helped improve interest and engagement (in terms of numbers of staff volunteering to be endorsed) was the offer of incentives (typically financial incentives, but sometimes small 'treats' such as chocolates or gift vouchers) for being assessed and additional incentives if the candidate received a 'met' result.

NAAS coordinator

The NAAS coordinator was seen by interviewed staff to play a crucial role in the implementation of NAAS within each local authority/ trust. They played a major role in driving engagement within the local authorities.

In Group 1, the perception of assessed staff interviewed was that the NAAS Coordinator role, combined with an administrative support team is essential to the delivery of NAAS. In the Group 1 local authorities, the NAAS Coordinators were responsible for tasks including disseminating information about NAAS (principles, aims and processes), making practical arrangements, advising on approaches to selecting and supporting staff to be assessed, and encouraging interest. Interviews with assessed staff suggested that NAAS Coordinators were more involved in discussing the process of being assessed with practitioners than their managers.

The Group 1 Coordinators were typically Principal Social Workers[15] and thus were generally well known and respected, which gave them greater ability to influence perceptions of NAAS.

The general perception among group 1 leaders (ADCS and PSW) and frontline staff was that a dedicated NAAS Coordinator that is known and trusted by staff, and

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[15] Principal social workers (PSWs) are advanced practitioners in frontline service teams, who carry cases, provide supervision, and have learning and development responsibilities

visibly supported by leadership is key to NAAS visibility in the service, and staff engagement.

> "...you just know that anything we might want to ask she'll always talk about it; you can ask her questions and you just know that it'll be fine." (Practitioner, Group 1, Timepoint 1).

Group 1 Coordinators were unsure about the likely success of recruiting someone externally into the NAAS Coordinator role post because of the perceived importance of established relationships to encourage staff to be assessed. However, no Group 1 co-ordinator was aware of anyone being recruited into the role in any other local authority or had direct evidence to back up these opinions.

Interviews within Group 2 suggest that the role was seen as being equally important within Group 2. The main difference was that several Group 2 Coordinators were recruited from outside the local authority/ trust. There was no perceived difference in the effectiveness of these staff (compared with those recruited from within the local authority).

Within Group 2 there were a couple of local authorities/ trusts that changed NAAS Coordinator during the implementation period. Interviews highlighted that when the change in NAAS coordinator happened, due to the loss of a respected member of staff that was experienced in 'driving momentum' of NAAS, leaders and practitioners felt there was a decrease in overall engagement with NAAS throughout the local authority, a reduction in positive attitudes towards NAAS, and ultimately a reduction in the numbers of staff being endorsed and assessed in the local authority/trust that had a change in coordinator. In one local authority, the new coordinator said that they resolved to go through the assessment as soon as possible to help them understand the process and show visible leadership to the staff.

Practice Endorsement

The next section discusses the practice endorsement process. In summary, a wide variety of approaches were reported in the qualitative interviews conducted.

Practice endorsement is a process for managers to decide whether social workers are ready to demonstrate their expertise and take the assessment. The aim of the practice endorsement is to assess the readiness for a social worker's knowledge and skill, against the Post-Qualifying Standards (PQS), is at a level to be assessed.

In both Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities/trusts there was evidence from interviews with NAAS coordinators, managers and assessed staff that several local authorities/trusts were conducting a low level of scrutiny or assessment of

practitioners' knowledge and skills before allowing them to take part in an assessment. However, where practice endorsement was perceived to have been used as a tool for assessing knowledge and skills against the PQS it was seen as helpful by the assessed worker.

Please note that Section 5 looks at the impacts of the practice endorsement process on continuous professional development (CPD) in more detail.

Group 1 practice endorsement

There were a number of processes taken with the five Group 1 local authorities. In some cases, the process of practice endorsement was informal, for example, a conversation with their manager to gauge willingness to be assessed. There were several examples in the qualitative interviews of social workers that did not realise they had been through the practice endorsement process.

In one Group 1 local authority, the original practice endorsement process incorporated a practitioner self-assessment and a manager assessment, as well as the creation of a development plan. Feedback in interviews from NAAS Coordinators, managers and practitioners was that this was too burdensome and put staff off engaging with NAAS. This led to a slimming down of this process to encourage sign up to NAAS and now the process has been reduced to an informal discussion about readiness.

Some local authorities helped staff to create a portfolio for the practice endorsement process, and tied this into preparation for any post-assessment CPD. Reaction to this type of preparation varied. Some staff seemed to value this process of reflection on their work and as a tool for preparation for NAAS. Similar to the development plans, the portfolio was not used in local authorities/trusts after the first cohort of staff went through practice endorsement as NAAS leads considered it to be similar to the self-reflection and development that was already well embedded in practice. The process for practice endorsement became a conversation between the practitioner and their line manager where both provided examples to illustrate readiness for assessment on a form. When complete, the form is signed off by a senior manager within the local authority.

In other local authorities, practice endorsement was reported as being delivered through the Personal Development Review (PDR). Their PDR form was redesigned to enable a conversation about endorsement and the opportunity to sign up for NAAS.

During interviews with senior leaders and practitioners in Group 1 local authorities, there was generally limited evidence that local authorities were using practice

endorsement to credibly assess whether a social worker was meeting the PQS and ready to take the assessment.

Assessed staff and their managers often reported a lack of clarity about what the practice endorsement process actually meant, why it was required, and what was required both for managers and social workers themselves. Some staff going through the practice endorsement felt that the stage was a tick box exercise rather than as a thorough and robust assessment of whether a practitioner or supervisor was ready for NAAS when they were already having conversations on strengths and weaknesses with managers. However, those that created self-assessment forms or 'portfolios' generally agreed that it gave them time to assess their strengths and weaknesses and undertake training before assessment. Even though it was often the case that these 'portfolios' were not reviewed or scrutinised, the staff who created them found it a useful process as a means of self-reflection.

Due to this lack of understanding over the importance of the practice endorsement, where there was a self-assessment process that took time to complete, it was often seen as unnecessarily burdensome by both practitioners and managers. Managers we spoke to had limited knowledge of practice endorsement, either not realising the purpose of it and that they had a role to play, or they felt they had limited time to engage with the process.

Where managers were not going through the practice endorsement process themselves, there was a concern from some practitioners that these managers did not fully understand what is expected. This concern was in terms of endorsement against the PQS and approving staff who were not yet ready to go through the assessment or who had development needs.

Group 2 practice endorsement

In Group 2 local authorities/ trusts there was a similar variety of approaches that were reported (including 'portfolios', development plans and some 'informal approaches'). However, there was generally a greater perception from assessed candidates that practice endorsement was being used credibly to assess readiness (against the PQS), although this was far from universal.

The introduction of DfE toolkits and further guidance was reported by most leaders and managers interviewed as helping them understand the importance of the practice endorsement. Guidance from DfE was provided to local authorities/trusts at the beginning of phase 2 of the evaluation, which was when Group 2 local authorities/trusts started NAAS. The greater level of credibility may have arisen from this as local authorities/trusts were now able to understand why these new stages

had been introduced, whilst for Group 1 local authorities the NAAS process was not prescriptive as discussed above in section initial set up of NAAS.

Implications of delivery of practice endorsement

In local authorities/trusts where the practice endorsement was consistently communicated and used as a tool of self-reflection against the PQS, most social workers saw its benefits. NAAS was seen to have a greater impact (on CPD and embedding the PQS) where local authorities allowed practitioners to review practice against the PQS framework and reflect on additional areas of learning and development required. Practitioners consistently referenced that they felt that the work and reflection about ability relative to the PQS, that went into the endorsement process, felt more beneficial than the assessment itself.

Where the practice endorsement was communicated as a stage to go through before the assessment, or there was an informal (discussion) process, social workers did not see that there was any purpose or benefit from the practice endorsement.

One theme that came through strongly in a lot of local authorities across both Groups 1 and 2 was that some social workers reported that they had no knowledge of a practice endorsement process in their local authority/ trust. Instead they agreed to 'do NAAS' and said they were given an assessment date, in some cases without any form of self-reflection whereas others had varying degrees of reflection prior to assessment.

However, in the staff follow up surveys around eight in ten assessed staff reported that they understood why they completed a NAAS practice endorsement form. And understanding was slightly higher in Group 2 than in Group 1 (Group 1 follow up: 79%, Group 2 follow up: 86%).

Group 3 shared delivery approach

Within Group 3, fourteen local authorities/trusts combined to take a slightly different approach to implementing NAAS at a regional level. 'Future Social' in the West Midlands used a 'shared delivery model' approach. As each local authority was going to go through the process, the decision was made to do it as a region together. The intention was that it would reduce duplication and be better overall value for money.

The local authority NAAS coordinators interviewed suggested that the shared delivery approach allowed sharing of best practice and knowledge sharing across the region which they thought they may not have accessed if they were operating on

their own, while still allowing them to choose their own local authority specific approach.

> *"The main part of it in respect to Future Social has been attending sessions that we all have as a region. .... I took what was more effective. It has been helpful to have someone who has oversight of what neighbouring areas are doing and can feed that through to us"*

> Future Social Coordinator

The aspects of shared delivery that the NAAS leads within Future Social local authorities thought was most successful was the sharing of practitioner experience of going through NAAS and the support it gave to each of the local authority NAAS Coordinators. For example, one of the NAAS Coordinators within a Future Social local authority joined later into the process. They saw that there was no approach to practice endorsement in place within their local authority. They used the resources available throughout the Future Social group to put together a project plan, a process for endorsement for practice supervisors and a communications package.

In practice, the shared delivery approach has been slightly hampered by the fact that by the time the model and resources were in place, many of the local authorities had already decided on their approach separately. For example, Future Social developed their own handbook which would take practitioners along the NAAS pathway. This was based on the model from one local authority within Future Social. However, as this was disseminated across the fourteen local authorities/trusts, they found a number of local authorities had already created and their own handbook and passed it on to staff.

Those interviewed said that one of the main aims of the shared delivery approach was to support recruitment in the region. The expectation was that by having a regional approach to a professional development, the fourteen local authorities could be reassured about the quality of recruitment. However, in practice there is not a consistent 'career pathway' across the local authorities which made a single approach to recruitment more difficult to implement.

Information and knowledge of NAAS

Interviews with staff suggested that levels of awareness of the aims of NAAS at the beginning of implementation varied. This generally depended on whether someone had decided to be assessed or not. At the start of Group 1 those closest to NAAS – coordinators, implementation support teams, assessed staff – could describe the aims in general terms, both at the start of the programme and after assessment. They generally saw the aims of NAAS as professionalising the workforce, raising

public confidence in social work, raising the sense of pride in social workers, embedding PQS[16] and improving standards of social work practice. This suggested messages about the aims of NAAS and the channels for communicating to those who were already engaged were effective.

However, at that point, the majority of staff had not been assessed. Many non-assessed staff were unable to communicate what NAAS is beyond an accreditation. Findings from interviews in Group 1 suggested three main reasons for low awareness amongst non-assessed (as well as a sizeable proportion of assessed staff). Firstly, staff were busy and struggled to find the time to attend information sessions, or read updates, and were less likely to do so if they were not being assessed and therefore saw the information as irrelevant. Secondly, NAAS implementation teams prioritised efforts to inform and prepare only staff who had volunteered to be assessed. Thirdly, the communication approach taken by the local authorities contributed to this low awareness; predominantly emailed messages are overlooked by non-assessed staff (and some assessed staff), and some non-assessed staff view NAAS briefing events as being targeted at assessed staff.

Group 2 staff that were interviewed generally displayed higher awareness of NAAS, compared to interviewed Group 1 staff. The increased engagement from the NAAS Delivery partner was seen to be beneficial.

Staff were asked how much they understood about the introduction of NAAS in the children's social care sector overall, and within their local authority (Figure 1). This was also asked in the 'non-NAAS' sites staff survey.

Awareness of how NAAS is being introduced in the children's social care sector was higher in NAAS sites than non-NAAS sites (Figure 1) and increased between the baseline and follow up surveys for both Group 1 and Group 2 respondents. Half (50%) of those in the Group 3 baseline survey respondents knew a lot or a fair amount about how NAAS was being introduced in the sector overall, which was higher than at the baseline stage of Group 1 and Group 2.

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[16] In the qualitative interviews staff often use the term KSS rather than PQS.

Figure 1: Understanding how NAAS is being introduced in the sector overall
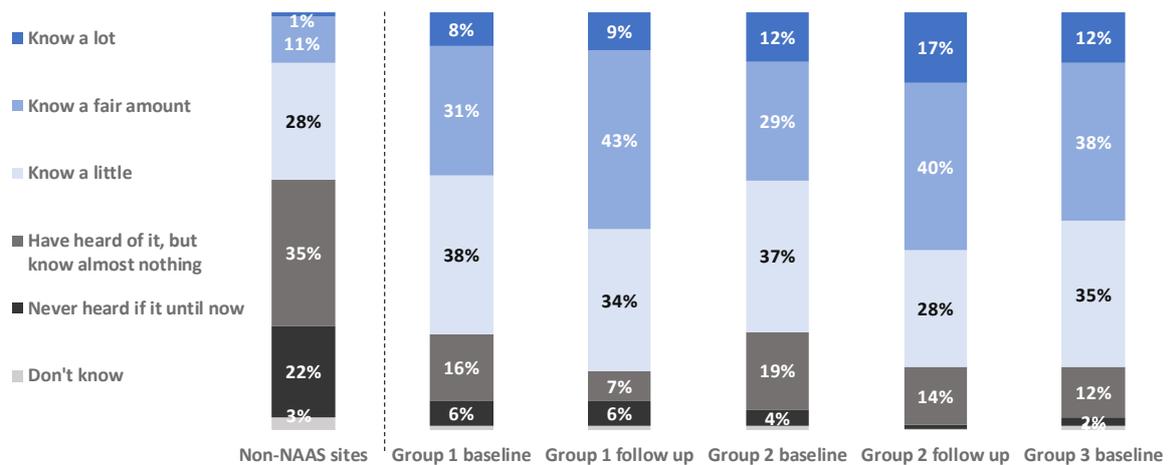
Source:
Q005_1 How much would you say you currently understand about how NAAS is being introduced in the children's social care sector overall?
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

Staff in NAAS sites were also asked how much they currently understood about NAAS being introduced within their local authority/ trust (Figure 2). Knowledge increased between the baseline and follow up surveys for both Group 1 and Group 2 respondents. Awareness of how NAAS was being introduced in the local area was higher in Group 3 (54%) than in Groups 1 and 2 (43% and 45% respectively).

Figure 2: Understanding how NAAS is being introduced within your local area
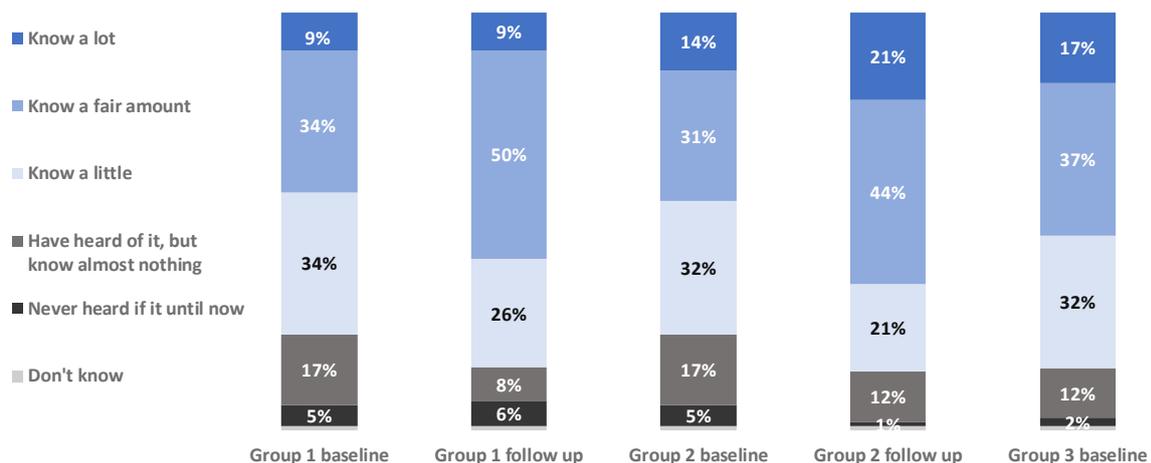
Source:
Q005_2 How much would you say you currently understand about how NAAS is being introduced within your local authority/trust?
Base: All respondents: Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

Sources of information about NAAS

This next section looks at sources of information about NAAS. In summary, sources of information about NAAS were generally well received by social workers.

Table 3: Where staff received information about NAAS

Source of information	G1 baseline	G1 follow up	G2 baseline	G2 follow up	G3 baseline
Your local authority	70%	76%	76%	83% ^	75%
Your direct line manager	45%	43%	36% *	41%	44% ~
A Trade Union	23%	21%	11% *	6% ^ #	4% * ~
NAAS Delivery Partner	12%	21% ^	12%	19%	15%
DfE	7%	14 %	12% *	12%	14% *
Professional / Trade Press	10%	11%	9%	6%	11%
A sector body	8%	2% ^	9%	9% #	11%
NAAS Research Partner	n/a	11%	n/a	12%	n/a
Other internet sources	11%	n/a	9%	8%	9%
Internal training co-ordinators	n/a	1%	2%	2%	1%

Source:
Q007 From where have you received information about NAAS
Base: All respondents: Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline – 765
^ indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G1 baseline survey and the G1 follow up survey or G2 baseline survey and G2 follow up survey.
* indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G1 baseline and G2 baseline survey or the G1 baseline and G3 baseline survey.
# indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G1 follow up survey and the G2 follow up survey.
~ indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G3 baseline survey and the G2 baseline survey.

As table 5 shows, the social worker's own local authority/trust was the most common source of information about NAAS cited. This figure was broadly consistent, but there was a significant increase between the Group 1 and Group 2 follow up survey (Group 1 baseline: 70%, Group 1 follow up: 76%, Group 2 baseline 76%, Group 2 follow up: 83%, Group 3 baseline: 75%).

Amongst NAAS sites, the next most common source of information about NAAS came from their direct line manager, with about four in ten of all respondents selecting this (Group 1 baseline: 45%, Group 1 follow up: 43%, Group 2 baseline: 36%, Group 2 follow up: 41%, Group 3 baseline: 44%).

Trade unions were significantly more likely to be a source of information for Group 1 respondents in both the baseline and follow up surveys compared to those in Group 2. Around a fifth of Group 1 respondents (23% in the baseline, and 21% in the follow up) received information about NAAS from trade unions, compared with 11% of Group 2 baseline respondents, six per cent of those in the Group 2 follow up survey and four per cent in the Group 3 baseline.

In the follow up surveys, the NAAS Delivery Partner was more likely to be cited as a source of information for staff, in comparison to the baseline surveys for both Group 1 and Group 2. This may reflect both their role in delivering the assessments, and the increased role they took in engagement (as NAAS developed). This increased from one in ten (12%) in both baseline surveys to two in ten at the follow up surveys (Group 1: 21%, Group 2: 19%).

Table 4: Helpfulness of information about NAAS

Source of information	G1 baseline	G1 follow up	G2 baseline	G2 follow up	G3 baseline
Your local authority	68%	81% ^	73%	82% ^	82% * ~
Your direct line manager	75%	88% ^	81% *	82%	88% * ~
DfE	61%	60%	72% *	84% ^ #	86% * ~
A Trade Union	85%	62% ^	59% *	53%	54% *
A sector body	63%	27% ^	74% *	86% ^ #	76% *
NAAS Delivery Partner	77%	85%	84% *	89% ^	89% * ~

Source of information	G1 baseline	G1 follow up	G2 baseline	G2 follow up	G3 baseline
NAAS Research Partner	n/a	86%	n/a	76% #	n/a
Professional / Trade Press	90%	89%	78% *	78% #	73% * ~
Other internet sources	75%	83% ^	78%	72% ^ #	67% * ~

Source:
Q008 How helpful was the information you received from…?
Base: All respondents who received information about NAAS: Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline – 765
^ indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G1 baseline survey and the G1 follow up survey or G2 baseline survey and G2 follow up survey.
* indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G1 baseline and G2 baseline survey or the G1 baseline and G3 baseline survey.
# indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G1 follow up survey and the G2 follow up survey.
~ indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G3 baseline survey and the G2 baseline survey.

All sources of information about NAAS were generally seen as 'helpful' (Table 4). Staff were asked to rate the helpfulness of the information they had received from the sources listed in the table. The table shows the percentage of staff that had received information from that source and viewed it as helpful.

Amongst the Group 1 baseline, professional/ trade press, trade unions, and the Delivery Partner had the highest proportion of respondents claiming the information they received from these sources were helpful (90%, 85% and 77% respectively). Whilst this data is only indicative due to low base sizes, there was a decrease in how helpful information from Trade Unions was between baseline and follow up in Group 1 (Group 1 baseline: 85%, Group 1 follow up: 62%).

The perceived helpfulness of different sources was relatively similar among Group 2 survey respondents. About eight in ten felt that information from the Delivery Partner (84%), direct line managers (81%), professional/trade press (78%) or other internet sources (78%) was helpful. In the follow up survey, the Delivery Partner (89%), sector bodies (86%), and the Department for Education (84%) had the highest proportions of staff claiming the information they received from these sources was helpful.

All respondents who received information were asked how the information received could have been improved[17]. The most commonly referenced improvement was 'including more information about the impact of being accredited or not accredited' (Group 1 follow up: 62%, Group 2 baseline: 64%, Group 2 follow up: 56%, Group 3 baseline: 68%).

Group 2 respondents were next likely to believe that more clarity about the purpose/aims of NAAS would have improved the information (Baseline: 56%, Follow up: 44%), followed by information on the personal benefits of NAAS (Baseline: 45%, Follow up: 40%).

Training and support received

This section looks at formal and informal training and support received. In summary, about six in ten respondents had received training or support about NAAS. The majority felt that this training was helpful. The additional information (such as toolkits) that were provided within Phase 2, to all local authorities/trusts engaged with NAAS, were beneficial. The majority of endorsed staff had read, or planned to read, the PQS and do NAAS practice questions.

There was a mixture of informal and formal support to prepare endorsed staff for assessment within the Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities.

Formal training and support

Formal training or support, across Group 1 and 2 local authorities/ trusts typically involved several approaches. There were briefing sessions, e.g. an induction day to introduce the Delivery Partner, communicate the aims of NAAS and inform practitioners of key dates, or an assessment introduction day to outline elements of the assessment day and to review practice questions. There was theory and practical training delivered internally or by an external provider, e.g. refresher sessions on legislation and therapeutic techniques, a practice assessment day to role-play and practice completing multiple choice assessments. Some local authorities/ trusts, who had the resources/expertise to do so put on extra training as part of their wider continuous improvement process. Some practitioners were also offered around two days study leave.

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[17] Results from the Group 1 baseline are not comparable with the other survey data as the question was asked with an unprompted open-ended text response box, whilst for other waves of the questionnaire, respondents could select from a pre-coded list of responses

Table 5: Proportion of respondents who had received training or support about NAAS from their local authority/ trust

Received training/ support	G1 baseline	G1 follow up	G2 baseline	G2 follow up	G3 baseline
Yes	43%	58% ^	46%	58% ^	55% * ~

Source:
Q010. Have you received any training or support about NAAS from your local authority / trust?
Base: All respondents: Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline – 765
^ indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G1 baseline survey and the G1 follow up survey or G2 baseline survey and G2 follow up survey.
~ indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G3 baseline survey and the G2 baseline survey.

Six in ten respondents (Group 1 and 2 follow up surveys: 58%) had received some training or support about NAAS at the time of the follow up surveys. This was significantly higher than the those in the baseline surveys (Group 1: 43%, Group 2: 46%).

The most common type of training and support given was briefing on the process for NAAS with around eight in ten stating they had received this training. Group 3 local authorities/ trusts were more likely to offer internal communications, formal training/ CPD, and support from a manager or supervisor, compared to the Group 2 baseline survey. A similar pattern followed against Group 1 local authorities/trusts in the baseline survey (Table 6).

Table 6: Type of training/ support offered by local authority/ trust

Types of training/ support	G1 baseline	G1 follow up	G2 baseline	G2 follow up	G3 baseline
Briefing on the process for NAAS and the assessment day	78%	87%	80%	85%	75%
Internal communications from your local authority / trust	41%	46%	58% *	51%	45% ~

Types of training/ support	G1 baseline	G1 follow up	G2 baseline	G2 follow up	G3 baseline
Formal training or CPD to develop your knowledge and skills	27%	21%	26%	26%	40% * ~
Support from a manager or supervisor	20%	28%	25%	24%	33% * ~
Training or support tailored to areas of the KSS / Post Qualifying Standards	n/a	25%	n/a	29%	n/a

Source:
Q011. And was this training or support…
Base: All respondents who received training or support from local authority/ trust*: Group 1 baseline – 132; Group 1 follow up – 70; Group 2 baseline – 332; Group 2 follow up – 230; Group 3 baseline – 444
* indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G1 baseline and G2 baseline survey or the G1 baseline and G3 baseline survey.
~ indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the G3 baseline survey and the G2 baseline survey.

The majority that received any training or support from their local authority/ trust reported that it was helpful. This was highest in Group 3.

- Group 1 baseline: 78%, Group 1 follow up: 73%, Group 2 baseline: 85%, Group 2 follow up: 82%, Group 3 baseline: 89%.

Most of the formal training or support options were well received. However, there were mixed responses to study leave, due to returning to a backlog of work after the assessment day.

> "There are days when I can't get to the toilet or take a lunch break. To take two days study leave - it's crackers! The job that we do is not a 9-5 job." (Practitioner, Group 1, Timepoint 3).

Formal training and support – Group 2

Interviews with local authorities and staff suggested the majority of support was commonplace in Group 1 and Group 2. However, there were additional approaches taken within Group 2 which were seen as beneficial.

Group 2 staff were the recipients of materials developed based on learnings from the experiences of Group 1 delivery. They were given a wider range of resources, including FAQs/Toolkits which break down what the assessment involves, and

'guides to' which were seen as being effective, and greater access to example assessment questions. Being provided with more direct examples of assessment questions was seen as being very useful.

> "The applied knowledge rather than the general knowledge,
> they're the kind of questions people need to get used to being
> asked." (Other, Group 2, Timepoint 2).

Feedback from Group 2 interviews suggested that preparatory information was more often clearly linked to the PQS than it was for Group 1 assessed staff. This was often done through workshops focusing on each of the standards and their relationship to NAAS. Several mentioned that their local authority/ trust would focus on a different item of the PQS each week.

This additional level of preparatory guidance provided to Group 2 staff was praised as helping to manage expectations of the assessment day. This was important to ensuring that practitioners felt adequately prepared.

> "It was really clear what to expect, that information pack was
> sufficient to get an understanding of what to expect."
> (Practitioner, Group 2, Timepoint 2).

Informal preparation and support

Assessed practitioners varied in their informal preparation across Group 1 and 2. The most commonly reported action in preparation for NAAS was reading the PQS for their role. This was higher at each successive group baseline survey (Group 1 baseline: 34%, Group 2 baseline: 43%, Group 3 baseline: 56%).

30% of respondents in the Group 1 and 35% in the Group 2 follow-up surveys had been endorsed for NAAS, with similar percentages claiming that they had not been endorsed but expected to be (Group 1: 31%, Group 2: 35%). The majority of endorsed survey respondents had read or planned to the read the PQS (Group 1: 84%, Group 2: 74%). This was followed by seeking out other information/ material about social work knowledge and skills (Group 1 baseline: 22%, Group 2 baseline: 29%, Group 3 baseline: 40%).

A common preparation strategy was completing practice questions. Practitioners found the multiple-choice practice questions most helpful in supporting them to reflect on areas for further learning, particularly around legislation. It was reasonably common for endorsed survey respondents to have answered or plan to answer practice and simulation questions, as a way to prepare for NAAS (Group 1: 82%, Group 2: 65%).

However, in the interviews, practitioners identified that they were often too busy to spend much time to prepare (outside of scheduled training) for the assessment.

> "If you are asked to do something in addition to a very busy day it feels like a bit of a nuisance...." (Practice Manager, Group 2, Timepoint 2).

It was also relatively common for staff that had been practicing for a longer period (typically 10+ years) to say they would not do any preparation work because they believed the assessment reflected their day-to-day job. Whereas less experienced staff were engaged with the preparatory work preparation methods.

Assessment feedback

This next section looks at feedback on the assessments. It starts with overall perceptions from interviews with assessed candidates, then looks at the different aspects of the assessment.

The delivery evaluation was not intended to evaluate the format of the assessment. Analysis of the assessment results and format is being carried out by the NAAS Content and Standards Partner. However, the process of delivering the assessment, and the impact it had on practitioners was discussed in interviews.

Overall feedback on the organisation and format of the assessments was positive. Feedback on the overall organisation of the assessment centres and the support provided by the Delivery Partner was positive. This was reflected in the 'on the day' surveys conducted by the Delivery Partner which asked assessed candidates a number of questions about the assessment day and surveys from Kantar. Nine in ten respondents in the Kantar staff follow up surveys who went through the assessment day agreed that the assessment day was well organised (Group 1: 89% Group 2: 94%)[18].

The vast majority of assessed staff that were interviewed said the day ran smoothly and logistics worked well. The Delivery Partner support staff were viewed as friendly and helpful, which helped to ease anxiety amongst some practitioners.

In our Timepoint 2 interviews we received feedback from a small number of Phase 1 assessed practitioners about the organisation of the assessment day. Practitioners mentioned they would have appreciated having the rules for attending an

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[18] It is important to note that base sizes are small for these questions, meaning that the data is indicative.

assessment day communicated in advance, such as mobile phones will be collected and returned at the end of the assessment, and that water was not allowed in the room. Following early feedback, additional guidance was provided to candidates, and this guidance reduced these problems.

Practitioners received an email before assessment asking if they had any reasonable adjustments requirements to allow the Delivery Partner to meet these needs.

There were a few aspects of the assessment that surprised some assessed candidates.

- The formality of the setting.

- The intensity of the assessment.

The formality of the assessment day and the difference in format, setting and tone from usual social work experiences surprised some assessed practitioners. This was particularly the case for those who had recently been on a NAAS preparation course, delivered by a University, which mirrored a 'real life scenario'.

The toolkits developed by DfE (and were ready for most Group 2 local authorities/ trusts when they were starting assessments) provided information on what each stage of the assessment involves, and the time required. However, where candidates had not checked this, they found the assessment more intense than they expected.

> "I must admit I was exhausted at the end of it, I was absolutely shattered. It did feel like an interview process and quite an intense one at that...." (Practice Manager, Group 2, Timepoint 2).

Within Group 2, there were a number of concerns about having enough spaces available at the assessment centre, due to a lack of available regional assessment centres. Staff found that by the time they were ready to take the assessment all of the dates had been blocked out, meaning they either had to wait or travel further afield. It was also identified by NAAS leads that it is hard to predict when staff would want to be booked into the assessment as people may delay booking after practice endorsement.

Knowledge Assessment

The Knowledge Assessment is a 60-minute online assessment that is made up of two elements. There was a set of general social work knowledge questions based

on the PQS and a set of applied knowledge questions, which provide a short practice scenario followed by a set of questions related to the outcomes of it. This set of questions are role specific (Practitioner & Practice Supervisor).

Most assessed staff interviewed after their assessment day self-reported that they did not have significant concerns about the Knowledge Assessment and felt that the question areas were relevant to their work. There were some minor concerns about the wording of some questions, the number of possible answers to a question, and the questions being too frontline focussed (particularly among staff working in various specialisms). Where there were concerns about the Knowledge Assessment, it tended to be from staff that were not on frontline work.

> "It slightly depended on where you are in the service and which aspects you could get on with. I've worked in probably all of the services. If you worked in the looked after children part of the service, Section 47s and in investigations might not be the focus of your work and you might struggle more with legislation around that." (Practice Manager, Group 2, Timepoint 2).

Simulated Practice Assessment: Simulated Practice Scenario and Reflective Assessment

The Simulated Practice Assessment is a two-hour assessment made up of three elements.

1. Two practice scenarios (Simulated Practice Exercises).
2. A reflective assessment based on the second scenario completed.
3. A written assessment based on one of the Simulated Practice assessments.

It gives social workers the chance to demonstrate their skills in a realistic, situational setting. This section discusses the first two of these, the next section discusses the written assessment.

Most Group 1 and 2 assessed staff that were interviewed were generally satisfied with the Simulated Practice and Reflective Assessment sections of the day. However, these were the areas that generated most concern.

Simulated Practice scenario

The Simulated Practice scenario was described as applicable and, for the most part, reflective of their work experience by both practitioners and practice supervisors. Although assessed staff frequently mentioned that the actors were good and allowed the scenario to feel more lifelike, some Group 1 and Group 2 assessed staff

felt it unnatural and were uncomfortable and anxious about having a camera recording them.

> "It was a really really different set up, the camera was in your face it was really obvious, and it wasn't as fluid as it was on the practice day. The practice day was more understanding of what we actually are doing." (Practitioner, Group 1, Timepoint 2).

Where the Simulated Practice scenarios were felt to be less applicable to real practice, was in the amount of information provided before the start of the scenarios. Staff said that they would typically have more prior knowledge about the case before going into a situation and this would enable them to address the situation appropriately.

Reflective Assessment

Some of the concerns about the Reflective Assessment focused on the name of the task itself. Use of the term 'reflective' in this section was misleading for practitioners, as they were expecting it to be similar to a reflective session, an approach to social work practice which consists of a dialogue where probes and prompts are used to direct the focus and illicit reflections from practitioners.

Some found the dynamic of it not being a two-way conversation very difficult. They expected prompting as would do in a supervision reflective discussion, which they felt is a method that draws out more from workers. They felt it was unusual as a social worker to talk solely on their own for twenty minutes.

> "It's an odd exercise talking to someone who doesn't reply…." (Practitioner, Group 2, Timepoint 2).

Written Assessment

The written assessment element of the Simulated Practice Assessment asks candidates to complete a written assessment based on one of their simulated practice scenarios. Most practitioners that were interviewed across Groups 1 and 2, commented that the written assessment was representative of what they do every day (e.g. writing case notes, doing analysis, developing/writing action plans).

The one commonly mentioned challenge with the written assessment was the time allowed (c. 30 minutes). Staff who had been assessed often mentioned that they struggled to complete this task within the time limit and felt that more time on this section would always be helpful, even if it was not used. Several practitioners ran

out of time to complete and this left them feeling as though they had already failed. Some commented that going straight into written reflection after a session was not realistic or representative of actual practice, and more time is needed to genuinely reflect before writing an action plan.

Post-assessment support and learning

This section looks at the post-assessment period. In summary, perceptions among the majority of staff (including senior leaders, managers and practitioners) were that the initial version of the results letter which was sent out in early stages of Phase 1 did not provide sufficiently detailed information on assessment results to help develop post-assessment learning plans. A revised version of the results letter which was rolled out in August 2019 was, drafted to try and address the early concerns. This version of the letter was seen as only being a marginal improvement. There were only a few interviews with managers of a practitioner that received a 'not met' result, but most of them felt that a lack of detailed feedback made it difficult to support staff with a 'Not Met' result.

Following the NAAS assessment, assessed staff received a letter or email from the Delivery Partner confirming whether they received a 'met' or 'not met' result. The results letter also includes additional feedback on assessment performance relative to aspects of the assessment and the PQS. The content of the letter has been revised throughout the process based on feedback from social workers.

Local authorities/ trusts are not routinely provided with their employees' assessment results. It is up to any assessed candidate whether they share their results, either by providing consent to the delivery partner to share or by sharing their result themselves, (and what level of detail they share) with their employer.

 In many cases, the NAAS Coordinator informally contacted the social worker after the assessment to understand how the assessment went and to offer support before social workers were given their results letter. Social workers appreciated this on a personal basis and also found it to be useful.

Post-assessment results letter – Group 1

Assessed practitioners and service leaders who were interviewed within Group 1 often mentioned being 'frustrated' and 'disappointed' in what they saw as the lack of detailed and meaningful feedback in the post-assessment results letter.

Expectations were high for feedback that practitioners could use to develop personalised learning plans and local authorities could use to target learning and development resources in an efficient and relevant way.

In Group 1, a consistent theme mentioned by local authority NAAS leads, managers and assessed social workers was that the results letter lacked the detail necessary to help them understand the areas of the PQS on which they needed to target learning and development. This was repeatedly mentioned in the interviews as disappointing for the candidates and the local authorities who had hoped for more information and spent a lot of their time being endorsed, preparing for the assessment and taking the assessment. It was also off-putting to those that had not yet decided to participate as they felt it was hard to understand what benefits they could receive from NAAS. Several non-assessed staff said that they decided not to go through NAAS because of what they had heard about the lack of feedback provided in the results letter and they decided that NAAS 'wasn't worth it'.

Practitioners' suggestions for realistic improvements in the Group 1 results letter centred around transparency in grading, receiving specifics on development gaps rather than 'headings of the KSS'. They also suggested that local authorities/trusts should be mandated to meet and discuss results with each assessed candidate and more widely shared information on the appeals process.

Post-assessment results letter – Group 2

The content of the results letter was revised significantly following feedback from Group 1 local authorities. The general feeling among leaders, managers and practitioners interviewed is that revised results letter has been seen as a marginal improvement which provides candidates with more information which was appreciated. Its highlighted areas that they did well which was received positively.

However, issues still remain around the level of detail provided.

A number of social workers reported that they still felt they would have preferred more personal 'qualitative' feedback on performance, e.g. being provided with the assessors view on the individual's performance, including what they did that constituted the higher or lower score.

> "What was very disappointing was the results feedback. It is quite an emotionally stressful day and especially if you have a lot of experience. I've been a social worker for 12 years. The stakes felt pretty high. I was relieved I didn't have any areas for development, but the letter was so limited." (Practitioner, Group 2, Timepoint 3).

Post-assessment: Training or support provided

Around half of assessed staff in the follow up surveys had not been offered any post-assessment training or support (Group 1: 46%, Group 2: 51%). And only a minority of those that had been offered training had attended it (Group 1: 36%, Group 2: 24%).

Post-assessment: Support offered to candidates with 'Not Met' results

In some Group 2 local authorities, there was concern about the impact of 'Not Met' results on staff. Senior staff within most local authorities were unsure about how to support candidates with 'Not Met' results, even if they had not yet had people who had this. Similarly, practitioners felt they needed more information on what the implications would be on their PDR and general career progression if they were to receive a 'not met' result. They often felt that their local authority should provide more guidance and support besides training.

Both managers and practitioners, across the local authorities and groups, highlighted the importance of getting this support quickly. They felt to enable appropriate support for those with 'Not Met' results, it was important that results were automatically confidentially shared with the NAAS coordinator and their line manager, so they are able to help.

> "If someone doesn't meet how are they going to feel about that and if we don't know, what are we going to do? We can't support them if we don't know." (Leadership, Group 2, Timepoint 3).

They were also concerned that the assessment feedback (regardless of whether it was the original or revised results letter) did not provide enough information on why candidates received a 'Not Met' outcome. This was felt to make it considerably more difficult to provide feedback, support and ultimately a plan to improve either their performance at work or their assessment performance.

> "They didn't really get feedback on what areas of KSS they didn't meet…" (Manager, Group 2, Timepoint 3).

The impact of the results letter on CPD is discussed more in section 5.

4. Value for Money analysis of NAAS

This section provides an early Value for Money (VfM) assessment of the set-up and delivery costs associated with NAAS based on cost survey returns from Group 1 local authorities[19]. It is important to note that this is an early assessment of the costs (based on survey data) and Value for Money (at a very early stage of NAAS). Importantly, it does not consider other interventions that might have taken place in the Group 1 local authorities (or the control group of comparable local authorities), which may have contributed to the outcomes identified. As a result, results should be treated as indicative.

In summary:

- The effect of the introduction of NAAS was estimated by comparing relative outcomes between Group 1 local authorities (the 'treatment' group) and other comparable local authorities not engaged in the programme (the 'control' group).

- The estimated impact for each outcome measure of interest was monetised using information on NAAS grant funding, reported data on the costs of NAAS from the local authorities as well as research from a range of external sources.

- An indicative VfM assessment (based on early cost and benefit data) was provided by comparing the estimated benefits (or cost savings) with the costs associated with set-up and delivery of NAAS.

- This early assessment of the VfM analysis suggests the introduction of NAAS was associated with a number of positive impacts on specific child outcomes. For instance, the analysis identified a relative reduction in the rate of children looked after (per 10,000) and the rate of child protection plans (per 10,000) amongst the Group 1 local authorities compared to the control group. In addition, the introduction of NAAS was also associated with changes to some social worker outcomes in the Group 1 local authorities (including relative reductions in the vacancy rate for social workers and the reliance on agency staff).

- In monetary terms, cost savings associated with NAAS due to a reduction in the number of looked after children, fewer child protection plans (offset by the increase in the number of children in need) and lower reliance on agency

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[19] Desite collecting the corresponding cost information, Group 2 local authorities/trusts are not included in the VfM analysis due to the more limited time since the start of NAAS implementation for the majority of these local authorities/trusts

social workers in the NAAS Group 1 local authorities was estimated to range between approximately £20.9 million and £23.5 million for the five Group 1 local authorities. On the cost side, the set-up and delivery of NAAS in the Group 1 local authorities accounted for approximately £10.3 million in Departmental resources.

- The indicative results suggest that for every £1 spent by the Department on the set-up and delivery of NAAS in the Group 1 local authorities up until 2019, cost savings of between £2.03 and £2.28 were realised in the Group 1 local authorities.

- However, it is important to note that these results should be interpreted with some caution as there are likely to overestimate the impact of NAAS for two main reasons. First, there are likely to have been other initiatives and programmes undertaken in the Group 1 local authorities over the same period that are not distinguished separately from the impact of NAAS in the analysis. Second, the estimates are based on a sample of five local authorities out of 69 that are participating in NAAS and hence, the analysis may be subject to small sample bias.

Costs of NAAS

This section firstly presents the cost of NAAS for both Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities/trusts. Where possible it breaks down Group 1 specific costs to feed into the VfM analysis later in this section (which was only conducted among Group 1 local authorities).

In relation to the components of the analysis feeding into this section, London Economics collected information from the DfE on the development and ongoing costs incurred that were associated with the set-up and delivery of NAAS, but also the costs associated with NAAS Delivery Partner(s). London Economics also collected information of the costs incurred by each of the NAAS local authorities/ trusts using a cost questionnaire (appendix 6).

Department for Education costs

Set-up costs

The set-up of NAAS and preparation for its day-to-day delivery can be divided into four distinct stages over a period of three years:

- Proof of concept stage: 2015 – 2016;
- Consultation and analysis stage: January 2017 – April 2017;
- Development stage: April 2017 – January 2018; and

- Set-up stage: January 2018 – July 2018.

The costs associated with the proof of concept and consultation and analysis stages were incurred irrespective of the number of local authorities who implemented NAAS. In total, the cost of the proof of concept stage to the Department was £3.68 million – of which, approximately 13% was accounted for by internal Departmental administrative costs and the remaining 87% was accounted for by external consultancy costs. The consultation and analysis stage were the least costly stage of the programme's set-up, accounting for £0.40 million in Departmental resources, which were equally split between internal Departmental staffing costs and the costs of external specialist services.

In contrast, the development stage of setting up NAAS was the costliest stage tallying up to £4.76 million. However, in many instances, these costs are associated with both Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities. In order to feed into the VfM analysis of Group 1 and provide an estimate of how much of these costs are associated with the five Group 1 local authorities, the following breakdowns are made:

- Total programme costs accounted for £4.76 million, of which £0.91 million was allocated to the Group 1 local authorities and £2.59 million to the Group 2 local authorities to build the infrastructure to support the delivery NAAS.
- The remaining £1.26 million of costs related to other programme costs. For simplicity, the variable component of these other programme costs is split equally across the 21 local authorities forming Group 1 and Group 2 while the fixed component of these costs is all attributed to the Group 1 local authorities (totalling £0.85 million).
- Hence, in aggregate, the costs associated with the development stage of NAAS were estimated to be £1.76 million for Group 1 local authorities.

The final set-up stage of activity required a further £1.23 million to implement. This included costs to contract the Delivery Partner to undertake assessments and evaluation costs. It is assumed that these costs are a function of the number of local authorities and hence, split equally across the 21 Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities. Therefore, Group 1 local authorities accounted for approximately £0.29 million of the costs associated with the final set-up stage of NAAS.

Taken together, the total set-up costs of NAAS in the Group 1 local authorities were equal to approximately £6.13 million.

Delivery costs

The delivery of NAAS in the Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities can be divided into two distinct time periods:

- Phase 1: July 2018 – June 2019;
- Phase 2: July 2019 – March 2020.

Excluding grants paid to non-Group 1 local authorities, the costs incurred in Delivery Stage 1 are all attributed to the delivery of NAAS in Group 1 local authorities. The external consultancy costs incurred in Stage 1 totalled approximately £3.04m (£2.27m of which was associated with the work of the Delivery Partner, £0.212m of which was associated with the work of the Evaluation Partner and £0.113m of which was associated with the work of the Contents and Standards Partner).

In addition to this, other programme costs totalled £1.03 million and grant awards tallying up to £50,000 (£10,000 per local authority) were made to the Group 1 local authorities in February 2019. Group 2 local authorities also received £10,000 each as grant awards.

Therefore, in aggregate, total delivery costs associated with NAAS for the Group 1 local authorities were £4.12 million.

Aggregate costs

Combining both set-up (£6.13 million) and delivery costs (£4.12 million) associated with NAAS, the total cost in the Group 1 local authorities was estimated to be approximately £10.3 million.

Local authority costs

Despite best attempts to ensure that responses were provided consistently, there will undoubtedly be some differences in both the internal consistency of the information provided by the local authorities but also the comprehensiveness and categorisation of some of the information provided.

Local authorities were asked about set-up costs (both direct/fixed costs and indirect costs) and then the costs of delivery (split by cost for Practice Endorsement, preparation and support for the assessment, post-assessment cost and any other costs).

Below we present the total delivery costs across the five Group 1 local authorities and Group 2 local authorities that returned cost survey data. Some variation in cost estimates is because local authorities were already undertaking a number of the activities (such as training related to understanding and meeting the PQS) related to the PQS and NAAS as part of their existing staff development activities and did not include it as a NAAS specific cost but thought of it as part of their general CPD offer.

Table 7: Total costs and DfE grant funding related to NAAS

Group	Endorsed	Assessed	Grant funding	Setup costs	Delivery and other costs	Total costs
G1	306	194	£961,400	£285,067	£334,676	£619,743
G2	442	291	£1,721,000	£620,703	£265,501	£886,204
Total	748	485	£2,682,000	£905,770	£600,177	£1,505,947

Note: Number of social workers endorsed and assessed as of January 2019 for Group 1 and January 2020 for Group 2.
Source: London Economics' analysis of Local Authority Cost Questionnaires

Value for Money (VfM) analysis

This section assesses the economic costs and benefits associated with the introduction of NAAS in Group 1[20]. The impact of NAAS on specific child/ family and social worker outcomes were estimated, and then monetised and compared to the costs associated with the design and delivery of the programme to provide a value for money analysis. These estimates should be treated with caution rather than conclusive, due to data limitations. This section presents a summary of the findings and limitations.

The process taken for this analysis was:

Firstly, the effect of the introduction of NAAS was estimated by comparing relative outcomes between Group 1 local authorities (the 'treatment' group) and other comparable local authorities not engaged in the programme (the 'control' group). It is important to note that Group 1 local authorities were not selected at random to participate in NAAS. The control group of statistically comparable local authorities were identified afterwards to 'match' the Group 1 local authorities as best as

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[20] Namely, Bury, Leeds, Manchester, Oldham and Wigan (collectively referred to as 'Group 1' local authorities).

possible. Therefore, the analysis is not a true experiment based on random assignment of the treatment (in this case, participation in NAAS).

Secondly, the estimated impact for each outcome measure of interest was monetised using existing evidence made available by the DfE as well as research from a range of external sources.

Finally, a value for money assessment was provided by comparing the estimated benefits (or cost savings) with the costs associated with set-up and delivery of NAAS.

Creating a 'control' group of local authorities/trusts

The analysis presented in this report focuses on the five Group 1 local authorities, as any impact of the introduction of NAAS is unlikely to have been realised in the Group 2 local authorities/ trusts, due to short timescales.

In order to compare the change in the outcome measures of the 'treatment' local authorities with those of comparable local authorities, to act as a 'control group' in the quasi-experiment, the relevant local authorities were identified by using a propensity score matching (PSM) model. Essentially, for each 'treatment' local authority, this approach identifies their 'statistical neighbour' based on observable characteristics (with the only observable difference being participation in the first phase of NAAS rollout).

The five nearest statistical neighbour local authorities (i.e. comparable local authorities in which NAAS has not been introduced) were identified using the propensity score matching model for each of the five Group 1 local authorities, and are shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Comparable local authorities identified using PSM[21]

Local authority	Bury	Leeds	Manchester	Oldham	Wigan
Propensity score	43.9%	35.0%	65.9%	44.9%	27.9%
Nearest Neighbour 1	Tower Hamlets (44.6%)	Bristol, City of (35.0%)	Blackburn with Darwen (61.7%)	Tower Hamlets (44.6%)	Camden (27.4%)
Nearest Neighbour 2	Warrington (42.8%)	Brighton and Hove (33.1%)	Lancashire (55.8%)	Wandsworth (45.6%)	Southwark (24.6%)
Nearest Neighbour 3	Wandsworth (45.6%)	Luton (32.6%)	Sheffield (53.5%)	Lambeth (46.9%)	Halton (31.7%)
Nearest Neighbour 4	Lambeth (46.9%)	Plymouth (32.1%)	Tameside (49.5%)	Warrington (42.8%)	Plymouth (32.1%)
Nearest Neighbour 5	Hammersmith and Fulham (39.3%)	Halton (31.7%)	Lambeth (46.9%)	Tameside (49.5%)	Wakefield (23.5%)

Source: London Economics' analysis using DfE data.

The difference-in-differences analysis (see next section) presented compares the outcome measures for the Group 1 local authorities with the average of the outcome measures in the five closest statistical neighbours. This reduces the potential

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[21] Note: Percentage indicated probability of being 'selected' for NAAS based on local authority characteristics. Socioeconomic and demographic controls used were as follows: Percentage of white children; Percentage of white population; English indices of deprivation (Income, Employment, Education, skills and training, Health deprivation and disability, Crime, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment, Income Deprivation Affecting Children). We also included the number of children looked after placements per social worker, the rate of children looked after per 10,000, as well as turnover rate (%) for children's social workers, vacancy rate (%) for children's social workers and number of children looked after placements per social worker. All information taken from prior to introduction of NAAS.

sensitivity of the analysis to unobservable local characteristics in the PSM model (given its purely statistical and mechanistic nature).

Establishing outcomes to measure initial impact of NAAS

Given the ultimate objectives of the programme, the outcome measures considered in the analysis relate to both child outcomes[22] and workforce characteristics for social workers.

In terms of child outcomes, the change in the **rate of looked after children** (per 10,000 children), the **rate of child protection plans** (per 10,000) and the **rate of children in need** (excluding CPP) following the introduction of the programme were examined.

In terms of workforce characteristics that can be measured against a baseline period before NAAS, the impact of implementation of the programme on the **turnover rate, vacancy rate, absence rate** and **agency worker rate** amongst child and family social work practitioners was examined. These workforce characteristics are of interest because they provide an indication of the stability (and continuity) of the services provided to children and families in need. Despite these measures being imperfect, it is likely that any improvements in the stability of the service provided should improve outcomes for the children and families in need in the longer run, in line with the stated justification for NAAS. The economic benefit of the programme is measured by the extent to which the workforce relies on agency staff (who are relatively more expensive) to fill vacant posts.

Measuring initial impact of NAAS

The impact of NAAS on the outcome measures was quantified using a **difference-in-differences** approach. Such an analysis compares the change in the outcome measures of the 'treatment' local authorities/ trusts before and after the introduction of NAAS with the changes in these outcome measures in other comparable local authorities and trusts that have not participated in the programme.

It is important to note that some of the comparisons made rely on very early estimates of impact, and do not account for any other external factors. The results

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[22] There were a number of key issues in deciding which outcome measures to consider. Of primary importance was the need to have comparable and objective information available covering both the treatment group – and the counterfactual group of local authorities. As such, it was necessary to use information centrally (and consistently) collected. This resulted in the use of Department for Education data relating to both a range of child-centric and workforce related metrics.

should be treated with some caution and used as part of a longer-term measurement of VfM.

The results of the difference-in-differences analysis for each outcome measure of interest are shown in Table 9. It should be noted that a positive coefficient (in the last column measuring the difference-in-differences) indicates that the rate in question is lower in the 'treatment' group than in the control group. In other words, a positive coefficient represents a positive impact of NAAS relative to the counterfactual group.

Table 9: Difference-in-differences analysis - Results[23]

Outcome measure	Group 1 local authorities: 2015	Group 1 local authorities: 2019	Group 1 local authorities: difference	Composite of the 5 nearest neighbours: 2015	Composite of the 5 nearest neighbours: 2019	Composite of the 5 nearest neighbours: difference	Difference-in-differences
Rate of children looked after per 10,000 children [1]	84.2	84.1	-0.1	71.7	76.7	5.0	5.1
Rate of child protection plans per 10,000 children [1]	53.8	45.1	-8.0	54.8	48.9	-5.8	2.2
Rate of children in need (excluding CPP) per 10,000 children [1]	333.7	326.7	-7.0	348.7	335.3	-13.3	-6.3
Turnover rate (%) for social workers [2]	12.3	11.7	-0.5	17.2	15.0	-2.2	-1.6

[23] Note: Differences may be due to rounding to the nearest decimal place. (1) For each year of analysis, the average within the 'treatment' local authorities and the composites of the 5 nearest neighbours is weighted by the population of children within each Local Authority in 2019. (2) For each year of analysis, the average within the 'treatment' local authorities and the composites of the 5 nearest neighbours is weighted by the population of social workers within each Local Authority in that year. All numbers are reported to one decimal place. (3) 2014 data is used for Manchester and Wigan due to missing data in 2015.

Outcome measure	Group 1 local authorities: 2015	Group 1 local authorities: 2019	Group 1 local authorities: difference	Composite of the 5 nearest neighbours: 2015	Composite of the 5 nearest neighbours: 2019	Composite of the 5 nearest neighbours: difference	Difference-in-differences
Vacancy rate (%) for social workers [2]	7.8	8.3	0.5	13.9	17.6	3.7	3.2
Absence rate (%) for social workers [2]	3.6	3.3	-0.2	3.5	2.9	-0.6	-0.3
Agency rate (%) for social workers [2][3]	8.0	4.1	-4.0	12.9	15.5	2.5	6.5

Source: London Economics' analysis

The results suggest that in respect of all outcome measures, with the exception of the workforce turnover rate (where there was essentially no impact) and the incidence of children in need, the Group 1 NAAS local authorities displayed an improvement relative to the control group.

The analysis suggests that in respect of the **rate of children looked after** (per 10,000), the **rate of child protection plans** (per 10,000), the **vacancy rate** for social workers and the **agency rate**, the Group 1 local authorities displayed a decrease relative to the control group[24]. For example, the rate of looked after

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[24] Caution should be taken when interpreting trends with the rate of children looked after. Reduced looked after children rates were used as a measure of benefit as they reduce financial costs to a local authority. A decrease in the rate of looked after children can only be taken as a definite positive in terms of children's outcomes where children have stayed

children (per 10,000 children) decreased by 0.1 (from 84.2 in 2015 to 84.1 in 2019) in the Group 1 local authorities compared to an increase of 5.0 in the control group – giving a difference-in-differences estimate of 5.1. In other words, given the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the Group 1 local authorities, a rise in the rate (per 10,000 children) of looked after children by 5.0 might have been expected over the period. However, given the rate in fact fell by 0.1 per 10,000 children, this decline represents an **outperformance relative to expectations**.

In the case of the rate of **children in need** (excluding CPP) (per 10,000 children), the Group 1 local authorities showed a smaller decline relative to the control group. This may suggest a potential substitution effect with fewer children on child protection plans who are still classified as children in need (i.e. requiring some (though less intensive) provision of services).

In terms of the relative outperformance of Group 1 local authorities compared to the control group in terms of **vacancy rates** and the **reliance on agency staff**, this seems to have been driven by improved recruitment and retention amongst the practitioner workforce in Group 1 local authorities implementing NAAS.[25]

Monetising the impact of NAAS

The difference-in-differences analysis suggests that NAAS was associated with a positive impact on the rate of children looked after (per 10,000 children) for the Group 1 local authorities compared to the control group. This impact is equivalent to approximately **154 fewer children being looked after** in the Group 1 local authorities.[26]

In aggregate, across the five Group 1 local authorities, the reported expenditure on looked after children was equal to approximately £201.6 million with 3,873 looked after children in 2018-19. This equates to a cost of approximately £52,000 per year per looked after child in the five Group 1 local authorities. With an average duration

home safely and permanently. This evaluation does not take those broader variables into account. It purely looked at the financial savings to the local authority.

[25] On average, net recruitment (total starters minus total leavers) over the five-year period from 2015-2019 was equal to 380 FTE (1,184 starters - 804 leavers) for the Group 1 local authorities compared to 97 FTE (836 starters - 739 leavers) for the control local authorities. In percentage terms compared to the level of substantive staff in 2015, this suggests a 33% net recruitment and retention rate in the Group 1 local authorities compared to just 11% in the control group local authorities.

[26] The 2018 population of children aged between 5 and 16 in the Group 1 local authorities was 303,485. Therefore, a reduction in the rate of looked after children of 5.1 per 10,000 children is equal to a reduction of 154 children being looked after. [(303,485 × 5.1)/10,000].

of 2.21 years being looked after, the total cost of a looked after child in the Group 1 Local Authority is equal to approximately £115,200.

Therefore, **the estimated reduction of 154 looked after children equates to a cost saving of approximately £17.8 million**. As noted above, the results should be treated with some caution and used as part of a longer-term measurement of VfM.

Child Protection Plans

The NAAS programme was associated with a reduced rate of children subject to child protection plans by 2.2 (per 10,000 children) for the Group 1 local authorities relative to the control group. This is equivalent to 68 fewer children being on child protection plans.[27]

Across England, the total expenditure on social work including Local Authority functions relating to child protection was equal to approximately £2.157 billion in 2018-19 with a total of 120,190 child protection plans at any point during the year. Therefore, a reasonable estimate of the saving from the avoidance of one child protection plan is approximately £17,950 per year. On average, a child protection plan lasts just under 10 months. Hence, the average cost avoided from a single reduction in the number of children subject to child protection plans is approximately £14,700.[28]

Taken together, **a decline in the number of children subject to child protection plans by 68 corresponds to a total cost saving of approximately £992,800.** However, it is important to note that there are likely to be some additional costs arising from other child support activities that may be put in place instead of more intensive support activities.

Children in need (excluding CPP)

The difference-in-differences analysis suggests that the NAAS programme was associated with a higher number of children in need other than those subject to child protection plans per 10,000 children by **6.3** in the Group 1 local authorities relative to the control local authorities. This equates to an increase in the number of children

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[27] The 2018 population of children aged between 5 and 16 in the Group 1 local authorities was 303,485. Therefore, a reduction in the rate of child protection plans of 2.2 (per 10,000 children) is equal to a reduction of 68 children on protection plans. [(303,485 × 2.23)/10,000].
[28] This is the product of the annual cost of a child protection plan and the average duration of a child protection plan in years. [£17,493*0.818].

in need other than those subject to child protection plans by **192** across the Group 1 local authorities.

The number of children in need episodes in England (excluding children subject to child protection plans) was 588,650 in 2018-19. Expenditure by local authorities on children in need in 2018-19 in excess of the £2.157 billion assigned to child protection plans was £1.33 billion. This means each child in need episode (excluding children subject to a child protection plan) was associated with expenditure of approximately £2,250 per year. The average episode of need excluding becoming the subject of a child protection plan lasts under 7 months. Hence, the average episode of need other than becoming subject to a child protection plan is associated with expenditure of approximately £1,260.[29]

Therefore, an increase in the number of children in need (excluding those subject to child protection plans) of 192 is associated with a cost of approximately £242,100.

Social work workforce characteristics

In addition to the potential impact on children, the impact of NAAS on the child and family social work workforce can also be measured by the extent to which agency staff are used to cover vacancies or absence for other reasons. Agency workers are an essential part of the workforce and provide a large proportion of the care in England. However, they are significantly more expensive than permanent staff in local authorities and trusts, and we refer to this increased expense as the 'agency worker premium'.

Total spend by local authorities on agency social workers in 2017-18 was reported to be at least £335 million[30]. With approximately 5,340 full-time equivalent agency social workers hired by local authorities at the time of the 2017 social workforce return (30 September 2017), this suggests that the average cost per agency social worker was approximately £62,700 in 2017-18. Accounting for inflation, the estimated cost of an agency social worker was estimated to be approximately £65,400 in 2019.

In comparison, on average, a directly employed social worker hired by the local authority received a basic salary of £35,600 in 2019. Adjusting for on-costs of 20%,

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[29] This is the product of the annual cost of an episode of need other than a child protection plan and the average duration of an episode of need other than a child protection plan in years. [£2,254 * 0.559].

[30] Guardian (2019). 'Councils spend millions on agency social workers amid recruiting crisis', available at https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/apr/07/social-work-recruiting-woes-see-councils-pay-millions-to-agencies.

the average cost of a directly employed social worker was estimated to be approximately £42,700 per year.

Therefore, the agency premium was estimated to be approximately £22,700 per worker (53%). Agency social workers filled 72% of vacancies in 2017-18. For this reason, reductions in the turnover and vacancy rates are associated with savings from avoiding the agency worker premium.

The difference-in-differences analysis suggested that the difference in agency rates between the NAAS Group 1 local authorities and the counterfactual was a 6.5 percentage points reduction following the introduction of NAAS. Given that the Group 1 local authorities have a combined total of approximately 1,672 FTE social workers and agency social workers, this implies a reduction (compared to the counterfactual) of approximately 103.8 FTE agency workers used per annum.

Hence, the analysis suggests the total costs avoided in the Group 1 local authorities due to lower reliance on agency social workers is equal to approximately £2.36 million in 2019 (104 fewer FTE agency workers utilised multiplied by the agency social worker premium of around £22,700).

Aggregate economic impact

Combining these indicative estimates of the cost savings relating to the number of looked after children (**£17.8 million**), children on child protection plans (**£0.993 million**) and the lower reliance on agency social workers (**£2.4 million**) as well as the increased costs associated with children in need (**£0.242 million**), the total economic benefit associated with the NAAS Group 1 local authorities was estimated to be **£20.9 million**.

Adopting the alternative approach, by undertaking the difference-in-differences analysis for each Local Authority **individually**, the total economic benefit was estimated to be **£22.8 million**.

The results should be treated with some caution and used as part of a longer-term measurement of VfM.

Overall Value for Money analysis results

As a reminder, this early analysis of the costs and Value for Money of NAAS was based on survey returns from local authorities at an early stage of NAAS. Caution should be taken as results are indicative rather than conclusive. When comparing the costs of implementing NAAS with the initial estimates of benefits, the introduction of NAAS was estimated to have a positive impact on specific child and social worker outcomes for Group 1 local authorities relative to the control group.

In summary, the introduction of NAAS was associated with a positive impact on specific child and social worker outcomes for Group 1 local authorities relative to the control group (that is, local authorities not participating in NAAS). In monetary terms, cost savings associated with NAAS Group 1 authorities due to a reduction in the number of looked after children, fewer child protection plans (offset by the increase in the number of children in need) and lower reliance on agency social workers was estimated to range between approximately **£20.9 million** and **£23.5 million** for the five local authorities in Group 1. On the cost side, the set-up and delivery of NAAS in the Group 1 local authorities accounted for approximately **£10.3 million** in Departmental resources.

Taken together, this suggests a **benefit-cost ratio in the range of 2.03 and 2.28** associated with the NAAS programme in the Group 1 local authorities. In other words, for every £1 spent by the Department on the set-up and delivery of NAAS, between £2.03 and £2.28 cost savings were realised in the Group 1 local authorities. However, it is again important to note that attributing the total estimated impact of NAAS presented here to the various outcome measures potentially overestimates the likely impact of the programme given the number of different interventions that might have taken place across the various local authorities at the same time, as well as the different structures, systems and other characteristics in place to deliver social work in the local authorities. Many of these other activities and characteristics are essentially unobservable. Therefore, although the approach taken in this report attempts to control for these confounding factors through their impact on child and social worker characteristics, the results should only be viewed as an indicative assessment of the value generated by NAAS.

5. Perceived initial effects and challenges of NAAS

This section looks at two elements of the early impacts of NAAS: (i) perceptions among those involved in Child and Family Social Work of what the initial effects and challenges have been; and (ii) perceptions and expectations of the likely future effects of NAAS.

This section presents findings from interviews and staff surveys. The research presented in this section is primarily a process evaluation of how NAAS was and perceived to be delivered and implemented. The research was not designed to analyse what long-term differences NAAS has made or to measure the full impacts of NAAS because the timings for this would extend past the life of this research project.

In this section we draw on analysis of the qualitative research findings and surveys of child and family social work staff to identify perceptions of NAAS and whether it will achieve it's intended effects. These effects include, among other things, greater awareness and usage of the PQS, and a focus on CPD which are directly related to the delivery and implementation of NAAS.

In summary:

- There was a real variety in terms of how well the PQS were embedded into practice. However, the general view across leaders of all the local authorities/trusts in groups 1 and 2 was that NAAS had driven the urgency and pace of embedding the PQS across local systems. Leaders in local authorities/trusts also said that NAAS had provided a level of external scrutiny to review and ensure consistent practice across the workforce.

- Having the mechanisms to evaluate performance against the PQS, through the practice endorsement and assessment preparation were commonly seen as the most beneficial aspect of NAAS by practitioners. There was a common theme amongst those interviewed that although the PQS were not new to child and family social work, there was little traction amongst staff apart from those who had been through ASYE.

- The NAAS results letter was criticised for lacking detailed information about development needs. There had been an expectation by practitioners and managers that the results would highlight specific development needs, and then recommend relevant tools/resources required to meet these. The level of detail provided was seen to be insufficient to help drive improvements in CPD.

- About a quarter (23% in the Group 1 baseline and 22% in the Group 2 baseline) felt that NAAS would help improve their ability as a social worker. This was higher at 36% in Group 3.

- There was some evidence in the interviews of Group 1 and 2 leaders and workforce development teams reflecting on wider learning culture and staff needs due to NAAS. Some leaders felt that NAAS had drawn their attention to the usefulness of observation and simulated practice, and this could have wider use in their workforce strategy to ensure social workers practice was reviewed, in addition to their existing internal auditing measures.

- Across Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities/ trusts, the influence of NAAS on CPD and learning was largely seen in providing opportunities for learning and self-reflection within the practice endorsement process, and NAAS assessment preparation. Across the interviews, staff and leaders discussed the degree to which impact was dependent on the individual practitioners' capacity for self-reflection, in order to analyse what the experience meant for their ongoing practice.

- From the workforce perspective, assessed staff often felt that there was very little support and reflection post-assessment for those who had met the accreditation. NAAS assessed staff commonly felt that the assessment had provided validation of their current practice, but then it was "back to practice as usual" without any tools/procedures to pursue further learning.

- Leaders had generally heard from colleagues and staff that undergoing NAAS had been a positive experience to reflect on practice, and that the validation of an accreditation had increased some practitioners' confidence in their own practice. Some practitioners felt that initial boosts to confidence were short lived where there were limited processes for discussion post results, or formal recognition procedures in place for going through the process.

- There was little indication of a perceived impact on career development or progression for people within Group 1 local authorities. There was more evidence of an influence within Group 2 local authorities/ trusts (and Group 3 through the baseline survey). The main direct change in some Group 2 local authorities/ trusts was to align NAAS assessment outcomes to progression pathways and increased pay. Generally, it was felt that introduction of NAAS within the local authority/trust had limited impact on the morale of the wider non-assessed workforce.

Embedding the Post-Qualifying Standards

The Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) for child and family social work were introduced by DfE in 2014 as a way of improving Social Work education, training and career development. After being set in legislation through The Children and Social Work Act 2017, section 42, and subsequently revised in 2018[31] they are now referred to as the Post-Qualifying Standards (PQS). The Chief Social Worker drafted the PQS for child and family's frontline social workers, practice supervisors and practice leaders to set out what they should know and be able to do. There are separate PQS for practitioners, practice supervisors and practice leaders. Please note that there are separate PQS for adult social work which are not applicable to this research.

NAAS is a tool for assessing whether child and family social workers meet the PQS. The practice endorsement is a tool for mapping performance against the PQS, to understand an individual's development needs and readiness for the NAAS assessment. The NAAS assessment and results are framed around the PQS statements.

How well embedded the PQS were prior to NAAS

Here we explore the extent to which local authorities/ trusts had integrated the PQS into practice prior to the introduction of NAAS, the impact of NAAS on this and how it has varied across local authorities/ trusts.

Firstly, there were local authorities and trusts in phase 1 and 2 who, prior to NAAS, did not have a workforce development offer informed by the PQS. The PQS was a recognised framework but not yet fully integrated into to all elements of CPD practice and procedures/systems. The PQS was consequently not perceived by staff as being part of their learning and development practice and culture. In practice, this meant local authorities/ trusts were not using the PQS consistently and uniformly as a framework to guide, conduct and review CPD practice. In some local authorities/ trusts it had solely been used within the ASYE programme, whilst others had used the PQS to inform specific elements of CPD procedures (e.g. incorporated in the scoring process for progression review but not discussed explicitly in PDRs). Some leaders felt that the PQS had not been a priority in the strategic design and thought leadership of workforce development practice prior to NAAS.

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[31] Social work post-qualifying standards: knowledge and skills statements

NAAS was generally regarded by these local authorities/ trusts who, prior to NAAS, did not have a workforce development offer informed by the PQS, as a mechanism for further integration to help embed the PQS into local systems.

> " If I'm totally honest I wasn't totally engaged. We've now completely aligned it to our training programme and observations and are measuring against the [KSS]." (Leadership, Group 2, Timepoint 3).

Secondly, there were some phase 1 and 2 local authorities/ trusts who had progressed further in attempts to embed the PQS within practice prior to NAAS rollout. Typically, in these local authorities/ trusts there had been a stronger commitment at the leadership level to embed the PQS to improve practice as part of an ongoing system change programme. Some local authorities/ trusts had used the PQS as a framework to inform new workforce development training programmes or had recently conducted health check audits on the extent to which the PQS was embedded across the learning culture and practice. The implementation of NAAS provided the impetus to follow through with their early efforts to integrate the PQS and was perceived as facilitating full alignment.

> "I think we'd have done that [integration of PQS] regardless of NAAS being in place because we've focussed on relational practice as our practice model and identified that [the PQS] was embedded ... we've worked very hard at that. It's all part of the system change and the culture change." (Leadership, Group 2, Timepoint 3)

Thirdly, there were a smaller group of local authorities/ trusts who were confident that they had a robust workforce development offer fully mapped to the PQS. The design of their workforce development offer was aligned to the PQS from the outset and they felt there were very few changes needed to current procedure and practice. Leaders described models where the PQS was embedded right across all processes (e.g. within job descriptions, induction processes, supervision, annual review and progression).

> "We're already confident our training programme is mapped to the PQS…it's already designed to meet the PQS across the board." (Leadership, Group 2, Timepoint 3).

How NAAS helped local authorities/ trusts embed the PQS

Despite local authorities/ trusts coming from different starting points in their level of integration of PQS into CPD practice, as discussed above, there was a general view

across leaders of all the local authorities/ trusts in groups 1 and 2, that NAAS had driven the urgency and pace of embedding the PQS across local systems.

Leaders in local authorities/trusts said that NAAS had provided a level of external scrutiny to review and ensure consistent practice across the workforce. Their motivation for integration of the PQS was the strategic value of the PQS, as a route to improving practice and professional standards within their local authority/ trust and sector. NAAS then provided the local authority leaders validation that their workforce was practising at the required national standards.

> **"**NAAS is there, and people can be accredited, but really the PQS is the important bit. It's the standards that people are working to and the [NAAS] processes lend themselves to supporting you with the accreditation process." (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 3).

> "We wouldn't say NAAS is the driver for change, we'd say the Knowledge and Skills Statement [PQS] are threaded throughout everything we do and that supports people to be practice ready and that then enables people to be test ready, but the test is the culmination and external validation..." (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

Local authorities/ trusts looked at how others had implemented, or were currently implementing, NAAS and how they could further align the PQS with their existing systems. As discussed previously, the level of influence of NAAS was dependent on the local authority's/ trust's existing extent of integration of the PQS and the wider context of need for practice improvement within their local authority/ trust (e.g. recent Ofsted rating and related improvement plans).

NAAS coordinators discussed the rollout as an opportunity to link practice to the PQS where gaps were identified in current procedures and integration could be strengthened. For most local authorities/ trusts this meant revising or incorporating the PQS into existing practices and support, with an emphasis on practice review and self-reflection against the PQS.

Amended practices included:

- Revision of job description/career grades descriptors (e.g. incorporating skills/knowledge areas previously not included from the PQS).

- New training programmes commissioned with the requirement to embed the PQS and/or PQS training built into wider training programmes.

- Revision of appraisal/Personal Development Review (PDR) templates using the PQS as a framework to align with the practice endorsement process and then facilitate self-assessment against PQS.

- Integration into frameworks for progression panels/portfolios reviewed against the PQS.

- Development of aligned guidance and template frameworks for supervision meetings (e.g. an evidence tracker of practice against the PQS).

- The PQS providing a framework to direct observations within internal audits.

In some cases, the implementation of NAAS had helped influence change where there had been previous barriers at a strategic level. In some local authorities/ trusts the PDR format had been tied to a generic corporate local authority/ trust structure. As discussed in the previous section, for some local authorities/ trusts NAAS provided a strategic argument for senior leadership to agree changes aligned with the PQS.

In a few local authorities/ trusts, the timing of rollout aligned with the development of a wider improvement journey. This had led to complete revision so that the PQS was integrated into all core CPD processes (e.g. job descriptions, recruitment, supporting supervision/PDRs, ongoing training).

There were also new specific measures brought in to increase workforce engagement with NAAS, and to complement each local authority's/ trust's practice endorsement process and preparation support for the assessment.

These were aligned and referenced to the PQS. They included (but not implemented in all local authorities/ trusts) PQS communications directed at all child and family social care workforce (e.g. email, e-newsletters and posters highlighting a PQS of the month/week). This often highlighted what a selected PQS meant in practical terms for practitioners and how they could demonstrate this in practice with children and families. Others held PQS workshops with practitioners and managers to raise awareness of the PQS.

Awareness of the PQS

The staff survey asked how much staff know about the PQS. As would be expected, awareness of the PQS was significantly higher for those in NAAS sites compared to non-NAAS sites (Figure 3). In non-NAAS sites, around a third (36%) of survey respondents knew 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' about the PQS for their role. Awareness was higher in the Group 1 (45%), Group 2 (52%) and Group 3 baseline surveys (57%).

In Group 2, awareness of the PQS (those who reported they knew 'a lot' or 'a fair amount') increased between the baseline (52%) and follow up (59%) surveys. This increase was consistent in the survey between assessed and non-assessed staff within Group 2, so it was a system wide effect rather than something specific to those that were assessed.

Figure 3: Knowledge about the Post-Qualifying Standards
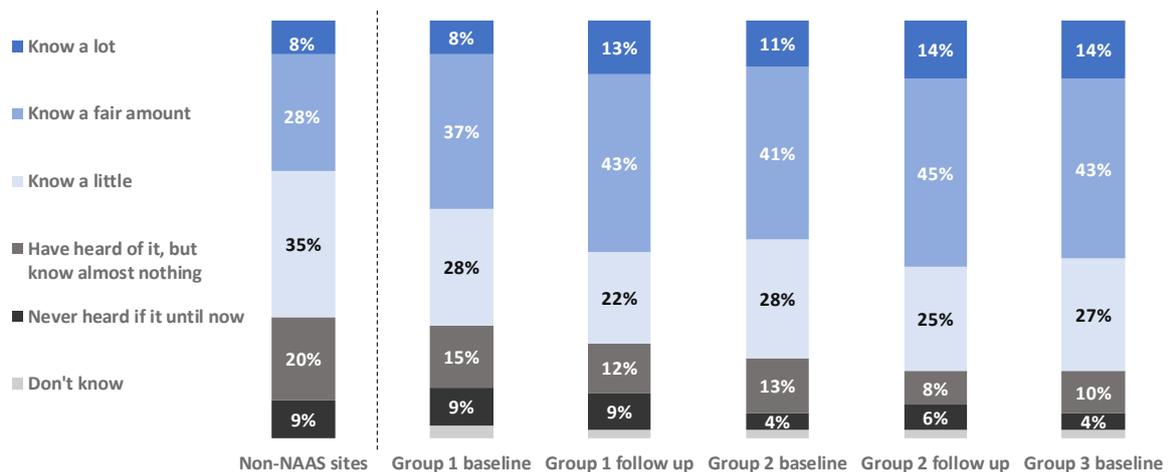
Source:
Q027 How much would you say you currently know about the Post-Qualifying Standards (PQS) (formerly known as the Knowledge and Skills Statements) for your role?
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

Additionally, six in ten (63%) Group 2 assessed staff agreed that going through the process of NAAS increased the amount they know about the PQS.

Group 1 interviews found the PQS appeared to be more well-known and regularly reflected on by newly qualified staff, staff who went through Frontline and staff who manage practitioners in their assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE).

However, practitioners who qualified less recently tended to be less familiar with the PQS, but when reminded of them were confident they knew the principles even if they could not describe the actual statements.

> "I'm not too familiar with it…. I probably know it but when you say it's [KSS] I've got no idea." (Practitioner, Phase 1, Timepoint 1)

Across the workforce there was acknowledgment that after ASYE there was often variation in social workers' and social work managers' experiences of continuous professional development (CPD). Interviews with Group 1 staff at all levels showed there was different access to training and development opportunities both across

and within some local authorities/ trusts. The PQS was not systematically embedded in understanding and awareness 'on the ground'. This was particularly the case with more established and experienced staff who tended to have more familiarity with the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF).

> "It was very much embedded in their (ASYE practitioners) language, but the challenge for me was getting through to the older more experienced social workers and managers."
> (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 1)

Effect of NAAS on knowledge and use of the PQS

Interviews with leaders and practitioners in Group 1 and 2 suggested that NAAS was generally viewed as complementing existing alignment of CPD practice to the PQS. This was especially the case where there was a rigorous practice endorsement process which involved self-assessment and reflection against the PQS. The interviews found that there was evidence that PQS awareness and understanding had strengthened across local services since NAAS was introduced, but this was not necessarily experienced equally amongst all staff in their day to day role.

This was generally the same in the staff survey. Staff in NAAS sites were more likely to agree that the PQS plays a role and makes a difference in their day to day role than staff in non-NAAS sites (Figure 4). This increased between the baseline surveys of each group. Half (50%) of Group 3 agreed. In non-NAAS sites about one in five (22%) agreed that the PQS will make a positive difference in their day to day role and one in three (33%) agreed that the PQS will play a role in their day to day role. Almost six in ten staff in Group 3 agreed at the baseline survey that the PQS will play a part in their day to day role than those in Group 1 (58% in Group 3, up from 51% in Group 2 and 42% in Group 1) (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Whether agree PQS will help you to make a positive difference in your day to day role

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Non-NAAS sites	22%	41%	22%	14%
Group 1 baseline	35%	37%	16%	13%
Group 1 follow up	38%	28%	17%	16%
Group 2 baseline	42%	36%	14%	8%
Group 2 follow up	45%	38%	10%	7%
Group 3 baseline	50%	37%	8%	5%
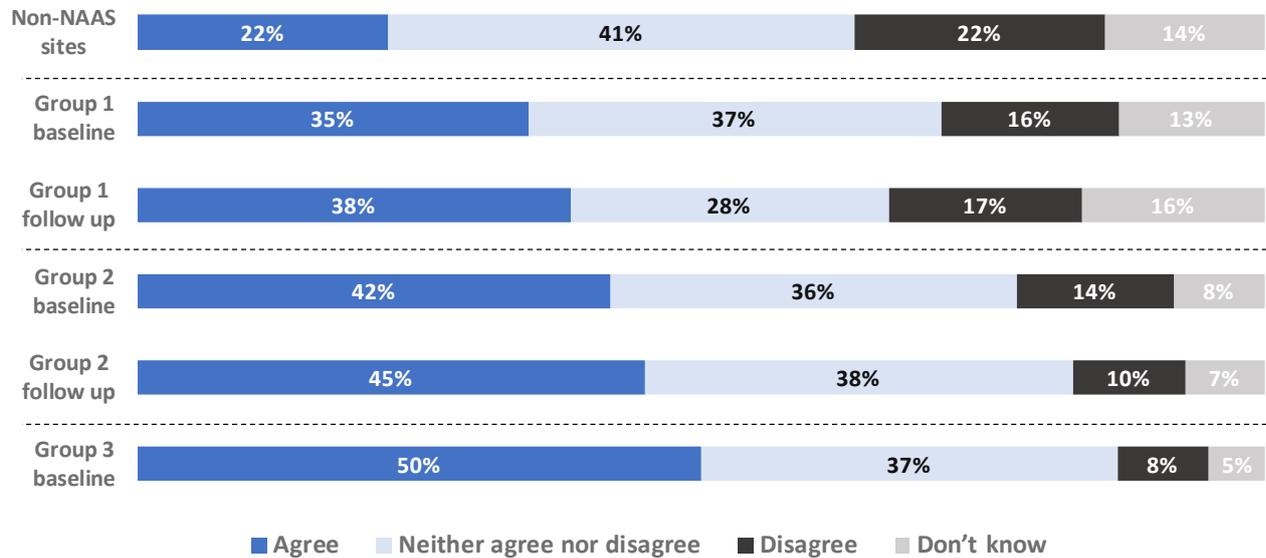
Source: Q028 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Knowledge and Skills Statements/post-qualifying standards will help you to make a positive difference in your day to day role?
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline – 765

Figure 5: Whether agree PQS will play a part in your day to day role

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Non-NAAS sites	33%	32%	23%	13%
Group 1 baseline	42%	28%	16%	13%
Group 1 follow up	47%	25%	16%	11%
Group 2 baseline	51%	30%	12%	7%
Group 2 follow up	53%	28%	12%	7%
Group 3 baseline	58%	28%	7%	6%
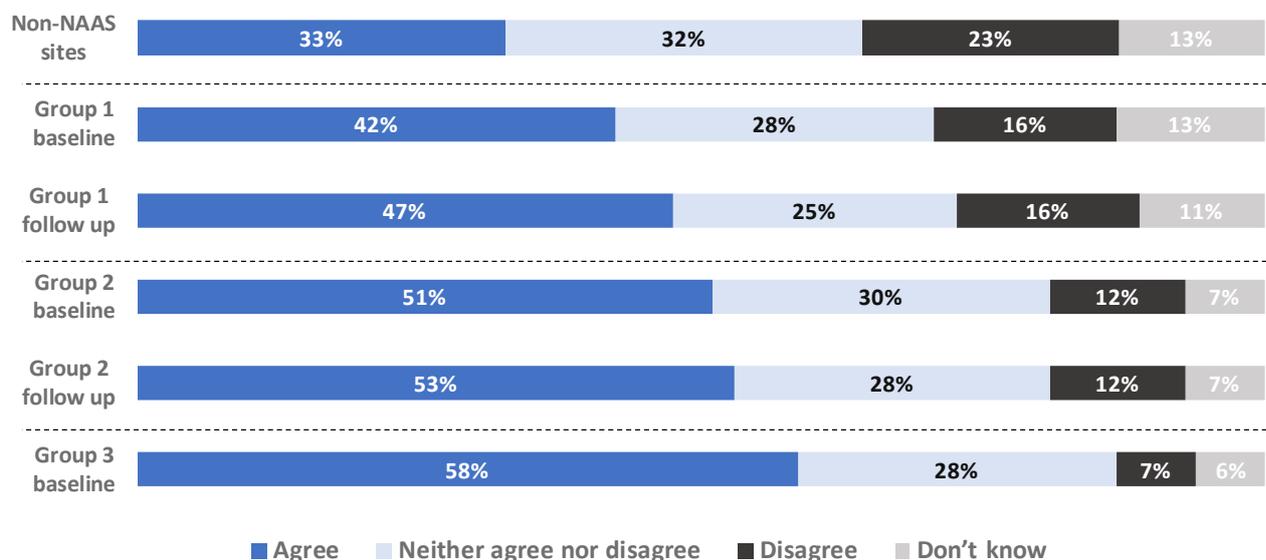
Source: Q029 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Knowledge and Skills Statements/post-qualifying standards plays a part in your day to day role?
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

Generally, there was greater visibility and understanding of PQS where local authorities/ trusts had made changes to systems/procedures and increased reflection and discussion of their role and practice through the framework of PQS. Staff knowledge and understanding had increased where the PQS had been successfully built into specific training or workshops (including wider CPD and NAAS preparation training).

> "Our training and development programme are now mapped to the PQS elements. This has been recent and part of NAAS".
> (Practice Manager, Phase 1, Timepoint 1)

Practitioners who attended these sessions, described them as an opportunity to refresh learning and felt more confident about linking their practice to the PQS.

Some NAAS assessed staff expressed a perceived greater value in the PQS as a positive tool for practice after going through the NAAS process. This allowed them to look at where they are at as a practitioner and how they can demonstrate core skills and knowledge in their practice. However, in the interviews, there were fewer signs of increased knowledge and awareness of the PQS among non-assessed staff, with some of the interviewed non-assessed staff having very little knowledge of the PQS. Leaders in the local authorities/ trusts mentioned that despite efforts to highlight the PQS in direct emails and workshops to staff, there were frequently signs that non-assessed staff were not engaging with communications about PQS (or NAAS) or had attended these workshops.

> "If you talked to any of my team and asked them to talk about the knowledge and skills and they hadn't been on the accreditation workshops and forums, they wouldn't know what you were talking about." (Practice Manager, Phase 1, Timepoint 1)

One unintended outcome was that some staff did not feel the PQS was directly relevant to them if they had chosen not to go through the NAAS process.

Changes to wider processes and procedures- such as integrating the PQS to supervision and PDRs- was seen as taking time to embed and was not always consistently used in practice. For example, some staff discussed awareness of a new supervision and appraisal template and guidelines, but they had not been used by their managers yet. In some cases, there had been resistance to changes as they were perceived as more time consuming and just formalising the types of conversations that had already been happening. They therefore did not automatically perceive that aligning their performance management with the PQS would be beneficial to them as practitioners.

"It feels like a tick box. We know what we are doing. We know the PQS." (Practitioners, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

Effects of NAAS on Learning and Development

NAAS aims to provide social workers with a better understanding of their current level of knowledge and skills and highlight areas for further development. This is to ensure that employers better understand their workforce development needs, through the practice endorsement processes including supervision, performance management and learning and development. This section looks at the initial effects of NAAS on learning and development within Group 1 and 2 local authorities/ trusts.

Effect of NAAS on training offered

In each wave of the surveys, almost all respondents felt that regular formal training, and having regular training and development discussions were important. About three-quarters of staff had regular training and development discussions with their manager (this was higher than in non-NAAS sites at 58%).

The proportion of staff that agreed they get the training and development they need to do their job well, was higher in the Group 2 and Group 3 baseline surveys (83% each) than in the Group 1 baseline (72%). However, there was no significant change in agreement in Group 1 and Group 2 between the baseline and follow up surveys.

There were several questions in the staff survey directly related to the impact of NAAS on learning and development.

At the baseline survey about three in ten (Group 1: 30%, Group 2: 33%) social workers agreed that NAAS will help improve the training and support social workers receive (Figure 6). This was higher at 46% in Group 3. This was higher in Group 2 and Group 3 NAAS sites than for the non-NAAS sites (26%). In addition to the chart below which shows all respondents for each group, the proportion of Group 2 assessed staff that disagreed that NAAS will help improve the training and support social workers receive, fell between the baseline (27%) and follow up survey (11%). There was no equivalent change among Group 2 non-assessed staff.

Figure 6: Agreement that NAAS will improve training and support social workers receive

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Non-NAAS sites	26%	33%	26%	15%
Group 1 baseline	30%	26%	31%	13%
Group 1 follow up	19%	29%	38%	14%
Group 2 baseline	32%	34%	23%	11%
Group 2 follow up	35%	31%	23%	11%
Group 3 baseline	46%	33%	14%	7%
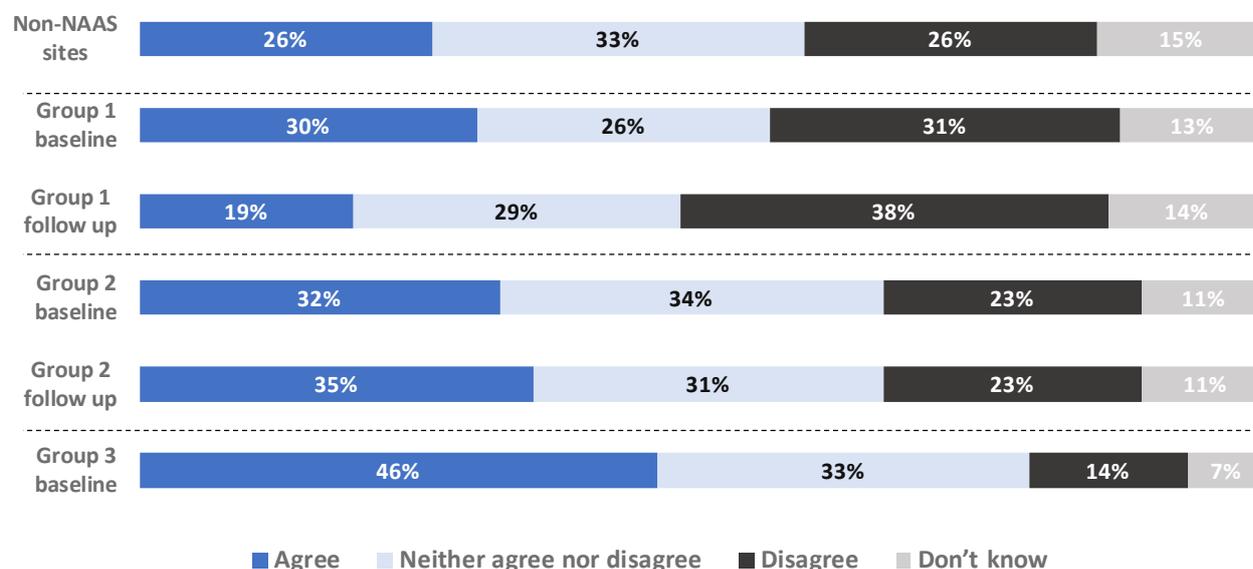
Source: Q030_3 NAAS will help to improve the training and support social workers receive
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

In the follow up surveys, staff were asked if their employer has introduced training to address any areas for development identified by NAAS. In the Group 1 follow up survey, about one in five (23%) agreed that this had happened. This was higher in the Group 2 follow up survey at almost two in five (38% agreed, 15% disagreed, the remainder gave a neutral answer or did not know).

Only a small number of staff were asked about post-assessment training, so the responses can only be treated as indicative. The majority of staff who received training following the assessment (21 out of 25), said that the training they received following the assessment was helpful.

Group 1 staff that were assessed were asked to rate the extent to which they felt NAAS has improved the quality of formal training or CPD in their local area. Thirteen out of forty-six Group 1 assessed staff said that NAAS has improved the quality of formal training or CPD in their local area [32] [33].

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[32] This was defined as giving a score of 4 or 5 out of 5 when asked to rate the extent to which NAAS has improved the quality of formal training or CPD in their local area.
[33] These questions were only asked of a small number of staff and should be treated as indicative.

Perceptions of how NAAS impacts on CPD

There was some evidence in the interviews of Group 1 and 2 leaders and workforce development teams reflecting on wider learning culture and staff needs due to NAAS. Leaders in some local authorities/ trusts had been prompted to think about changes to future training, for example, introducing more opportunities for shadowing to increase cross-specialism knowledge. Others felt that they wanted to extend NAAS preparation training to the wider workforce to refresh knowledge and theory. Some leaders felt that NAAS had drawn their attention to the usefulness of observation and simulated practice, and this could have wider use in their workforce strategy to ensure social workers practice was reviewed, in addition to their existing internal auditing measures.

Local authority/ trust leaders also felt that the level of impact on learning and development culture, was dependent on the baseline of the quality and investment in workforce development practice in place before the NAAS rollout. Those who felt that they had good existing workforce development strategies, felt that NAAS had little overall impact on them because they had already embedded good practice, that their staff were already valued and recognised the importance of CPD. In these circumstances, the rollout out of NAAS would not change that but might reinforce the importance of learning and improvement.

> "NAAS complements it, it wasn't envisaged it would cause any massive changes to it." (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

> "The model [practice model of local authority] is embedded in a way that people are living and breathing it and that means that getting through the assessment is just business as usual so that is reassuring for us as a local authority..." (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

There was evidence that some local authorities/ trusts, who were at the early stage of an improvement transformation, had benefited from NAAS complementing a current review of workforce development and investment in learning and CPD. In one local authority, it had helped the protection of workforce development budgets and acted as a 'lever' to ensure required resourcing. Conversely, some local authorities had started improvement journeys (as result of recent Ofsted inspection and change to their rating) after the rollout of NAAS. In such cases leaders felt it was more difficult to identify the impact of NAAS because of the ongoing changes to compliance and quality processes that were part of new improvement plans. Staff echoed this and described lots of changes to process and procedures which meant

they could not identify whether wider changes were related to NAAS or other factors.

Local authority/ trust leaders also felt that there were limits to the usefulness for wider learning and development, so that whilst NAAS could provide a general sense of workforce standards, the more impactful CPD for practice was required within specialist areas, which NAAS does not focus on or highlight.

Other local authorities/ trusts discussed that current barriers to retention and recruitment meant that they had higher proportions of newly qualified staff and their priority was developing resources to best support skills in that section of the workforce.

Relationship between practice endorsement and CPD

As discussed earlier in the report, practice endorsement was delivered in a variety of ways across the local authorities.

As discussed in section 3, the general feeling among all levels of staff was that NAAS had a greater impact on the culture of CPD where a high level of support and learning was provided before the assessment. This allowed practitioners to review practice against the PQS framework and reflect on additional areas of learning and development required. This provided the additional effect of an extra opportunity for reflective practice beyond what was available within the existing practices and cultures of the local authority/ trust. For some practitioners, NAAS had given them access to learning and resources that would not be available or prioritised without the rollout of NAAS.

For those staff who went through a practice endorsement, it provided an opportunity for practitioners and mangers to identify current levels of knowledge and skill and any areas for development against the PQS.

> "As a manager, I found it useful to use the KSS. To use it as a platform to have a conversation about where I think their skills and knowledge lie and what they think." (Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 3).

Some staff felt that existing and previous PDR processes had not effectively encouraged managers and staff to identify suitable training and resources to develop skills, and there was a tendency for people to pursue the learning opportunities that they were interested in, rather than where they had areas for improvement.

There were a couple of local authorities/ trusts who provided an additional step after completion of the practice endorsement record, to create a development plan which mapped out resources and training required to meet specific areas of improvement. In some cases, this was self-directed learning or local authority/ trust developed specific sessions where there were common gaps in knowledge and understanding. In some local authorities/ trusts, this allowed wider benefits for workforce development practice, where NAAS coordinators identified cross-cutting developmental themes which they thought were important for future planning of learning.

Practice endorsement was not viewed as useful for reflective practice by all. Some felt that practice endorsement duplicated existing CPD processes (e.g. reflection in PDR and supervision sessions with managers) and the benefit did not outweigh the extra time and resource taken to complete.

> "I don't think you need that additional mechanism to get that learning, I think it's a lot of work that's unnecessary." (Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 2)

Relationship between NAAS preparation training and CPD

Staff valued specific learning and training sessions which explored theory and approaches to practice, to help them prepare for NAAS, with 73% of assessed staff who received pre-assessment training and support from their local authority in Group 1 and 83% in Group 2 stating these sessions were helpful. The learning benefits were often regarded as having a wider impact than just preparing for the assessment. This type of learning allowed them to reflect on relevant theoretical models and review how that applied to their current practice and the work of other colleagues.

Practitioners discussed how this then provided a better connection between the rationale of why they practice in certain ways, and how this was grounded in theory, legislation and procedures.

> "The whole process helps you focus on your learning. It reconnects you with the importance of theory, sometimes in the business of everyday you can lose sight off." (Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 2)

Preparation sessions also provided the opportunity to refresh learning in areas of social work practice, with which practitioners were less familiar or had not practiced for some years. They were prompted to think more broadly about practice and skills across the sector and different specialisms. This was particularly the case for

service managers, who felt there were benefits in re-connecting with 'on the ground practice'. Additional sessions and resources also helped some individuals keep abreast of wider changes in social work and sector knowledge.

Some managers incorporated the key learning of staff who had attended NAAS preparation into their team meetings, to strengthen the overall knowledge base of the team. Some managers could see an initial impact on staff reflecting more frequently on theories and models used in day to day practice, and this helped to further embed specific practice models within that local authority/ trust.

> "They are now recognising how they are being systemic rather than just saying they are systemic." (Practitioners/Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

However, the qualitative research showed that it was generally felt across all staff that these preparation sessions did not provide new learning to facilitate a change in approach to practice. It was felt that the sessions would not have a lasting impact beyond staff re-familiarising themselves with practice models, social work theory and legislation already known and used by practitioners and managers. In the quantitative research we found that staff wanted to get support with more examples of assessment questions and exercises within these NAAS preparation sessions (Group 1 follow up: 51%, Group 2 follow up: 39%).

Relationship between NAAS results letter and CPD

From both an individual and leadership perspective, the quality of the results feedback affected the perceived impact of the assessment on CPD. Despite recent changes to the level of assessment feedback provided (as discussed in more detail in the previous section), there was a feeling across all those interviewed (Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities/ trusts), that the results did not provide enough detail on their own specific development areas to effectively inform future learning and training. There had been an expectation by practitioners and managers that the results would highlight specific development needs, and then recommend relevant tools/resources required to meet these.

Leads and managers mentioned that workforce development should be able to use the results of NAAS to create a wider training offer but struggled to do so since they did not have access to aggregated (and complete) results across the local authority/ trust, which would allow them to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses (relevant to the PQS).

Additionally, as described above, there is concern that the results provided are not detailed enough to inform a training programme offer (including the 'revised' results letter).

"There needs to come from that some CPD themes.... if we're weaker on certain KSS elements then that needs to inform our training programme across the service...." (Other, P2, T3)

Local authority and trust leaders also had concerns regarding whether the level and quality of assessment feedback, would provide enough insight to inform wider CPD because of the limited detail provided from the assessment results. There had been expectations that the results would provide analysis of wider needs and identify thematic strengths and weaknesses against the KSS across the workforce. Some local authorities/ trusts intended to use analysis of the results to revise their overall learning and training.

"It is giving us another set of metrics to look at own workforce development requirements, using the KSS, but also what our preparation work and the assessment outcomes are telling us about the standards that are workers are at." (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

Reflective Supervision

There was already a high baseline when it came to perceived importance, and frequency, of reflective supervision. Almost all survey respondents said that reflective supervision was important to their career as a social worker (97% in Group 1 baseline, 98% in Group 1 follow up, and 99% in Group 2 baseline and follow up surveys). Generally, about two-thirds reported that they receive reflective supervision at least monthly. This did not vary significantly between Group 1 and 2, or within either group between the baseline and follow up surveys. Most respondents also agreed that they were able to regularly reflect on their work with experienced colleagues.

About eight in ten respondents in Group 1, 2 and 3 were satisfied with the quality of formal supervision they receive, which was higher than in non-NAAS sites (64%). In addition to the chart below which shows all survey respondents in each group, dissatisfaction with formal supervision among Group 2 assessed staff decreased from five per cent at the baseline survey to one per cent at the follow up. There was no equivalent change for non-assessed staff.

Effect of NAAS on reflective supervision

Across Group 1 and Group 2 local authorities/ trusts, the influence of NAAS on CPD and learning was largely seen in providing opportunities for learning and self-reflection within the practice endorsement process, and NAAS assessment preparation. Across the interviews, staff and leaders discussed the degree to which

impact was dependent on the individual practitioners' capacity for self-reflection, in order to analyse what the experience meant for their ongoing practice. Leaders also felt that staff had focused on the assessment as something you "pass or fail" and that had become part of the narrative of NAAS. Once completed and accredited this was then perceived as the end of the process, and staff were not discussing what they had specifically learnt to enrich their learning and development.

Formal post-assessment discussion and review of the results with staff was variable. Some local authorities/ trusts have made a reflective discussion with their NAAS coordinator or manager part of the process. But typically, local authorities/ trusts did not have a current review meeting procedure or a reflection discussion, it was dependent on individuals asking for one.

From the workforce perspective assessed staff often felt that there was very little support and reflection post-assessment if you had met the accreditation. NAAS assessed staff commonly felt that the assessment had provided validation of their current practice, but then it was "back to practice as usual" without any tools/procedures to pursue further learning.

> "It isn't really something you come away from and think you've learnt something. It is more that you experience something that you meet or not meet in terms of expectations for the standards of your practice rather than altering how the workforce feels, thinks and behaves."(Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 3).

Linked to the discussion above about impact of NAAS on CPD, leaders and NAAS coordinators felt there were barriers to having a meaningful discussion post results, if the assessment feedback did not provide any further reflection on practice from the personal endorsement process. The post-assessment process was seen as a secondary confirmation of the endorsement of staff's practice and the local authority's endorsement process.

> "I don't know that NAAS specifically will change anything dramatically. I think it will provide further evidence that our workforce is out there and competent and capable to do the job they need to do." (NAAS Co-ordinator, Phase 2, Timepoint 1)

Practitioners shared this view and were often unclear on the value of having a further reflective discussion based on the results feedback.

> "I didn't get any feedback apart from that I passed so it is hard then for workforce development to think about what training and

support they need to put in." (Practitioner/Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 3).

This was further compounded where staff had been accredited with high to medium scores against the PQS with little feedback on how to guide future CPD for high quality staff.

> "The dangerous thing we never accounted for with NAAS...we forgot people pass with flying colours, are we saying you're good enough, don't learn anymore; and we have to address that." (NAAS Co-ordinator, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

Effects of NAAS on staff satisfaction and morale

This section looks at attitudes towards NAAS and perceptions of the initial effects it has had on staff, the profession and children and families in Group 1 and 2 local authorities/ trusts. There was a high level of reported job satisfaction to begin with. About eight in ten Group 1 and 2 respondents agreed with the statement 'Overall, I find my job satisfying' at the baseline surveys (Group 1: 82%, Group 2: 85%). This was higher at 90% among Group 3 respondents. There was no statistically significant difference between the baseline and follow up surveys (Group 1: 85%, Group 2: 90%) for Group 1 or 2.

Staff were asked about the impact of NAAS, post-assessment, on their levels of confidence in their role and practice. Almost all respondents said they were confident working with children and young people. In Group 1 and Group 2 about a quarter felt that NAAS would help improve their ability as a social worker (Figure 7). This was higher at 36% in Group 3. Feedback from interviews was that improvement in quality of practice was perceived as something that would need to be measured beyond staff self-reflection (e.g. via internal observation processes and feedback by children and families on the service received).

Figure 7: Agreement that NAAS will help improve ability as a social worker

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Non-NAAS sites	20%	33%	31%	16%
Group 1 baseline	23%	27%	40%	10%
Group 1 follow up	18%	24%	44%	13%
Group 2 baseline	22%	36%	31%	11%
Group 2 follow up	27%	33%	32%	9%
Group 3 baseline	36%	34%	23%	7%
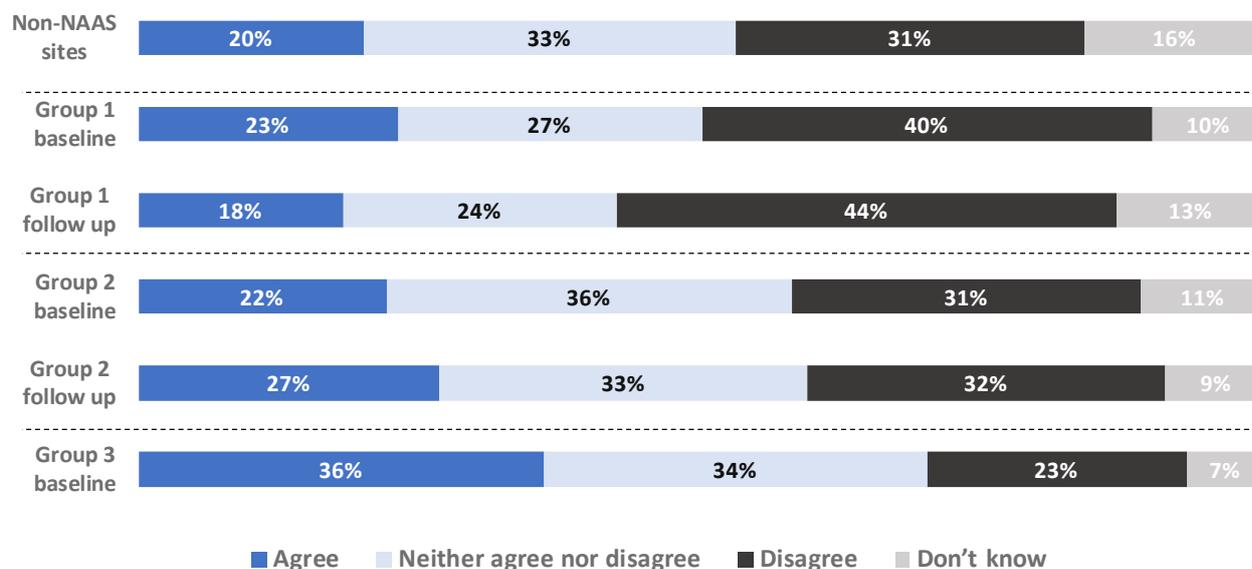
Source: Q030_5 NAAS will help to improve my ability as a social worker
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

Group 1 staff that had been assessed were asked to rate the extent to which they felt that going through NAAS has improved the quality of their practice and confidence in their own practice. Sixteen out of forty-six Group 1 assessed staff said that going through NAAS has improved the quality of their practice[34]. Seventeen out of forty-six Group 1 assessed staff said that going through NAAS has improved confidence in their own practice[35].

Leaders had generally heard from colleagues and staff that undergoing NAAS had been a positive experience to reflect on practice, and that the validation of an accreditation had increased some practitioners' confidence in their own practice.

> "When you've been accredited through NAAS, I do think there's something positive about that in itself, affirming people's experience and confidence." (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

This was reflected in the feedback from staff. Typically, assessed staff expressed a relief that they had completed the process and were happy to have had the quality

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[34] This was defined as giving a score of 4 or 5 out of 5 when asked to rate the extent to which NAAS would improve quality of their practice.
[35] This questions were only asked of a small number of staff and should be treated as indicative.

of their practice validated by receiving a "met" result. They felt happy that their practice had been accredited to a national standard and this reinforced their confidence in their knowledge and skills. Many staff also expressed satisfaction that the endorsement and preparation process had allowed them to reflect on their practice and development. This was particularly the case for experienced practitioners and managers who had not recently completed post-qualifying assessment (e.g. ASYE and PQ). They felt that receiving a "met" result increased their confidence as they knew they were maintaining national practice standards.

> "If you have been practicing for 20 years you have the experience, but do you lose elements of your reflection? Do you get into a comfort zone rather than being able to be critical about your work? " (Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 2)

> "It helps rejuvenate your practice and reflect on how you can do best for families." (Practitioner, Phase 2, Timepoint 2)

However, staff felt that the NAAS assessment could only go so far in increasing confidence in practice, because the results feedback gave limited direction on further CPD they should undertake or detailed insight on areas of strength in practice.

> "Not only do you not know what you could develop, but also what you did well in. There must be things you can improve on and know where you have done really well which would give you confidence " (Practitioner/Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

Some practitioners felt that initial boosts to confidence were also short lived where there were limited processes for discussion post results, or formal recognition procedures in place for going through the process.

> "I think it improved my confidence when I found I had passed. It was just a nice thing, I suppose, to see that I had passed it, but it hasn't changed the way I do anything. I felt good for about a week after but now it's gone back down cos there's been no kind of recognition of the fact I've passed it. If it wasn't for this interview now, I wouldn't even be thinking of it." (Practitioner, Phase 1, Timepoint 3)

Staff of all levels also perceived that those going through the NAAS process in Group 1 and Group 2, were practitioners and managers already confident in their

standards of practice and recognised by managers. This means that accreditation would only have a small impact on their levels of confidence in practice, and subsequent impact on their future progression/career pathways.

> "The group going forward are going to become managers or senior leaders anyway. That's just who they are as professionals. To raise standards, it's the other group of people that need to be targeted." (Practice Manager, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

There were only a few qualitative interviews conducted directly with staff who had achieved "not met results", but evidence gathered from those interviews and managers showed that these results were interpreted in different ways. For a couple, this had knocked their confidence in their practice to a point where they did not want to go through the assessment for a second time or decided to leave the profession. There were a small number of practitioners and managers who received "not met" results that expressed doubts in the accuracy of the results and questioned whether the assessment allowed them to perform to the best of their ability on the day. There were concerns from some who received "not met" results that the format and content of the assessment did not allow them to showcase their skills and knowledge effectively.

Perceptions of NAAS effect on career development

The initial impact of NAAS on career development pathways varied across the roll-out amongst local authorities/ trusts. There was little indication of a perceived impact on career development for people within Group 1 local authorities. There was more evidence of an influence within Group 2 local authorities/ trusts (and Group 3 through the baseline survey). The main direct change in some Group 2 local authorities/ trusts was to align NAAS assessment outcomes to progression pathways and increased pay. Local authorities/ trusts had different grading levels and structures, but this tended to be for the progression to a senior social work practitioner role/post-qualifying consolidation. In some local authorities/ trusts the NAAS result outcome itself provided evidence for progression, whilst for others the practice endorsement review/portfolio fed into evidence reviewed by a progression panel.

For some practitioners the alignment to progression was viewed as a key motivation for undergoing NAAS. The assessment was viewed as a quicker and less time-consuming means to provide evidence of their level of practice, in order to progress.

Alignment with progression had not been implemented by all local authorities/ trusts. Local authorities/ trusts who had not linked the two were concerned about union

opposition if NAAS was directly connected to progression of pay grade. They were also concerned that it could be perceived as an unfair process by those who had chosen not to do NAAS, for factors unrelated to their future thoughts about progression.

> "That's been a bit divisive, there are places that have said they'll link it to progression and paying people more. While it's voluntary it doesn't seem a very fair thing to do...." (NAAS Coordinator, Phase 2, Timepoint 1)

Other strategic barriers identified were that some local authorities/ trusts had restrictions of the number of staff that can work at higher level roles. Consequently, an automatic link with progression would not work with their required staffing and payment structures.

Some NAAS coordinators expressed concerns that this was not yet a tried and tested route for progression and could be perceived as a less robust method compared to portfolio pathways, which involved university modules and evidencing skills and knowledge across a piece of research in practice.

In local authorities/ trusts which had implemented alignment to progression, there was not always awareness and/or clarity about the process amongst the non-assessed workforce. There were also indications that it could have a perverse impact on engagement with NAAS if the workforce perceived NAAS as a progression pathway at a specific level. For some practitioners and managers, NAAS was not regarded as relevant to the professional standards of their role or to their future progression and CPD.

As a way of understanding early attitudes toward the perceived personal benefits of going through NAAS, staff were asked about whether they thought NAAS would be beneficial for their career development.

At the baseline survey, staff in NAAS areas were more likely to think that NAAS would help improve their career development than those in non-NAAS sites (Figure 8). About one in three respondents thought that NAAS would help improve their career development (Non-NAAS: 25%, Group 1: 33%, Group 2: 32%). This was higher in Group 3 (44%). These were unchanged at the time of the follow up survey. There was no change in results for assessed staff.

Figure 8: Agreement that NAAS will improve career development

Category	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Non-NAAS sites	25%	30%	28%	17%
Group 1 baseline	33%	22%	33%	12%
Group 1 follow up	33%	19%	33%	15%
Group 2 baseline	32%	34%	23%	11%
Group 2 follow up	35%	31%	23%	11%
Group 3 baseline	44%	31%	17%	8%
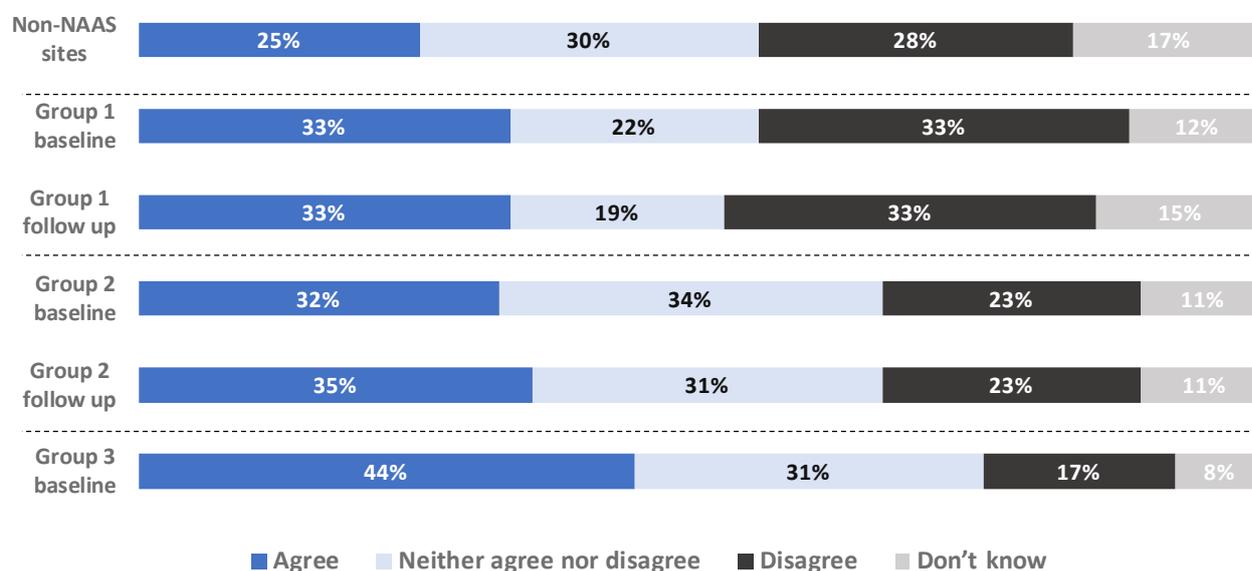
Source: Q030_6 NAAS will help to improve my career development
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

The perception that NAAS will be positive for the social worker personally was higher in Group 2 and Group 3, than in Group 1 or the non-NAAS sites (Figure 9). In Group 2, this also increased between the baseline (30%) and follow up (40%). This increase in perception that NAAS will be positive for them personally in Group 2, was driven by an increase in positive ratings among NAAS assessed staff (Baseline 42%, Follow up 55%).

Figure 9: How positive will NAAS be for you personally

	Positive	Neither positive nor negative	Negative	Don't know
Non-NAAS sites	24%	40%	23%	13%
Group 1 baseline	26%	36%	26%	12%
Group 1 follow up	22%	33%	30%	14%
Group 2 baseline	30%	42%	15%	12%
Group 2 follow up	40%	41%	13%	6%
Group 3 baseline	44%	37%	13%	6%

■ Positive   ■ Neither positive nor negative   ■ Negative   ■ Don't know
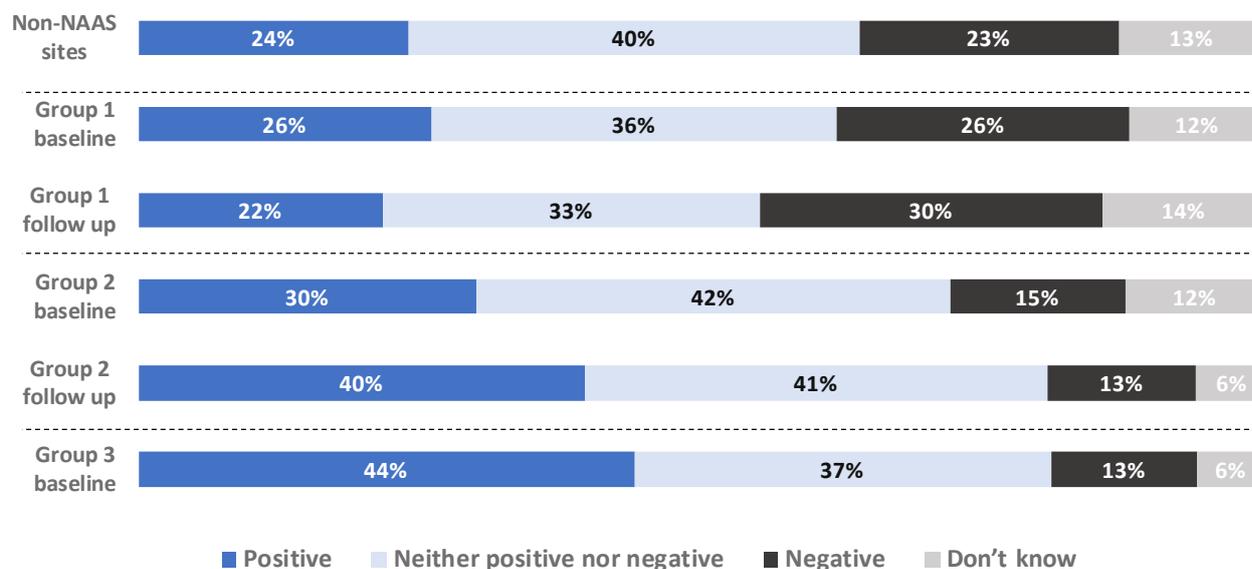
Source: How positive or negative do you think NAAS will be for you personally?
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

Effects of NAAS on staff retention and recruitment

One of the long-term objectives of NAAS is to improve staff retention. The (headcount) turnover rate[36] of child and family social workers in England was 16% in 2018[37]. Reducing staff turnover provides a higher chance that a child and family receive care from a single point of contact over time. A high level of staff turnover within a local authority/ trust is generally thought to be more expensive as it increases recruitment costs and need for agency staff to fill any gaps. The long-term effect on staff turnover will most likely be measured through official social care workforce return data[38]. The Value for Money analysis in section four displays the likelihood that NAAS has had a slight positive effect on staff retention.

This section provides initial perceptions and feelings about what NAAS means to career plans from staff in Group 1 and 2 local authorities/trusts. In terms of external recruitment practice, very few local authorities/ trusts had made changes to their

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[36] This was calculated as as number of leavers divided by the number of workers in place at 30 September 2018
[37] Experimental statistics: Children and family social work workforce in England, year ending 30 September 2018
[38] Statistics: children's social work workforce

existing practices; and in relation to the impact NAAS had on staff retention, leaders felt it was still too early to understand whether NAAS would have either a positive or negative impact on retention rates and agency staff numbers.

As discussed earlier, some had been influenced by NAAS to align job descriptions and competency frameworks to the PQS. For some local authorities/ trusts there had been discussions about incorporating NAAS as a desired requirement, or its use as one element of assessing competencies and skills in the future. But this would be dependent on the future national profile of NAAS and higher numbers of accreditation across the sector.

From the staff surveys, about two-thirds of staff intended to remain in their current role for the next two years. This was higher among Group 2 and Group 3 baseline survey respondents (68% and 74% respectively) than those in non-NAAS sites (59%).

Group 1 assessed staff were asked about the extent to which they thought NAAS would make staff more likely to stay in their current role. Five out of forty-four thought NAAS would make staff a lot more likely to stay in their current role, while 16 out of forty-four said 'Not at all'[39].

At the Group 2 follow up survey, one in ten assessed staff said that going through NAAS made them more likely to stay in their current role for the next two years or in the profession for the next five years (9% and 13% respectively).

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[39] This question was asked of a small number of staff and results should be treated as indicative

Figure 10: Agreement that NAAS has made remaining in role/profession more likely

Going through the NAAS assessment has made me more likely to remain in my current role for the next two years

Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
9%	57%	32%	3%

Going through the NAAS assessment has made me more likely to remain in child and family social work for the next five years

Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
13%	54%	32%	1%

■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Don't know

Source: Q016_3 Going through the NAAS assessment has made me more likely to remain in my current role for the next two years
Q016_5 Going through the NAAS assessment has made me more likely to remain in child and family social work for the next five years
Base: Group 2 Follow on respondents that reported they had been assessed – 387

Perceptions of longer-term effects of NAAS on recruitment and retention

As NAAS has only been introduced relatively recently it has not been possible to ascertain real long-term impacts. This section presents staff perceptions of what the longer-term impact of NAAS will be. DfE plan on conducting further monitoring of outcomes over the longer term to measure the impact of NAAS in line with the NAAS benefits strategy. Leaders within some local authorities/ trusts were concerned about early indications of small numbers of staff leaving after undertaking NAAS, for example, taking up promotions at other local authorities/ trusts or moving on to agency work. Some leaders anticipated a future positive impact by attracting high quality staff, if NAAS were to successfully enhance and broaden their organisation's CPD offer and increase prospective staff motivation and satisfaction. One local authority had seen a greater retention of ASYE staff and felt this was in part related to the support being offered to undertake NAAS, and the decision to align NAAS to progression.

There were also some staff who felt that older practitioners and managers, either themselves or colleagues, might be influenced to leave the profession if NAAS became a mandatory requirement because they did not want to do any further professional assessment. From a leadership perspective, it was felt that if rollout

were to be made mandatory, this could impact on staff decisions about their future in the profession. But this would be one of a number of factors that could influence that, for example, job satisfaction, workload levels, financial reward and wider training and development opportunities.

> "I think the elephant in the room is what are the long-term impacts of this enormous amount of work, investment, what's it actually doing to change the perception of social work, the quality of social work or outcomes for children and families?" (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

> I'm left at the end of it wondering what the benefits of all that actually are in a longer-term sense." (Leadership, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

Perceptions of fairness of NAAS and effect on staff morale

In order to find out whether NAAS was seen as fair and beneficial to staff, we asked in interviews and the surveys whether it was a fair system for all social workers and whether it would have a positive impact on staff morale. Generally, it was felt that introduction of NAAS within the local authority/trust had limited impact on the morale of the wider non-assessed workforce. At the baseline surveys fewer than one in five non-NAAS and Group 1 and 2 respondents agreed that NAAS is a fair system for all social workers (Non-NAAS: 14%, Group 1: 16%, Group 2: 19%). This was significantly higher in Group 3 (30%).

There was an increase in perceived fairness (Figure 11) between the baseline and follow up among Group 2 staff (Baseline: 19%, Follow up: 28%). This increase occurred between both non-assessed (from 17% to 24%) and assessed (from 23% to 38%) staff.

Figure 11: Agreement that NAAS is a fair system for all social workers

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Non-NAAS sites	14%	31%	32%	23%
Group 1 baseline	16%	30%	40%	14%
Group 1 follow up	19%	25%	42%	14%
Group 2 baseline	18%	39%	26%	16%
Group 2 follow up	28%	37%	23%	12%
Group 3 baseline	30%	38%	25%	8%

Legend: ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Don't know
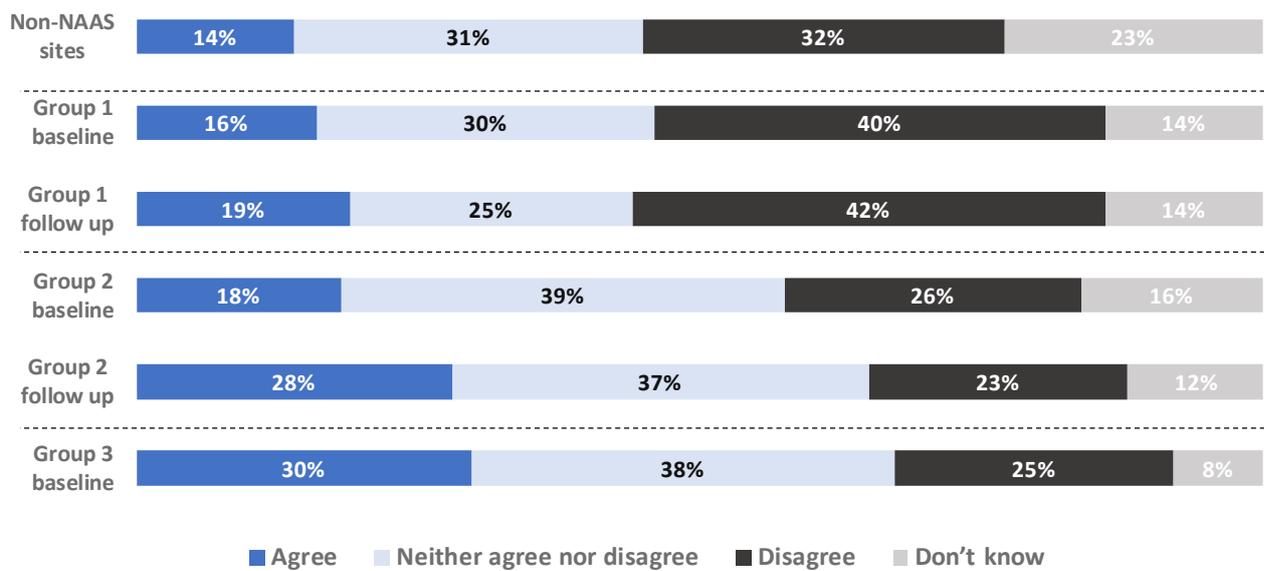
Source: Q030_9 NAAS is a fair system for all social workers
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387, Group 3 baseline - 765

There was a relatively similar pattern for perceptions of whether NAAS will have a positive impact on staff morale (Figure 12), albeit with substantially lower levels of agreement at any stage of the research. At the baseline survey fewer than one in five agreed that NAAS will have a positive impact on staff morale (Non-NAAS: 10%, Group 1: 13%, Group 2: 10%, Group 3: 17%).

This increased between the baseline and follow up for Group 2 (Baseline: 10%, Follow-up: 15%). There was also a decrease among Group 2 assessed staff in the proportion that that disagreed (Baseline: 49%, Follow-up: 33%).

Figure 12: Agreement that NAAS will have a positive impact on staff morale

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Non-NAAS sites	10%	27%	47%	16%
Group 1 baseline	13%	28%	48%	11%
Group 1 follow up	12%	22%	55%	11%
Group 2 baseline	10%	33%	47%	10%
Group 2 follow up	15%	37%	37%	10%
Group 3 baseline	17%	39%	38%	6%
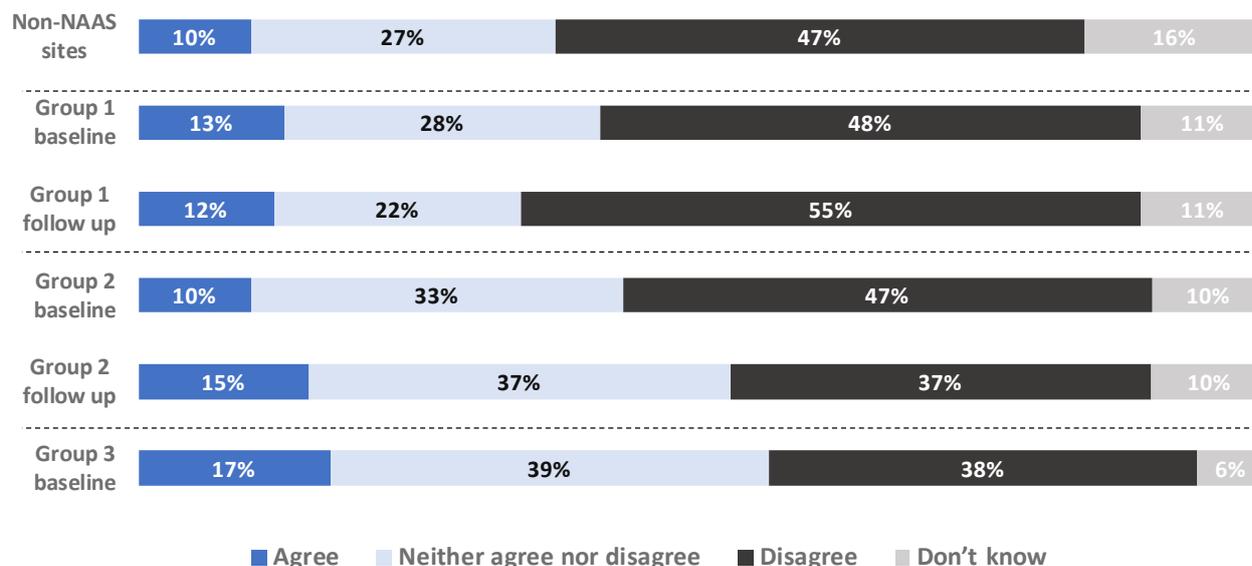
Source: Q030_8 NAAS will have a positive impact on staff morale
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

The greatest positive impact of NAAS on team morale and development appeared to be when several members of a team or a full team had volunteered to complete. This facilitated time learning together to prepare for the assessment and review more general practice within a team against the PQS. Having a cohort with a team manager and/or experienced practitioners undertaking NAAS, helped to provide active champions of the process and was perceived to encourage subsequent take up.

Those that had declined to undertake NAAS or were undecided, felt they were too busy with day to day practice and other elements of their role to engage with NAAS. However, interviews with staff at all levels found there had been some tension in teams regarding whether practitioners should volunteer to undergo assessment and differing views on the purpose and benefits of NAAS. There were also relatively common concerns that NAAS would lead to a two-tier system of those accredited and those not. The concerns were about both the impact on staff themselves, and the impact on perceptions of the quality and capabilities of staff by the community and external agencies including the courts.

> "It's been partly negative. There are colleagues who do not want to do it and fear this will lead to a two-tier system and do not want to be pressurised into doing it when they are already qualified and have their degree." (Practitioners, Phase 2, Timepoint 3)

Leaders were conscious that NAAS could lead to feelings of unfairness amongst staff if they saw NAAS accreditation providing levels of reward and support that were not provided to non-accredited staff. Local authorities/ trusts discussed the importance of ensuring that there were other mechanisms for support and reward of practice so that NAAS was not viewed as implementing a differentiated workforce development offer.

Staff wanted more communication about the impact of NAAS within their own local authority, for example, 'met' rates of staff and how that compared nationally. It was felt this would give greater confidence to the workforce, by demonstrating how they were performing as a local authority against national standards and help facilitate ongoing participation.

> "I've not seen it to be very visible from an organisational point of view. It's lost momentum and for me that's because of a lack of visibility". (Practitioner, Phase 1, Timepoint 3)

Perceptions of the effect NAAS will have on reputation of the profession

The wider impact on sector confidence and value of the accreditation was perceived as dependent on decisions made at national level regarding the rollout of NAAS. The workforce wanted greater clarity from the DfE on what accreditation would mean for the future of the sector, and whether it would have implications for their registration as social workers and social work managers. As discussed above, there were some concerns (albeit among a minority) that NAAS would create a two-tiered workforce which may lead to people thinking that NAAS accredited staff were of higher quality, and non-accredited staff of poorer quality.

When it came to initial perceptions of the impact of NAAS on the profession there was little change in results across the stages of NAAS. About one in four agreed that NAAS will help to improve the reputation of children's social care Figure 13). This was higher in Group 2 and 3 sites (28% and 36% respectively) than non-NAAS sites (20%).

Figure 13: Agreement that NAAS will help to improve the reputation of children's social care
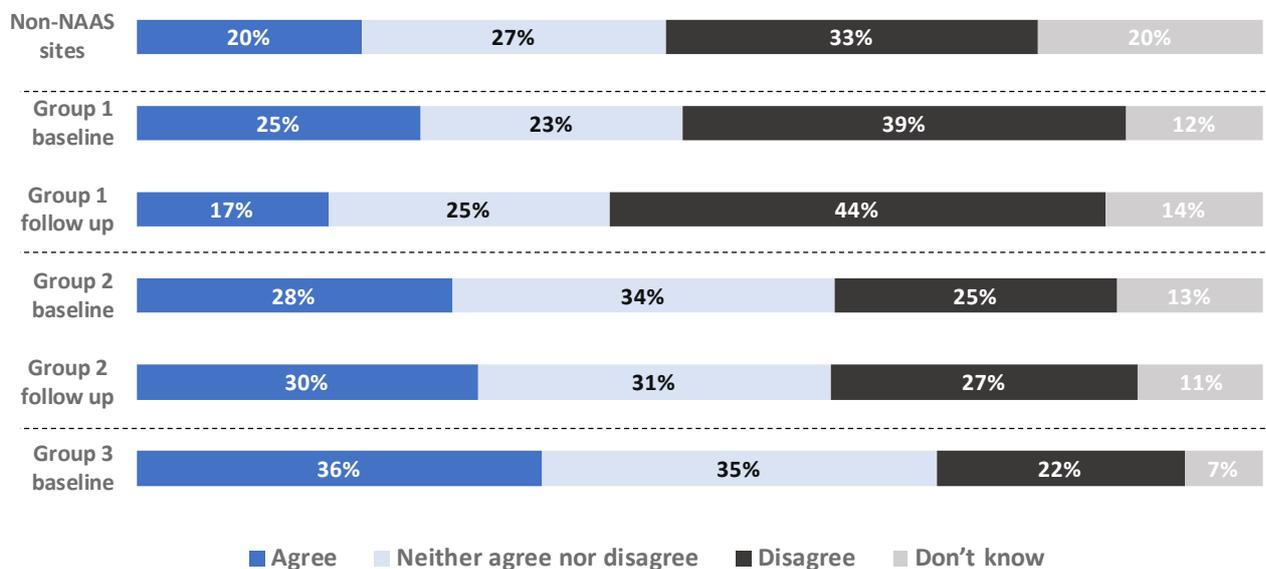
Source: Q030_10 NAAS will help to improve the reputation of children's social care
Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

Perceptions of the effect NAAS will have on children and families

There was a relatively similar pattern when looking at perceptions of whether NAAS will have a positive impact on children and families in 'my local area' (Figure 14). Generally, when interviewed staff did not see a direct link between NAAS and the quality of care provided. At the baseline stage about one in five respondents in non-NAAS, Group 1 and 2 NAAS sites agreed that NAAS will have a positive impact on children and families in the local area (Non-NAAS: 21%, Group 1: 17%, Group 2: 21%). This was higher in Group 3 (33%).

Figure 14: Agreement that NAAS will have a positive impact on children and families in local area
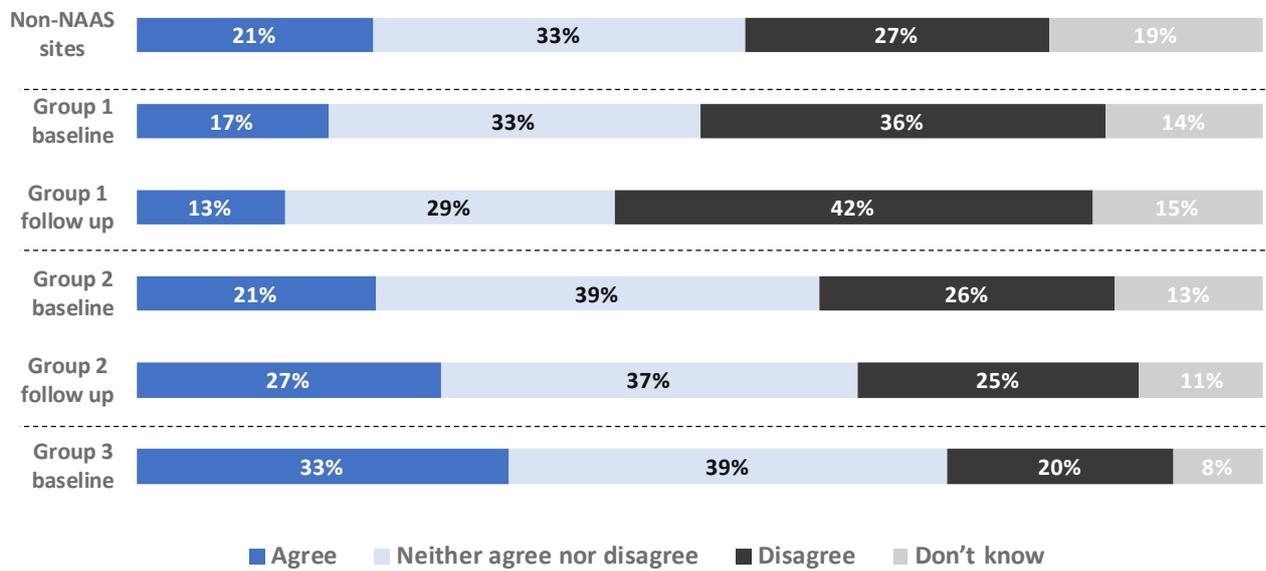
Source: Q030_11 NAAS will have a positive impact on children and families in my local area

Base: All respondents: Non-NAAS sites – 675; Group 1 baseline – 266; Group 1 follow up – 107; Group 2 baseline – 687; Group 2 follow up – 387; Group 3 baseline - 765

Conclusion

The National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) is a major change programme, with a significant amount of resources, capabilities and timescales required for implementation.

The indicative results from the early Value for Money analysis suggest that for every £1 spent by the Department on the set-up and delivery of NAAS in the Group 1 local authorities up until 2019, cost savings of between £2.03 and £2.28 were realised. This was estimated by comparing the estimated benefits (or cost savings) with the costs associated with set-up and delivery of NAAS between Group 1 local authorities and other comparable local authorities not engaged in the programme. The assessment also suggested that NAAS was associated with positive impacts on outcomes for children.

It is important to note that this Value for Money analysis was conducted among a small sample of five local authorities and was not able to distinguish other interventions that may have been simultaneously taking place in the local authorities, which may have had similar objectives to NAAS.

The qualitative and quantitative research showed that initial engagement from staff in Group 1 to be assessed by NAAS was low. In addition to general workload and capacity concerns there was limited understanding of the aims of NAAS, staff not feeling it was a priority as it was a) not mandatory and b) perceived as being a pilot which may not continue after the pilot finished.

NAAS was understood by Group 1 and 2 site leaders to increase the pace that the PQS was being embedded within local systems, and practitioners viewed the use of performance evaluation against the PQS (whether as part of the Practice Endorsement process or through PQS related training) as the most beneficial aspect of NAAS.

The research also showed that whilst assessed staff believed that the assessment was a positive experience, they often felt that there was very little support and reflection from their employers post-assessment for those who had met the accreditation. NAAS-assessed staff commonly felt that the assessment had provided validation of their current practice, but then it was "back to practice as usual" without any tools/procedures to pursue further learning. To ensure that the aims of NAAS are met it will be important to ensure that continuous learning is implemented and that opportunities for practice reflection and observation do not stop once a candidate receives a "met" grade in the assessment. There was consistent feedback from assessed staff that the feedback in the initial results letter did not give enough detailed information to support further learning and

development. The results letter was revised and feedback suggested that the revised letter was only a marginal improvement.

This evaluation provides early indications to suggest that a nationwide implementation of NAAS could result in benefits for child and family social care, due to:

- departmental cost savings;

- an associated reduction of the number of children in care, and;

- by embedding the PQS in local systems and providing the impetus for staff to have further means to evaluate their skills and practice and identify areas for development.

The general trend in results from the staff surveys in terms of attitudes towards NAAS was positive, albeit starting from a relatively low baseline of support. For example, the proportion of respondents that agreed NAAS will be positive for them and the proportion who felt it will have a positive impact on children and families in their local area rose between Group 1 and Group 3.

This trend is in alignment to the aims of NAAS, which are to: provide social workers with a better understanding of their current level of knowledge and skill and highlight areas for further development; support employers to raise the national standard and consistency of practice and improve outcomes for children and families; and ensure employers better understand their workforce development needs through the practice endorsement processes including supervision, performance management and learning and development.

Appendix 1 – Kantar logic model

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES Short-term	OUTCOMES Mid-term	IMPACTS
Concept	**DfE / Delivery Partner**	**DfE**	Training and development improve practice standards	Higher practice standards – create larger pool of high standard SW*	Enhanced reputation of the sector and social workers*
Proof of concept	Communications /Stakeholder engagement	Actionable feedback for improvement areas			
Public consultations	Relationship building w/ LAs e.g. Partnership Learning Days	Build a profile of engaged LAs (who can be promoters/mentors)	Assessment feedback provides support and mechanism to improve standards		
DfE policy development and delivery	Finalise assessment content & platform with Delivery Partner	**LAs**		Recruitment practices focused on accredited social workers	Social work is a desirable and long term profession*
Costs	Finalise assessment operations (logistics, actors etc.)	Understanding of skills gaps and training needs	Proactive and effective CPD & Performance Management in LAs		
LA grants	**LAs / Social Workers / Sector**	Use results as diagnostic tool for departments and SWs	Sector recognises the value of accreditation		
DfE internal programme costs	LA leaders publicly endorse NAAS	**Social Workers / Sector**		Culture change to measurement and management of performance*	Better outcomes for children and families*
Content Development & Assessment	Communications with staff/ partners / families	Increase in number of accredited staff	Social workers want to be accredited		
Evaluation	NAAS Project Management / organisation	Understanding of which LAs need assistance in delivering NAAS	Championing of NAAS by LAs / assessed SWs		
Delivery Partner	SW preparation for assessment	Social workers know what "good" looks like		Better retention rates and lower reliance on agency staff	Cost effective and viable NAAS
Sector	Career pathway and practice endorsement process established	National standardised approach created	Social workers increased confidence in their standard of practice		
Local Authority time					
Leadership / Staff time					

Insights from Phase 1 to help inform revisions to Phase 2 Activities	Insights from Phase 1 and 2 help inform national roll out		*These outcomes and impacts are also part of the wider reform process and embedding of the KSS are not measured in this evaluation	

Appendix 2 – Group 2 baseline survey

Q001 - Qintro: Introduction

Your views matter

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences - your feedback is incredibly important.

If you would like to speak to someone from the research team at Kantar Public about this research then you can contact us at NAAS@kantarpublic.com

Qnologin

Please tell us which local authority you work for
This will be used for analysis purposes only and will not be used to identify any respondents.

Prefer not to say

Q44

Please enter your HCPC registration number in the box below.

This information will not be shared with any third parties, including DfE or your local authority. This information will not be used to identify individuals in any reporting.

This information will only be used by Kantar Public to identify whether respondents have or have not taken part in the assessment so that we can compare responses from these two groups to look at the impact of NAAS.

If you do not have your HCPC number to hand you can find this online at http://www.hpc-uk.org/

Q45

Please indicate whether you have taken an assessment, or are expecting to take the NAAS assessment between now and December 2019

1. Yes – I have already had my NAAS assessment
2. Yes – I expect to take a NAAS assessment between now and December 2019
3. No –I do not expect to take the assessment between now and December 2019
4. Don't know (hide this option)
5. Prefer not to say (hide this option)

ASK Q45B IF Q45=2
Q45B

Have you booked an assessment date on the NAAS platform?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Prefer not to say

Q005 - Qaware:

How much would you say you currently understand about how NAAS is being introduced...?

STATEMENTS

a) In the children's social care sector overall
b) Within your local authority/trust

ANSWERS

1. Know a lot
2. Know a fair amount
3. Know a little
4. Have heard of it, but know almost nothing
5. Never heard of it
6. Don't know

Q006 - Q_howpositive:

How positive or negative do you think NAAS will be for...?

STATEMENTS

a) You personally
b) Children and families social care staff in your local area
c) The children and families social care profession as a whole
d) Children and families in your local area

ANSWERS

1. Very positive
2. Positive
3. Neither positive nor negative
4. Negative
5. Very negative
6. Don't know

Q007 - Q_info:

From which of the following have you received information about NAAS?

1   Local authority – wide communications
2   Your direct line manager
3   The Department for Education
4   A trade union
5   A sector body (e.g. Skills for Care, Research in Practice)
6   The NAAS Delivery Partner (Mott Macdonald)
7   Professional / Trade Press
8.   Other internet sources
996   other, namely...
998   none of the above
999   don't know

Ask only if Q007 - Q_info,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and row control on Q007 - Q_info
Q008 - Q_infohelp:

How helpful was the information you received from...

STATEMENTS

a) Your local authority
b) Your direct line manager
c) The Department for Education
d) A Trades Union
e) A sector body (e.g. Skills for Care, Research in Practice)
f) The NAAS Delivery Partner (Mott MacDonald)
g) Professional / Trade Press

ANSWERS

1. Very helpful
2. Fairly helpful
3. Neither helpful nor unhelpful
4. Not very helpful
5. Not at all helpful
6. Don't know

Q009 - Q_infoimprove:
Do not ask if Q7 = 998 or 999

Thinking about all the information you have received, as set out in the previous questions, how could this have been improved

Please think of all the information you received about NAAS

1. More clarity around the purpose/aims of NAAS
2. More information about impact of being accredited or not accredited
3. Information presented in a clearer way
4. Information on how it will benefit me
5. Information on the amount of my time it will take
6. Information on the format of the assessment
7. No improvements needed
8. Other (specify)
999   don't know

Q010 - Q_receive:

Have you received any training or support about NAAS from your local authority?

1   Yes
2   No
999   don't know *Position fixed *Exclusive

Ask only if Q010 - Q_receive,1
Q011 - Q_receivedetail:

And, was this training or support...?

1   ...formal training or CPD to develop your knowledge and skills
2   ...briefing on the process for NAAS and the assessment day
3   … internal communications from your local authority
4   ...support from a manager or supervisor
5   ...something else *Open
999   don't know

Ask only if Q010 - Q_receive,2
Q012 - Q_offered:

Have you been offered any training or support about NAAS from your local authority/trust?

1   Yes - plan to attend in the future
2   Yes - do not plan to attend
3   No
999   don't know

Ask only if Q010 - Q_receive,1
Q014 - Q_helpful:

How helpful was the training or support you received from your local authority/trust?

Please think about all the training or support you received in preparation for NAAS.

1   Very helpful
2   Fairly helpful
3   Neither helpful nor unhelpful
4   Not very helpful
5   Not at all helpful
999   don't know

Ask only if Q010 - Q_receive,1
Q015 - Q_improved:

How could the training or support from your local authority/trust have been improved?

1. Information presented in a clearer way
2. More examples of assessment questions and exercises
3. More time during training sessions / briefings
4. Additional training sessions or briefings
5. Receiving information further in advance
6. No improvements needed
7. Other (specify)
999   don't know

Q013 - Q_prep:

What else have you personally done (or plan to do) in preparation for NAAS?

1   Sought out additional training from a private sector organisation
2   Read the Knowledge and Skills Statements/ post-qualifying standards for my role
3   Sought out other information/material about social work knowledge and skills
4   Sought support from my manager/supervisor
6   Sought help from other colleagues
7.   Answering practice / simulation questions
5   Something else (please specify) *Open
999   don't know
998   none of these

Q016 - Q_agreejob:

Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements

STATEMENTS

a) Overall, I find my job satisfying
b) I am likely to remain in my current role for the next two years
c) (IF Q45=1) Going through the NAAS assessment has made me more likely to remain in my current role for the next two years
d) I plan to remain in child and family social work for the next five years
e) (IF Q45=11) Going through the NAAS assessment has made me more likely to remain in child and family social work for the next five years

ANSWERS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

Q017 - Q_direct:

Do you undertake direct work with children and/ or families?

1   Yes
2   No
999   don't know

Ask only if Q017 - Q_direct,1
Q018 - Q_confident:

How confident do you feel working with children and young people?

1   Very confident
2   Fairly confident
3   Neither confident nor unconfident
4   Fairly unconfident
5   Very unconfident
999   don't know

Q019 - Qposeffects:

What do you think will be the positive effects, if any, of NAAS in your local area? Please think about the way NAAS might impact on you, your colleagues, and children and families.

Please think about potential effects both in the immediate future and in the longer term.

1. Provides evidence of good work / skills
2. There will be positive impacts for children and/or families
3. It will raise the profile of social work
4. It will increase public trust in social work professionals
4. It will help to ensure standards of practice
5. Accreditation will help career progression
6. It will improve CPD / training and development
7.It will highlight key areas for personal improvement
8. It will refresh knowledge and skills
9. Other (specify)
10. None/No positive impact
999   don't know

Q020 - Q_negeffects:

What do you think will be the negative effects, if any, of NAAS in your local area? Please think about the way NAAS might impact on you, your colleagues, and children and families.

Please think about potential effects both in the immediate future and in the longer term.

1. Increase in pressure / stress for social workers
2. Additional work required
3. Reduction in time available to spend on caseload
3. There will be a negative impact on staff morale/confidence
4. Will increase number of staff leaving the profession and/or put people off entering the profession
5. Funds would be better spent elsewhere (e.g. training, hiring additional staff)
6. Creation of a two-tiered workforce ('accredited' and 'not accredited')
7. Other (specify)
8. None/no negative impacts
999   don't know

Q021 - Qtraining:

How important do you feel having regular formal training is to your career as a social worker?

1   Very important
2   Important
3   Neither important nor unimportant
4   Unimportant
5   Very unimportant
999   don't know

Q022 - Q_agreetraining:

Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS

a) I have the right tools (e.g. risk assessment tools, planning tools) to do my job
    effectively
b) I have the skills I need to work effectively with families
c) I get the training and development I need to do my job well

ANSWERS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

Q023 - Q_supervision:

How important do you feel having reflective supervision is to your career as a social worker?

1   Very important
2   Important
3   Neither important nor unimportant
4   Unimportant
5   Very unimportant
999   don't know

Q025 - Q_freqsupervision:

How often do you receive reflective supervision from your line manager/supervisor?

1   At least once a week
2   Fortnightly
3   At least once a month
4   Most months
5   Once or twice in the last six months
6   Once or twice in the last year
7   Never
999   don't know

Q024 - Q_agreesupervision:

Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS

a) I have regular training and development discussions with my manager
b) I believe regular training and development discussions are important
c) I am able to regularly reflect on my work with experienced colleagues
d) My leadership team keep me informed about changes that affect my work
e) The information I receive from my leadership team about changes that affect my work is consistent with the information I receive from my manager / supervisor

ANSWERS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

Ask only if NOT Q025 - Q_freqsupervision,7
Q026 - Q_satisfiedsupervision:

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of the formal supervision you receive?

1   Very satisfied
2   Satisfied
3   Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4   Dissatisfied
5   Very dissatisfied
999   don't know

Q027 - Q_KSSknow:

How much would you say you currently know about the Chief Social Worker's Knowledge and Skills Statements/post-qualifying standards for your role?

1   Know a lot
2   Know a fair amount
3   Know a little
4   Have heard of it, but know almost nothing
5   Never heard of it
999   don't know

ASK IF Q45=1 (already had a NAAS assessment)
Q027B

To what extent do you agree or disagree that going through the process of the NAAS assessment has increased the amount you know about the Knowledge and Skills Statements/post-qualifying standards?

1   Strongly agree
2   Agree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Disagree
5   Strongly disagree
999   don't know

Q028 - Q_KSSdifference:

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Knowledge and Skills Statements/post-qualifying standards will help you to make a positive difference in your day to day role?

1   Strongly agree
2   Agree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Disagree
5   Strongly disagree
999   don't know

Q029 - Q_KSSpart:

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Knowledge and Skills Statements/post-qualifying standards plays a part in your day to day role?

1   Strongly agree
2   Agree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Disagree
5   Strongly disagree
999   don't know

Q030 - Q_agreeNAAS:

NAAS aims to embed the Knowledge and Skills Statements / post-qualifying standards into working practices. It aims to help individuals and their managers gain a better understanding of their practice and provide a clear benchmark of expertise and quality of practice.

Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements

STATEMENTS

a) NAAS will help to make me feel more confident about working with children and young people
b) I want to be accredited through NAAS
c) NAAS will help to improve the training and support social workers receive
d) NAAS is about more than just the assessment day itself
e) NAAS will help to improve my ability as a social worker
f) NAAS will help to improve my career development
g) I understand how NAAS will achieve the positive impacts it is meant to
h) NAAS will have a positive impact on staff morale
i) NAAS is a fair system for all social workers
j) NAAS will help to improve the reputation of children's social care
k) NAAS will have a positive impact on children and families in my local area

ANSWERS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

ASK IF Q45=1 (already been through a NAAS assessment)

We would now like to ask you about your experience of the going through the NAAS assessment process.

Please select how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS

a) I understood why I was completing a NAAS practice endorsement form
b) The assessment day was well organised
c) Going through the NAAS assessment has made me feel more confident in my ability to carry out my role

ANSWERS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

Q031 - Intro_analysis:

The following questions will be used to ensure that we have interviewed a representative sample of the children and families social care staff in your local area and to evaluation whether NAAS is a fair system for all social workers. None of the answers to this survey will be used to identify any individual.

Q036 - Q_qual:

What qualifications in social work do you have?

1	CQSSW
2	BA
3	DipSW
4	MA
996	other, namely... *Open
997	none of the above
998	don't know
999	Prefer not to say

Ask only if Q036 - Q_qual,3,4
Q037 - Q_qualprog:

Did you qualify through any of the following routes?

1   Frontline
2   Step Up
3   Think Ahead
998   none of the above
997   Prefer not to say
999   don't know

Q038 - Q_qualyear:

Please indicate the year you received this qualification

(drop down list of years)
(Texfill with answers selected at Q36)

Q039 - Q_role:

What is your current role?

1   Social Worker
2   Team Manager
3   Social Work Assistant
4   Senior Social Worker
5   Advanced Practitioner
6   Service Manager
996   other, namely... *Open
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q040 - Q_experience:

How long have you been:

STATEMENTS

a) In your current role
b) Working for your current local authority
c) Practicing professionally

ANSWERS

1. Less than two years
2. Two to three years
3. Four to five years
4. Six to ten years
5. More than ten years
6. don't know
7. Prefer not to say

Ask only if Q040 - Q_experience ROW=1 & COL=1,2
Q041 - Q_ASYE:

Are you currently participating in, or have you recently been through, the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE)?

1   Yes, currently participating in ASYE
2   Yes, have recently been through ASYE
3   No
999   don't know *Position fixed
998   Prefer not to say

Q042 - Q_contract:

What type of contract are you on?

1   Agency
2   Temporary / Fixed term
3   Permanent
4   Independent
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q043 - Q_fulltime:

Are you employed full-time or part-time?

1   Full-time (30 hours or more per week)
2   Part-time (Less than 30 hours per week)
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q46

If we have any further questions relating to this particular survey, would you be willing to be re-contacted by Kantar Public within the next 12 months?

If yes
Please provide

Name
Email

Q100 – Demographics intro

The next few questions are used by the Department for Education to review the impact of NAAS on the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 for public sector workers. None of the answers to this survey will be used to identify any individual.

Q101 - Q_ethnicity:

What is your ethnic group?

Choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background

1   White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
2   White: Irish
3   White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4   White: Other, please describe
5   Mixed: White and Black Caribbean
6   Mixed: White and Black African
7   Mixed: White and Asian
8   Mixed: Other, please specify
9   Asian/Asian British: Indian
10   Asian/Asian British: Pakistani
11   Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi
12   Asian/Asian British: Chinese
13   Asian/Asian British: Other, please specify
14   Black/Black British: Black African
15   Black/Black British: Black Caribbean
16   Black/Black British: Other, please specify
17   Other Ethnic Group: Arab
18   Other Ethnic Group: Other, please specify
         If you have selected 'other' (please specify):
998   Prefer not to say

Q102 - Q_health:

Do you have any physical or mental health condition(s) or illnesses lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more?

1   Yes
2   No
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Ask only if Q034 - Q_health,1

Q103 - Q_healthability:

Do any of your condition(s) or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

1   Yes, a lot
2   Yes, a little
3   No, not at all
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q104

Are you currently pregnant or on maternity leave?

1   Yes
2   No
998   Prefer not to say

Q105

How old are you?

1   18-24 years
2   25-34 years
3   35-44 years
4   45-54 years
5   55-64 years
6   65 and over
998   Prefer not to say

Q105A

How would you describe your gender

1   Male
2   Female
3   In another way…
998   Prefer not to say

Q106

Do you identify as the gender you were assigned at birth?

1   Yes, I do
2   No, I don't
3   I am not sure
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q107

Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

1   Heterosexual / Straight
2   Gay / Lesbian
3   Bisexual
4   Other, namely…
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q108

Are you…

1   Single, that is, never married and never registered in a same-sex civil partnership
2   Married
3   Separated, but still legally married
4   Divorced
5   Widowed
6   In a registered civil partnership
7   Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership
8   Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
9   Surviving partner from a civil partnership
999   Don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q109

And do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion?

1   No religion
2   Christian
3   Hindu
4   Jewish
5   Islam/Muslim
6   Sikh
7   Buddhist
8   Other, namely…
999   Don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q047 - Outro_thankyou:

Thank you for taking part in the staff survey as part of the evaluation of NAAS. Your feedback is important in helping to shape and improve the process of rolling out NAAS nationwide
If you would like to speak to someone from the evaluation team at Kantar Public, then you can contact us at: NAAS@kantarpublic.com

Appendix 3 – Group 2 follow up survey

Q001 - Qintro: Introduction

Your views matter

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences - your feedback is incredibly important.

We carried out a similar survey earlier this year and are keen to find out how opinions have changed since then.

This survey is designed for everyone to complete, regardless of whether you took part in the survey earlier this year or whether you have attended the NAAS assessment day.

If you would like to speak to someone from the research team at Kantar Public about this research then you can contact us at NAASevaluation@kantarpublic.com

Qnologin

Please tell us which local authority you work for
This will be used for analysis purposes only and will not be used to identify any respondents.

Prefer not to say

Q44

Please enter your registration number in the box below.

This information will not be shared with any third parties, including DfE or your local authority. This information will not be used to identify individuals in any reporting.

This information will only be used by Kantar Public to identify whether respondents have or have not taken part in the assessment so that we can compare responses from these two groups to look at the impact of NAAS.

If you do not have your registration number to hand you can find this online at https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/

Q45

Please indicate whether you have taken an assessment, or are expecting to take the NAAS assessment between now and December 2019

1. Yes – I have already had my NAAS assessment
2. Yes – I expect to take a NAAS assessment between now and December 2019
3. No –I do not expect to take the assessment between now and December 2019
4. Don't know (hide this option)
5. Prefer not to say (hide this option)

ASK IF Q45=1
Q45b –

Please indicate whether you have already attended the NAAS assessment day

1. Yes- I have attended the assessment day
2. No- I have not yet attended the assessment day

Q005 - Qaware:

How much would you say you currently understand about how NAAS is being introduced...?

STATEMENTS

a) In the children's social care sector overall
b) Within your local authority/trust

ANSWERS

1. Know a lot
2. Know a fair amount
3. Know a little
4. Have heard of it, but know almost nothing
5. Never heard of it
6. Don't know

Q006 - Q_howpositive:

How positive or negative do you think NAAS will be for...?

STATEMENTS

a) You personally
b) Children and families social care staff in your local area
c) The children and families social care profession as a whole
d) Children and families in your local area

ANSWERS

1. Very positive
2. Positive
3. Neither positive nor negative
4. Negative
5. Very negative
6. Don't know

Q007 - Q_info:

From which of the following have you received information about NAAS?

1   Local authority – wide communications
2   Your direct line manager
3   The Department for Education
4   A trade union
5   A sector body (e.g. Skills for Care, Research in Practice)
6   The NAAS Delivery Partner (Mott Macdonald)
7   The NAAS Research Partner (Kantar Public)
8   Professional / Trade Press
9.   Other internet sources
996   other, namely...
998   none of the above
999   don't know

Ask only if Q007 - Q_info,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and row control on Q007 - Q_info
Q008 - Q_infohelp:

How helpful was the information you received from...

STATEMENTS

   a) Your local authority
   b) Your direct line manager
   c) The Department for Education
   d) A Trades Union
   e) A sector body (e.g. Skills for Care, Research in Practice)
   f) The NAAS Delivery Partner (Mott MacDonald)
   g) The NAAS Research Partner (Kantar Public)
   h) Professional / Trade Press

ANSWERS

   1. Very helpful
   2. Fairly helpful
   3. Neither helpful nor unhelpful
   4. Not very helpful
   5. Not at all helpful
   6. Don't know

Q009 - Q_infoimprove:
Do not ask if Q7 = 998 or 999

Thinking about all the information you have received, as set out in the previous questions, how could this have been improved

Please think of all the information you received about NAAS

1. More clarity around the purpose/aims of NAAS
2. More information about impact of being accredited or not accredited
3. Information presented in a clearer way
4. Information on how it will benefit me
5. Information on the amount of my time it will take
6. Information on the format of the assessment
7. No improvements needed
8. Other (specify)
999   don't know

Q010 - Q_receive:

Have you received any training or support about NAAS from your local authority?

1   Yes
2   No
999   don't know *Position fixed *Exclusive

Ask only if Q010 - Q_receive,1
Q011 - Q_receivedetail:

And, was this training or support...?

1   ...formal training or CPD to develop your knowledge and skills
2   ...briefing on the process for NAAS and the assessment day
3   … internal communications from your local authority
4   ...support from a manager or supervisor
5   ...something else *Open
999   don't know

Ask if 45b = yes
Q012 - Q_offered:

Have you been offered any training or support from your local authority/trust
following on from your NAAS assessment?

    1   Yes – have attended already
    2   Yes - plan to attend in the future
    3   Yes - do not plan to attend
    4   No
    5   Don't know

Ask if Q012=1
Q014 - Q_helpful:

How helpful was the post-assessment training or support you received from your
local authority/trust?

Please think about all the training or support you received in preparation for NAAS.

1   Very helpful
2   Fairly helpful
3   Neither helpful nor unhelpful
4   Not very helpful
5   Not at all helpful
999   don't know

Ask if Q10=1 AND NOT ASKED Q014
Q014B

How helpful was the training or support you received from your local authority/trust?

1 Very helpful
2 Fairly helpful
3 Neither helpful nor unhelpful
4 Not very helpful
5 Not at all helpful

Q015 - Q_improved:

How could the [IF Q12 = 1 "pre-assessment"] training or support from your local authority/trust have been improved? Please also detail if a different type of training would have been useful.

1. Information presented in a clearer way
2. More examples of assessment questions and exercises
3. More time during training sessions / briefings
4. Additional training sessions or briefings
5. Receiving information further in advance
6. No improvements needed
7. Other (specify)
999   don't know *Position fixed *Exclusive

Q015B

IF Q12 = 1 How could the post-assessment training or support from your local authority/trust have been improved?
Please also detail if a different type of training would have been useful.

Open text response.

999 Don't know

Q013 - Q_prep:

What else have you personally done (or plan to do) in preparation for NAAS?

1   Sought out additional training from a private sector organisation
2   Read the Knowledge and Skills Statement/ post-qualifying standards for my role
3   Sought out other information/material about social work knowledge and skills
4   Sought support from my manager/supervisor
6   Sought help from other colleagues
7.   Answering practice / simulation questions
5   Something else (please specify)
999   don't know
998   none of these

IF Q013 = 1

From which private sector organisation(s) have you sought out additional training?

Open text response
Prefer not to say
Don't know

Q016 - Q_agreejob:

Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements

STATEMENTS

a) Overall, I find my job satisfying
b) I am likely to remain in my current role for the next two years
c) (IF Q45=1) Going through the NAAS assessment has made me more likely to remain in my current role for the next two years
d) I plan to remain in child and family social work for the next five years
e) (IF Q45=11) Going through the NAAS assessment has made me more likely to remain in child and family social work for the next five years

ANSWERS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

Q017 - Q_direct:

Do you undertake direct work with children and/ or families?

1   Yes
2   No
999   don't know

Ask only if Q017 - Q_direct,1
Q018 - Q_confident:

How confident do you feel working with children and young people?

1   Very confident
2   Fairly confident
3   Neither confident nor unconfident
4   Fairly unconfident
5   Very unconfident
999   don't know

Q019 - Qposeffects:

Assessment days within your local authority have been offered since late 2018. What do you think will be the positive effects, if any, of NAAS in your local area? Please think about the way NAAS might impact on you, your colleagues, and children and families.

Please think about potential effects both in the immediate future and in the longer term.

PLEASE SELECT UP TO THREE KEY POSITIVE EFFECTS

1. Provides evidence of good work / skills
2. There will be positive impacts for children and/or families
3. It will raise the profile of social work
4. It will increase public trust in social work professionals
5 It will help to ensure standards of practice
6. Accreditation will help career progression
7. It will improve CPD / training and development
8.It will highlight key areas for personal improvement
9. It will refresh knowledge and skills
10. Other (specify)
11. None/No positive impact
999   don't know

Q020 - Q_negeffects:

What do you think will be the negative effects, if any, of NAAS in your local area? Please think about the way NAAS might impact on you, your colleagues, and children and families.

Please think about potential effects both in the immediate future and in the longer term.

PLEASE SELECT UP TO THREE KEY NEGATIVE EFFECTS

1. Increase in pressure / stress for social workers
2. Additional work required
3. Reduction in time available to spend on caseload
3. There will be a negative impact on staff morale/confidence
4. Will increase number of staff leaving the profession and/or put people off entering the profession
5. Funds would be better spent elsewhere (e.g. training, hiring additional staff)
6. Creation of a two-tiered workforce ('accredited' and 'not accredited')
7. Other (specify)
8. None/no negative impacts
999   don't know

Q021 - Qtraining:

How important do you feel having regular formal training is to your career as a social worker?

1   Very important
2   Important
3   Neither important nor unimportant
4   Unimportant
5   Very unimportant
999   don't know

Q022 - Q_agreetraining:

Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS

   a) I have the right tools (e.g. risk assessment tools, planning tools) to do my job effectively
   b) I have the skills I need to work effectively with families
   c) I get the training and development I need to do my job well

ANSWERS

   1. Strongly agree
   2. Agree
   3. Neither agree nor disagree
   4. Disagree
   5. Strongly disagree
   6. Don't know

Q023 - Q_supervision:

How important do you feel having reflective supervision is to your career as a social worker?

1   Very important
2   Important
3   Neither important nor unimportant
4   Unimportant
5   Very unimportant
999   don't know

Q025 - Q_freqsupervision:

How often do you receive reflective supervision from your line manager/supervisor?

1   At least once a week
2   Fortnightly
3   At least once a month
4   Most months
5   Once or twice in the last six months
6   Once or twice in the last year
7   Never
999   don't know

Q024 - Q_agreesupervision:

Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS

a) I have regular training and development discussions with my manager
b) I believe regular training and development discussions are important
c) I am able to regularly reflect on my work with experienced colleagues
d) My leadership team keep me informed about changes that affect my work
e) The information I receive from my leadership team about changes that affect my work is consistent with the information I receive from my manager / supervisor
f) My employer has introduced training to address any areas for development identified by NAAS

ANSWERS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

Ask only if NOT Q025 - Q_freqsupervision,7
Q026 - Q_satisfiedsupervision:

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of the formal supervision you receive?

1   Very satisfied
2   Satisfied
3   Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4   Dissatisfied
5   Very dissatisfied
999   don't know

Q027 - Q_KSSknow:

How much would you say you currently know about the Chief Social Worker's Knowledge and Skills Statement (now recognised as the Post-Qualifying Standards) for your role?

1   Know a lot
2   Know a fair amount
3   Know a little
4   Have heard of it, but know almost nothing
5   Never heard of it
999   don't know

Q028 - Q_KSSdifference:

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Knowledge and Skills Statements/Post-Qualifying Standards will help you to make a positive difference in your day to day role?

1   Strongly agree
2   Agree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Disagree
5   Strongly disagree
999   don't know

Q029 - Q_KSSpart:

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Knowledge and Skills Statements/Post-Qualifying Standards plays a part in your day to day role?

1   Strongly agree
2   Agree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Disagree
5   Strongly disagree
999   don't know

ASK IF Q45B=1 (already had a NAAS assessment)
Q027B

To what extent do you agree or disagree that going through the process of the NAAS assessment has increased the amount you know about the Knowledge and Skills Statements/post-qualifying standards?

1   Strongly agree
2   Agree
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Disagree
5   Strongly disagree
999   don't know

Q030 - Q_agreeNAAS:

Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements

STATEMENTS

   a) NAAS will help to make me feel more confident about working with children and young people
   b) I want to be accredited through NAAS
   c) NAAS will help to improve the training and support social workers receive
   d) NAAS is about more than just the assessment day itself
   e) NAAS will help to improve my ability as a social worker
   f) NAAS will help to improve my career development
   g) I understand how NAAS will achieve the positive impacts it is meant to
   h) NAAS will have a positive impact on staff morale
   i) NAAS is a fair system for all social workers
   j) NAAS will help to improve the reputation of children's social care
   k) NAAS will have a positive impact on children and families in my local area
   l) [IF Q45B=YES] The NAAS results letter provided enough information to let me know what I should focus on developing

ANSWERS

   1. Strongly agree
   2. Agree
   3. Neither agree nor disagree
   4. Disagree
   5. Strongly disagree
   6. Don't know

ASK IF Q45=1 (already been through a NAAS assessment)

We would now like to ask you about your experience of the going through the NAAS assessment process.

Please select how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS

a) I understood why I was completing a NAAS practice endorsement form
b) The assessment day was well organised
c) Going through the NAAS assessment has made me feel more confident in my ability to carry out my role

ANSWERS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

Q_detail (route only to those answering yes at 45)

Please detail what the endorsement process involved. Please include how you indicated to your employer your interest in taking the assessment and the selection process– including any forms or reviews you had to complete.

Free text box (do not force response)
999 Prefer not to say

Q_ADVO

Which of these phrases best describes the way you would speak about NAAS to other people or organization's?

Would you...

1   Speak well of NAAS without being asked
2   Speak well of NAAS if asked
3   Be neutral about NAAS
4   Be critical of NAAS if asked
5   Be critical of NAAS without being asked
6   Don't know/no opinion

Costs section – Route only to the answering yes at Q45b

The following set of questions are designed to understand the time you spent involved in the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) as well as any direct financial costs that you may have incurred due to your participation in NAAS.

QnewA

For each of the following stages of the assessment process, please provide an estimate of the number of hours that you committed to complete the particular stage. This should include both preparation time, the time attending the external assessment (including travel to and from), and any time in post assessment activities.

Please also specify if the time committed to each stage was within or in addition to your standard/contractual number of hours of work or whether the time was included within your usual contractual hours.

Please assume that there are 8 hours in a working day.

   a) Practice Endorsement
   b) Knowledge assessment
   c) Simulated assessment
   d) Written assessment linked to the simulated observation
   e) Post-assessment period

   1. Hours spent in preparation
         a. Whether this was outside standard/contractual hours of work (yes, no or partially)
   2. Hours spent in attendance
         a. Whether this was outside standard/contractual hours of work (yes, no or partially)

QnewB

In addition to the stages mentioned in the question above, did you undertake any other unforeseen activities that were directly associated with your participation on NAAS?
If yes, please specify what each activity was, and the approximate number of hours committed to complete the activity in the table below

LIST ACTIVITY

   1. Number of hours committed
         a. Whether this was outside standard/contractual hours of work (yes, no or partially)

QnewC

Did you incur any direct financial cost due to your participation on NAAS? For example, administrative costs, travel and subsistence costs that were not compensated for.
If yes, please specify the resource/activity and the approximate total cost (in pound sterling) of the resource/activity

Resource/activity

Cost in £

Routing is Q45b=1 AND ASKED OF EARLY ADOPTER LA's IN G2

Earlier in the questionnaire you said that you have already attended a NAAS assessment day.

This set of questions is exploring the impact you think NAAS has had on you and the profession.

To what extent to which you think NAAS has improved:

Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is a lot, and 1 is not at all

STATEMENTS

a) Confidence in your own practice
b) The quality of your practice
c) The quality of formal training or CPD in your local area

ANSWERS

1. Not at all
2.
3.
4.
5. A lot
6. Don't know

And again, thinking about your experiences going through NAAS, to what extent do you think that NAAS will:

Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is a lot, and 1 is not at all

STATEMENTS

a) Improve the reputation of social work
b) Make staff more likely to stay in their current role
c) Make staff more likely to stay in the profession
d) Improve the quality of the practice in the sector overall
e) Improve outcomes for children and families

ANSWERS

1. Not at all
2.
3.
4.
5. A lot
6. Don't know

Q031 - Intro_analysis:

The following questions will be used to ensure that we have interviewed a representative sample of the children and families social care staff in your local area and to evaluation whether NAAS is a fair system for all social workers. None of the answers to this survey will be used to identify any individual.

Q036 - Q_qual:

What qualifications in social work do you have?

1   CQSSW
2   BA
3   DipSW
4   MA
996   other, namely... *Open
998   none of the above
999   don't know

Ask only if Q036 - Q_qual,3,4
Q037 - Q_qualprog:

Did you qualify through any of the following routes?

1   Frontline
2   Step Up
3   Think Ahead
998   none of the above
997   Prefer not to say
999   don't know

Q038 - Q_qualyear:

Please indicate the year you received this qualification

(drop down list of years)
(Texfill with answers selected at Q36)

Q039 - Q_role:

What is your current role?

1   Social Worker
2   Team Manager
3   Social Work Assistant
4   Senior Social Worker
5   Advanced Practitioner
6   Service Manager
996   other, namely... *Open *Position fixed
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q040 - Q_experience:

How long have you been:

STATEMENTS

a) In your current role
b) Working for your current local authority
c) Practicing professionally

ANSWERS

1. Less than two years
2. Two to three years
3. Four to five years
4. Six to ten years
5. More than ten years
6. don't know
7. Prefer not to say

Ask only if Q040 - Q_experience ROW=1 & COL=1,2

Q041 - Q_ASYE:

Are you currently participating in, or have you recently been through, the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE)?

1   Yes, currently participating in ASYE
2   Yes, have recently been through ASYE
3   No
999   don't know *Position fixed
998   Prefer not to say

Q042 - Q_contract:

What type of contract are you on?

1   Agency
2   Temporary / Fixed term
3   Permanent
4   Independent
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q043 - Q_fulltime:

Are you employed full-time or part-time?

1   Full-time (30 hours or more per week)
2   Part-time (Less than 30 hours per week)
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q46

If we have any further questions relating to this particular survey, would you be willing to be re-contacted by Kantar Public within the next 12 months?

If yes

Please provide

Name
Email

Kantar Public will only use this information to contact you regarding the NAAS evaluation and will not share your details with any third parties. This information will not be used to identify individuals in any reporting. To view our privacy policy please click here

Q100 – Demographics intro

The remaining questions are optional. These will be used by the Department for Education to review the impact of NAAS on the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 for public sector workers. None of the answers to this survey will be used to identify any individual.

Q101 - Q_ethnicity:

What is your ethnic group?

Choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background

1   White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
2   White: Irish
3   White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4   White: Other, please describe
5   Mixed: White and Black Caribbean
6   Mixed: White and Black African
7   Mixed: White and Asian
8   Mixed: Other, please specify
9   Asian/Asian British: Indian
10   Asian/Asian British: Pakistani
11   Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi
12   Asian/Asian British: Chinese
13   Asian/Asian British: Other, please specify
14   Black/Black British: Black African
15   Black/Black British: Black Caribbean
16   Black/Black British: Other, please specify
17   Other Ethnic Group: Arab
18   Other Ethnic Group: Other, please specify
        If you have selected 'other' (please specify):
998   Prefer not to say

Q102 - Q_health:

Do you have any physical or mental health condition(s) or illnesses lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more?

1   Yes
2   No
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Ask only if Q034 - Q_health,1
Q103 - Q_healthability:

Do any of your condition(s) or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

1   Yes, a lot
2   Yes, a little
3   No, not at all
999   don't know
998   Prefer not to say

Q104

Are you currently pregnant or on maternity leave?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Prefer not to say

Q105

How old are you?

1. 18-24 years
2. 25-34 years
3. 35-44 years
4. 45-54 years
5. 55-64 years
6. 65 and over
7. Prefer not to say

Q105

How would you describe your gender

1. Male
2. Female
3. In another way ….
4. Prefer not to say

Q106

Do you identify as the gender you were assigned at birth?

1. Yes I do
2. No I don't
3. I am not sure
4. Don't know
5. Prefer not to say

Q017

Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

1. Heterosexual / Straight
2. Gay / Lesbian
3. Bisexual
4. Other, namely…
5. Don't know
6. Prefer not to say

Q108

Are you ...

1. Single, that is, never married and never registered in a same-sex civil partnership
2. Married
3. Separated, but still legally married
4. Divorced
5. Widowed
6. In a registered civil partnership
7. Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership
8. Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
9. Surviving partner from a civil partnership
10. Don't know
11. Prefer not to say

Q109

And do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion?

1. No religion
2. Christian
3. Hindu
4. Jewish
5. Islam/Muslim
6. Sikh
7. Buddhist
8. Other, namely…(open)
9. Don't know
10. Prefer not to say

Q047 - Outro_thankyou:

Thank you for taking part in the staff survey as part of the evaluation of NAAS. Your feedback is important in helping to shape and improve the process of rolling out NAAS nationwide and improving the service the Council / Trust delivers to children, young people and families in your area.

If you would like to speak to someone from the evaluation team at Kantar Public, then you can contact us at: NAASevaluation@kantarpublic.com

Appendix 4 – Group 2 baseline delivery model questionnaire

Research on the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS)

Local Authority/Trust NAAS Implementation Model Questionnaire

As part of the research on NAAS, we are keen to understand the different approaches that Local Authorities/Trusts are taking to implementation. A key aim of the research is to understand what works best in different contexts, so we would like to explore the different choices authorities have made to elements of implementation.

We have developed this short self-completion questionnaire to help with this. It should take about 10 minutes to complete. This complements the ongoing discussions we are having with each authority, our staff survey and our qualitative interviews with staff, managers and senior leaders.

We have kept the survey short as we know you will have a lot to do as part of NAAS, and beyond. Your participation is greatly appreciated, and we reiterate our assurances that the information you provide to us is used confidentially and feeds into understanding the implementation and impact of NAAS.

Ideally, we would like to receive responses by the end of April. However, we are happy to receive responses up to the 13th May. You can complete the questionnaire in the spaces below, or let Deborah Roback (Deborah.roback@kantarpublic.com) know if you would like to provide the information through a telephone conversation.

The questionnaire focusses on understanding your approach to:

- communicating about NAAS to staff,
- briefing and training them in preparation for the assessment day,
- practice endorsement,
- scheduling and managing social worker attendance at assessment days,
- post-assessment support and follow up,
- embedding the KSS and;
- integrating NAAS into your existing training and professional development systems.

Approaches to implementation may develop over time. We are therefore keen to understand if you have processes and approaches that you expect to change, and what these changes might be, it would be additionally interesting to know how you will review and amend your approaches.

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, or the research in general, then do please speak to Deborah Roback (Deborah.roback@kantarpublic.com) or email naasevaluation@kantarpublic.com .

Thank you

Ben Collins, Director, NAAS Research, Kantar Public

Questionnaire

Please complete each of the following questions in the space provided. We have kept these questions open to allow the intricacies of the approach being taken in each authority, and the differences, to be captured.

Please provide as much detail as you can to help us understand your approach to NAAS. If there are accompanying documents (for example those used during the Practice Endorsement process, or training materials) please provide copies – these can be templates and do not need to include any information about individuals.

Your details:

Job title	*[type response here]*
Local Authority/Trust	*[type response here]*

1. Selecting child and family practitioners and practice supervisors for assessment
How did you select child and family practitioners and practice supervisors for assessment?   **What were your selection criteria and processes?**
[type response here]

2. Practice endorsement
What process are you using to complete the practice endorsement for your child and family practitioners and practice supervisors? Does this use existing assessment tools, or have you created something new specifically for NAAS? Please describe the process, materials, and assessment criteria/standards you are using as part of practice endorsement.
[type response here]

3. Training and professional development

What training processes are you using as part of NAAS? Are these existing processes or new ones developed specifically for NAAS? Do they involve external providers? Please describe the nature and focus of any training, and how this integrates with your existing performance review and professional development systems.

[type response here]

4. Preparing child and family practitioners and practice supervisors for the assessment day

Are you doing anything else to help your child and family practitioners and practice supervisors prepare for the assessment day?

[type response here]

5. Supporting child and family practitioners and practice supervisors on the assessment day

Have you put anything in place to support child and family practitioners and practice supervisors specifically on the assessment day?

[type response here]

6. Supporting child and family practitioners and practice supervisors after the assessment day

What approach will you follow for the post-assessment period with assessed child and family practitioners and practice supervisors? Please provide details of how you will work with child and family practitioners and practice supervisors to integrate their assessment outcome into their longer-term professional development plan. Please also provide details of how you intend to work with child and family practitioners and practice supervisors who have received a 'not met' assessment outcome.

[type response here]

7. Regional networks & other collaborations
Do you have processes (or plans) with other authorities/trusts in your region, or elsewhere, to share your approaches to NAAS? If so, what information or support will you be sharing, and how will you be working with your colleagues in other authorities/trusts?
[type response here]

8. Whether likely to change approach
Do you expect to change any of the processes and approaches that you have taken towards the implementation of NAAS in your local authority/trust, and if so, what will these changes be?
[type response here]

9. Further thoughts or comments
If you have any further thoughts or comments on your implementation approach, please provide them here.
[type response here]

Please email your completed questionnaire Deborah Roback (Deborah.roback@kantarpublic.com). If you would like to talk through your responses to any of the questions above, please email Deborah or naasevaluation@kantarpublic.com

Appendix 5 – Group 2 follow up delivery model questionnaire

Research on the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS)

Local Authority/Trust NAAS Implementation Model – Follow Up

A key aim of the research on NAAS is to understand what works best in different contexts, and the different approaches that authorities have taken to elements of implementation. As part of this we are keen to understand whether the approaches of the Local Authorities/Trusts have changed over time.

Earlier this year we asked you to complete a questionnaire to understand your local authority's approach, and we have attached a copy of your responses. We are aware that, as further cohorts are assessed, and NAAS becomes embedded in your local authority, **your processes may have adapted**. Therefore, we ask that you complete this short follow-up questionnaire to **help us understand what processes have changed and why**. This complements our ongoing discussions with each authority, our staff survey and qualitative interviews with staff, managers and senior leaders.

The questionnaire should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. We have kept the survey short as we know you still have a lot to do as part of NAAS, and beyond. You can complete the questionnaire in the spaces below or if you would prefer to provide the information through a telephone conversation, please contact your area coordinator.

Your participation is greatly appreciated, and we reiterate our assurances that the information you provide to us is used confidentially and feeds into understanding the implementation and impact of NAAS.

Ideally, we would like to receive responses by the end of December.

The questionnaire focusses on understanding **what has changed and why** in terms of your approach to:

- communicating about NAAS to staff,
- briefing and training staff in preparation for the assessment day,
- practice endorsement,
- scheduling and managing social worker attendance at assessment days,
- post-assessment support and follow up,
- embedding the KSS and;

- integrating NAAS into your existing training and professional development systems.

Additionally, it would be interesting to know how you reviewed and made the decision to adjust your approaches.

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, or the research in general, then please speak to your area coordinator or email NAASevaluation@kantarpublic.com

Thank you

Ben Collins, Director, NAAS Research, Kantar Public

Questionnaire

Please complete each of the following questions in the space provided. We have kept these questions open to fully capture the intricacies and differences in each local authority's approach.

Please provide as much detail as you can to help us understand **how you have modified your approach to NAAS**, particularly what has changed since you completed the first questionnaire earlier this year, **and why these changes were made**. If there are accompanying documents (for example those used during the Practice Endorsement process, or training materials) please provide copies – these can be templates and do not need to include any information about individuals.

Your details:

Job title	*[type response here]*
Local Authority/Trust	*[type response here]*

1. Selecting child and family practitioners and practice supervisors for assessment
Has your selection criteria and process for selecting staff for the assessment changed since the first cohort of staff went through NAAS?   **If yes, please detail how and why.**   **If no, please detail how the process was reviewed, and which elements worked well**
[type response here]

2. Practice endorsement
You previously told us about the process you used to complete the practice endorsement. Has this process changed in any way over the last six months? If so, how and why?
[type response here]

3. Training and professional development
Previously you told us about the training and development you were using as part of NAAS. Over the last six months, have you developed/purchased any new training and development packages? Do these new packages involve external providers?
[type response here]

4. Preparing child and family practitioners and practice supervisors for the assessment day
Over the last six months, have there been any other changes in how you help your child and family practitioners and practice supervisors prepare for the assessment day?If so, please detail the nature of the changes and why they were made.
[type response here]

5. Supporting child and family practitioners and practice supervisors on the assessment day
You previously told us about support in place for child and family practitioners and practice supervisors specifically on the assessment day. Has this support changed over the last six months?If so, please detail the nature of the changes and why they were made.
[type response here]

6. Supporting child and family practitioners and practice supervisors after the assessment day
You previously told us your approach for the post-assessment period with assessed child and family practitioners and practice supervisors, including the approach for those who received a 'not met' assessment outcome. Have any of these processes changed? If so, please detail the nature of the changes and why they were made.
[type response here]

7. Regional networks & other collaborations
You previously told us about your collaborations with other authorities/trusts to share your approaches to NAAS? Has any more information or support been shared to date or have there been collaborations with new authorities/trusts? If so, please detail.
[type response here]

8. Further thoughts or comments
If you have any further thoughts or comments on your implementation approach, in particular how they have changed over time, please provide them here.
[type response here]

Please email your completed questionnaire to NAASevaluation@kantarpublic.com. If you would like to talk through your responses to any of the questions above, please email NAAS evaluation@kantarpublic.com

Appendix 6 – London Economics questionnaire

National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) Questionnaire

Understanding the costs incurred by Local Authorities/Trusts to deliver NAAS

Notes

This questionnaire is designed to understand the various costs associated with the implementation and delivery of the **National Assessment and Accreditation System** (NAAS) incurred by your Local Authority/Trust. The schematic below shows the various interlinking components of the cost analysis that are being undertaken and where this survey fits in the wider framework.
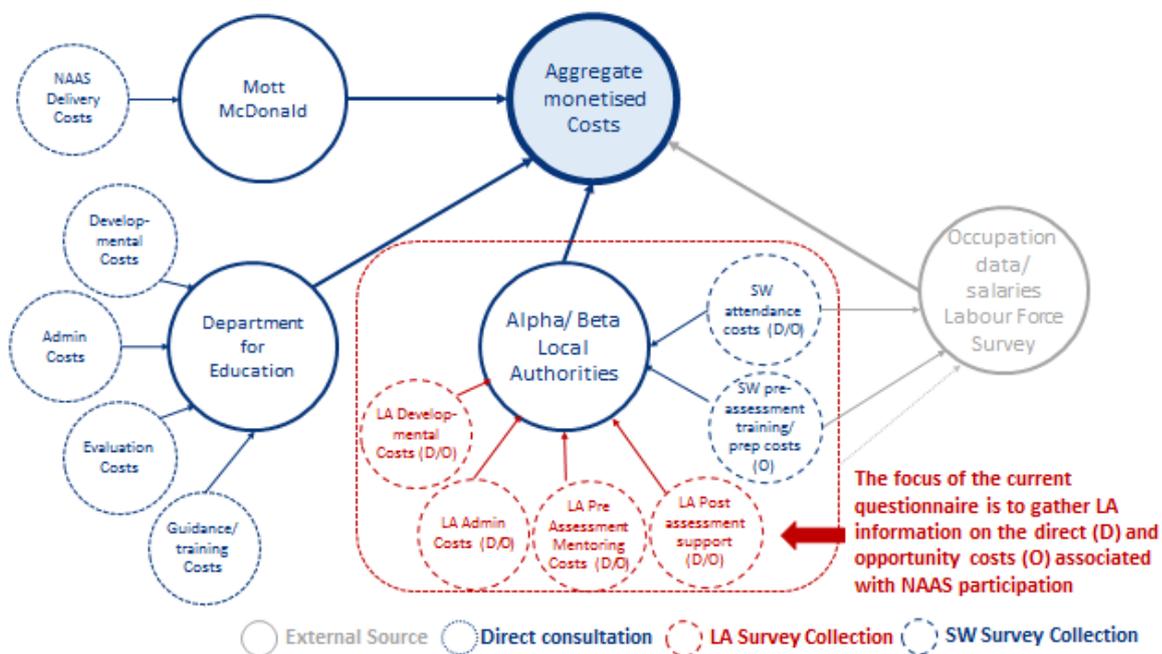
In order to complete this survey, you may require data from your existing database(s) and your own (or colleagues') knowledge about the **time** or **resource** spent (either in hours/days or full-time equivalent workload) on the set-up and delivery of the various stages of the assessment process, as well as the **direct financial costs** incurred to deliver NAAS.

This questionnaire splits the costs into three phases:

- **Phase 1**: Setting up the internal processes and requirements needed to deliver NAAS
- **Phase 2**: Participation and delivery of NAAS
- **Phase 3**: Post-assessment period

A1.1   Setup of NAAS

Q1.1. Setup of NAAS – Direct financial cost

In relation to **preparing** for NAAS, first, please think about the **direct financial costs** incurred by your Local Authority/Trust to deliver NAAS.

This relates to tasks, such as programme development, training/CPD, stakeholder liaison and communications, which were required to setup NAAS within your Local Authority/Trust.

Please provide a cost (in pound sterling) alongside each of the following relevant categories – and any others you can think of.

We appreciate that it may be difficult to provide an exact cost, so approximate costs are fine.

Cost category	Total cost (£) from [Insert date]
Staff recruitment costs (directly associated with the delivery of NAAS)	£
Training sessions/equipment/material	£
IT and Office equipment/material	£
Legal	£
Administration	£
Communication and liaison	£
Other 1 (please specify)	£
Other 2 (please specify)	£
Other 3 (please specify)	£

Q1.2: Setup of NAAS – Staff time

What types of staff were involved in **organising the preparation** for delivering NAAS and how long did they spend?

This relates to tasks, such as programme development, training/CPD, stakeholder liaison and communications, which were required to setup NAAS within your Local Authority/Trust.

*Please report time spent in **either:***

- *Total number of days (1 day = 8 hours) to the nearest half-day (0.5); or*
- *Full time equivalent (FTE) where 1 FTE is equal to one individual working full-time over the specified preparation period. E.g. If the preparation period was 2 months and one staff member worked on it for a month, the reported FTE will be 0.5.*

Note: If two (or more) staff members are working in the same role/occupation, please include them in separate lines in the table below (see example below).

Please feel free to add as many additional rows as necessary.

Type of staff involved [Please specify the individual's role/occupation – and if possible – their grade]	Total number of days/hours from [Insert date]	Full-time equivalent from [Insert date]
e.g. Administrative support	e.g. 5 days	e.g. 0.25 FTE
e.g. Administrative support	e.g. 2 days	e.g. 1 FTE

A1.2   Delivery of NAAS

Q2.1: Stage 1: Practice endorsement

Stage 1 of the NAAS process, the **practice endorsement**, is the responsibility of the Local Authority/Trust, as they put forward child and family practitioners and Practice Supervisors for the external assessment.

Please specify which staff members were involved in this stage and how long they spent to identify and support the appropriate individuals for the external assessment.

This information should consider the **costs incurred by the Local Authority/Trust** engaging in practice endorsement.

We will also be asking child and family practitioners and Practice Supervisors directly about the time they spent in preparation for this stage during Kantar Public's staff survey. This time does not need to be included in the tables below.

*Please report time spent in **either:***

- *Total number of days (1 day = 8 hours) to the nearest half-day (0.5); or*
- *Full time equivalent (FTE) where 1 FTE is equal to one individual working full-time over the specified period of stage 1. E.g. If stage 1 was completed over 1 month and one staff member worked on it for 2 weeks, the reported FTE will be 0.5.*

Note: If two (or more) staff members are working in the same role/occupation, please include them in separate lines in the table below.

Please feel free to add as many additional rows as necessary.

Type of staff involved [Please specify the individual's role/occupation – and if possible – their grade]	Total number of days/hours from [Insert date]	Full-time equivalent from [Insert date]
e.g. Child and family practitioner	e.g. 2 days	e.g. 0.5 FTE
e.g. Child and family practice supervisor		
e.g. Administrative support		

Please specify any **direct financial costs** incurred at this stage which were not accounted for in the preparation of NAAS.

Direct financial costs related to Stage 1 of NAAS	Total cost (£) from [Insert date]
	£
	£
	£

Q2.2: Stages 2-4: External assessment

Stages 2 to 4 of the assessment (**the external assessment**) are delivered by Mott MacDonald and include an assessment of knowledge, an observed simulated practice assessment (which includes a reflective assessment and written assessment).

Please specify which staff members were involved in supporting, administering and organising stages 2-4 of NAAS and how long they spent on these stages (in total).

For example, administrative staff may be required to make bookings and organise the logistics for child and family practitioners and Practice Supervisors undertaking the external assessment.
Please report time spent in either:

- *Total number of days/hours (1 day = 8 hours) to the nearest half-day (0.5); or*
- *Full time equivalent (FTE) where 1 FTE is equal to one individual working full-time over the specified period of stage 1. E.g. If the external assessment period is completed over 3 days (from organisation to delivery) and one staff member worked on it for 1 day, the reported FTE will be 0.33.*

Note: If two (or more) staff members are working in the same role/occupation, please include them in separate lines in the table below.

Please feel free to add as many additional rows as necessary

Type of staff involved [Please specify the individual's role/occupation – and if possible – their grade]	Total number of days/hours from [Insert date]	Full-time equivalent from [Insert date]
e.g. Child and family practitioner	e.g. 2 days or 16 hours	e.g. 0.5 FTE
e.g. Child and family practice supervisor		
e.g. Administrative support		

Type of staff involved [Please specify the individual's role/occupation – and if possible – their grade]	Total number of days/hours from [Insert date]	Full-time equivalent from [Insert date]

Please specify any resource costs incurred by your Local Authority/Trust in relation to the external assessment.

For example, travel and subsistence costs for social workers may be paid by the Local Authority/Trust.

Resource costs	Cost (£)	Unit
e.g. Travel and subsistence	£	e.g. per social worker or in aggregate

A1.3   Post-delivery of NAAS

Please specify which (if any) staff members were involved in tasks relating to the post-assessment period and how long they spent on these tasks (in aggregate).
This relates to tasks, such as feedback sessions, performance management, CPD/training sessions, communications, stakeholder management or any HR related tasks.
Please report time spent in either:

- *Total number of days (1 day = 8 hours) to the nearest half-day (0.5); or*
- *Full time equivalent (FTE) where 1 FTE is equal to one individual working full-time over the specified period of stage 1. E.g. If the post assessment period was for 2 weeks and one staff member worked on it for 5 days, the reported FTE will be 0.5.*

Note: If two (or more) staff members are working in the same role/occupation, please include them in separate lines in the table below.

Please feel free to add as many additional rows as necessary.

Type of staff involved [Please specify the individual's role/occupation – and if possible – their grade]	Total number of days from [Insert date]	Full-time equivalent from [Insert date]
e.g. Child and family practitioner	e.g. 2 days	e.g. 0.5 FTE
e.g. Child and family practice supervisor		
e.g. Administrative support		
Other 1 (please specify)		
Other 2 (please specify)		
Other 3 (please specify)		

A1.4 Other costs associated with NAAS

Please specify any other costs incurred by your Local Authority/Trust in relation to the preparation and/or delivery of NAAS which are not accounted for in any of the above questions.

Other costs	Cost (£)	Unit
	£	e.g. per social worker or in aggregate
	£	
	£	
	£	

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

For any enquiries regarding this publication, contact us at: dfe.NAAS@education.gov.uk or www.education.gov.uk/contactus

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