



A bright future over the rainbow
Integrated workforce national conference 2009
Summary report

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1. Introduction and content

1.1 Introduction

At the end of 2009, the Children's Workforce Development Council delivered three integrated working conferences in Birmingham, Sheffield and London. Structured around an overarching vision for an integrated children and young people's workforce - the One Children's Workforce Framework (OCWF), the conferences were the 3rd annual conferences focussed on integrated working.

These conferences were intended to help understand the vision of the One Children's Workforce Framework and how everyone the children and young people's workforce can play an active part in this.

The conferences were a platform for delegates to network with other colleagues, develop and share ideas, experiences, knowledge and best practice.

1.2 Context

The one children's workforce framework has been developed with local areas and national partners. It is now being used by strategic integrated workforce leads in all 152 Children's Trusts to help embed an integrated workforce.

The framework is in the shape of a rainbow, each colour on the rainbow represents a different theme. They are all about things we might do, or ways we could work that would improve children and young people's lives. Considered together, these core elements give a clear description of the characteristics of a fully integrated workforce.

- A shared identity, purpose and vision
- Common values and language
- Behaviours focused on positive outcomes
- Integrated working practices
- A high quality, appropriately trained workforce
- Complementary roles focused around children and young people
- Capacity to deliver and keep children safe
- A focus on Every Child Matters outcomes



The conferences presented delegates with the opportunity to attend interactive workshops focusing on the themes of the rainbow arcs to:

- Open up a dialogue on how to address the challenges of each theme.
- Discuss practical ways of how to put themes into action in their own organisation or Children's Trusts.

1.3 Audience

A total of 285 managers and practitioners from all sectors across the children and young people's workforce attended the three events.

2. On the day

2.1 Format

Following an opening address from either Jane Haywood, Chief Executive Officer or Deirdre Quill, Director of Integrated Workforce, delegates were able to attend two interactive workshop. Based on the themes of the framework rainbow arcs these workshops providing an insight on how to implement practical ideas for progression within teams, organisations and across Children's Trusts.

During lunch delegates explored materials in the market place and posted their own challenges, solutions and questions on a rainbow.

In the afternoon, the programme included real life case studies and a panel discussion including guest speakers from within the workforce followed by a plenary.

2.2 Workshops

Each conference presented a series of interactive workshops based on the seven themes of the OCWF rainbow arcs and an eighth theme - information sharing.

Red - Shared identity, purpose and vision

A shared identity for a diverse workforce

Mobilising practitioners from diverse backgrounds and professions behind one identity can be a real challenge. This workshop looked at the ingredients for success when developing a shared identity. Learning from the Make Poverty History campaign and the Apollo 13 mission, this session provided practical ideas to take back to help develop a shared identity amongst practitioners within teams and between your organisations.

Orange - Common values and language

Communicating effectively with a common language

How can you get the message across to the whole of your local workforce? How do you know if you are communicating effectively when many people seem to speak a different language? This workshop looked at how people successfully communicate in the most challenging of situations, such as the rescue teams in the China earthquake crisis.

Yellow - Behaviours focused on positive outcomes

Common approaches to induction

A common induction programme can help practitioners across agencies focus on positive outcomes for children and young people. This workshop allowed delegates to explore how local areas can embed common approaches to induction. This workshop was suitable for those who are in the early stages of developing common induction in their Children's Trust.

Green - Integrated working practices

Common Assessment Framework and lead professional – a supported journey for practitioners

This workshop gave delegates a chance view and discuss several new integrated tools including functional maps outlining the skills required to be a lead professional and to complete common assessments, and new integrated working training packages. Discussion groups focused on how to ensure that practitioners have the right skills and support through integrated training and supervision.

Blue - High quality, appropriately trained workforce

Making it real: translating the common core into standards and qualifications

In this workshop delegates got an overview of some of the themes emerging from the Common Core consultation and a sneak preview of the Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF). They were able to find out how these tools can benefit their workforce and discuss how they would like to see them evolve in the future.

Indigo -Complementary roles

Leadership in an integrated workforce

A children and young people's workforce, respected by its peers, will have excellent, well supported leaders across the system. This workshop provided an information update on how work is progressing to provide support and development to leaders and managers of children's services across the whole management chain.

Purple - Capacity to deliver and keep children safe

A creative approach to capacity challenges

In the current economic climate how can you use your existing capacity to improve lives of children and young people? This workshop looked at creative ways of looking at the challenges of capacity. Delegates went away with ideas that could be implemented locally within their organisation, service or Children's Trust to address these challenges.

Cross-cutting theme

Information sharing

What is required to embed good practice in information sharing, other than guidance and training? This workshop included a discussion on what organisations have done to make effective information sharing a part of the every day working practices with a focus on the contributions of senior and middle managers.

You can view key note speeches as well as the workshop presentations and materials on our website at www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/implementing-integrated-working/annual-conference

3. Findings

3.1 Key themes

Some important messages emerged from all the workshops – we'll be feeding this information to our project managers to shape their future plans. These included:

- Good communication is essential.
- The common core of skills and knowledge needs to be embedded further.
- Quality supervision is vital to support practitioners.
- Continued professional development for managers at all levels is needed in every Children's Trust.
- Integrated working is vital for children to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

3.2. Workshop outcomes

The purpose of these sessions was to provide insight into how the workforce can address the challenges each arc theme presents and discuss practical ideas for progression across teams, organisations and Children's Trusts. Top tips from delegates are listed below:

Red 'top tips'- Shared identity, purpose and vision

- Have a common goal focused on outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- Communicate clearly.
- Understand each others roles.
- Professional trust and respect are vital. Its about sharing ideas and resources not competing for them.
- A common vision needs to be promoted more widely than your home agency or Children's Trust.
- Trust your colleague to do their job well.
- Professionals need to relinquish their 'own language' and use a common one.
- Be creative.

Orange 'top tips'- Common values and language

- Collaborate don't isolate – we can do it between us!
- Focus on communication as a means of achieving goals.
- Develop agreed communications about one children's workforce.
- Evaluate the impact of communication.
- Get children and young people to communicate their views.
- Amplify basic key messages across the workforce.
- Avoid jargon.
- Be aware of cultural differences.

Yellow 'top tips' - Behaviours focused on positive outcomes

- Ensure that leaders and managers develop a culture that will facilitate common induction.
- Use joint commissioning to help facilitate a common induction within a Children's Trust.
- Promote the Children's Workforce Network's (CWN) vision and principles for induction more widely.
- Engage with the third sector too.
- The development of an online induction e-workbook seen by delegates as fantastic news.

Green 'top tips' - Integrated working practices

- Manager support and advocacy is essential to embed integrated working.
- Supervision, including peer support, reflection, group supervision, solution focused supervision and one to one supervision, is vital in supporting practitioners in integrated working.
- Common language is critical to promote shared understanding, information sharing, and joint working.
- Common induction is important as an introduction into the children's workforce.
- Common standards and a common quality assurance framework for the common assessment framework (CAF) would be extremely helpful.
- Communicate that early intervention is an essential part of everyone's job.
- Training works best, and is most beneficial when it is multi agency.

There was also lots of debate about how Think Family fits with other integrated working practices such as CAF and the lead professional.

Blue - High quality, appropriately trained workforce

In this workshop the delegates gave lots of suggestions for CWDC to take forward when implementing the refreshed common core.

- A need to make the common core statutory to enhance its status.
- The common core needs to be linked closely with the One Children's Workforce Framework.
- The common core needs to be levelled at a particular standard.
- A need for better joint messages coming from government on the common core.
- There needs to be an awareness raising exercise on the common core as not everyone is aware of it.
- The common core should be included in inspections.

Indigo - Complementary roles

In this workshop delegates fed back to CWDC on leadership and management programmes.

- The time commitment away from the day job would be challenging.
- Flexibility in providers and modules of learning would be needed.
- There needs to be equal access for all sectors of the children's workforce. If the Children's Trust is the gatekeeper for the programme then they need to plan and support the third sectors engagement.
- It is vital to build this activity into local workforce strategy and action plans. Some local areas are struggling to assert the Children's Trust's identity over their corporate identity.
- It is important to find the right level for the learning opportunity. Good cross level learning is vital (senior and operational leadership) but should also be balanced with direct relevance for the role.
- We should encourage Children's Trusts to think 0-19 rather than age specific i.e. early years or youth.

Purple 'top tips' - Capacity to deliver and keep children safe

- Invest in people and see them as individuals.
- Work with third sector colleagues to keep the skills and knowledge they develop in the Children's Trust.
- Encourage more working together at careers events. Young people need to see the range of jobs in the workforce and value the careers in the various sectors.
- Learn from what works - some Children's Trusts have well established grow your own programmes with high retention rates.
- Work together to know what you need before you start. The financial challenge up ahead means we need to be smart when we recruit so understanding what the whole workforce needs is essential.
- Develop from within. We have pools of very talented and experienced people who could do so much more with the right investment in them.

Information sharing 'top tips'

- Improving practice in information sharing is culture change.
- Training for managers is essential to support practitioners in supervision.
- A standardised local practice is vital in moving toward effective information sharing.
- Confidence is key to information sharing.
- Delegates also said that an implementation toolkit would be a useful resource.

4. Next steps

4.1 What next for CWDC?

These conferences will help us to shape the future of our work and to take the necessary steps to support you in your work with children and young people and to provide the tools, guidance and information to help you. All of this will help in our vision for England to have a children and young people's workforce that is respected by peers and valued for the positive different it makes to the lives of children, young people, their families and carers.

- Common language was a very widely debated topic as our conferences and we have provided a 'common language glossary' available from our website at www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/what-is-integrated-working
- Share Street is our new online community what you can connect with everybody who works with children, young people. You can view videos in the cinema, browse case studies, keep up-to-date with news, join a discussion in the café, order and share resources and be inspired. Visit our website from March 2010 to find out more www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/sharestreet

4.2 What next for all delegates?

We hope that you find this report a useful resource to enable you to share the workshop sessions with colleagues and explore ideas which can be put into practice with the help of the practical tools that are available.

All conference presentations and exercises including card sort exercises and workshop posters are available on our website at www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/implementing-integrated-working/annual-conference. These can be used locally by you, your teams and across your organisations to assist you in focusing on some of the common challenges that you face and to think about future solutions.

In early February we will be launching our integrated working campaign 'all together, a better way of working'. The campaign will highlight the benefits of integrated working and the tools which will help us all to work better together for children and young people. Part of the campaign is to work with ambassadors and partner organisations to help us to extend our reach by using their communications channels to engage with the practitioners at a grass roots level, particularly the third sector. Sign up for the campaign at www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/alltogetherbetter and encourage your colleagues and those you work with to sign up too.

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

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

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

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