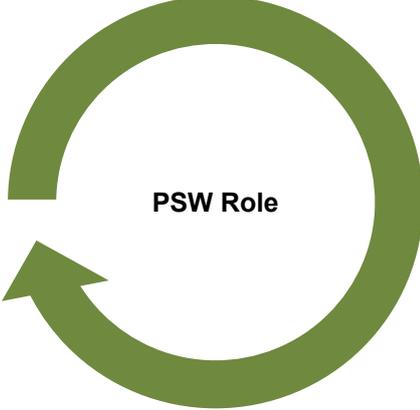


Subject	Principal Child and Family Social Worker Annual Report 2017/18
Report by	Sam Clayton
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<p>1.</p>	<p>Executive Summary</p>
	<p>Background</p> <p>The role of Principal Child and Family Social Worker was first set out in the Munro Review of Child Protection in 2011. Recommendation 14 stated that, “<i>Local authorities should designate a Principal Child and Family Social Worker, who is a senior manager with lead responsibility for practice in the local authority and who is still actively involved in frontline practice and who can report the views and experiences of the front line to all levels of management</i>”.</p> <p>Accountability</p> <p>The post currently reports to Janice Spencer, Assistant Director for Children's Services with the lead for Safeguarding. The designation of the role within Lincolnshire means that the responsibility and accountability for the quality of social work practice is organisationally defined and visibly supported.</p> <p>A degree of independence is required of the role in order to provide challenge within the organisation. Effectiveness is then supported by having a direct line of access to Senior Managers.</p> <p>Key Areas of Focus</p> <p>Seven key areas have been identified as central to the role of the Principal Child and Family Social Worker. These are in brief below, and are expanded on throughout the report.</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention, Recruitment and Succession Planning • Learning and Development • Supervision • Research Co-ordination • Principal Social Worker role • Partners in Practice • Ofsted </div> </div>

2.	<p>Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning</p> <p>Over the last year there has been extensive work in relation to recruitment, retention and succession planning. This work has been undertaken with Clare Threapleton, Human Resources Consultant and includes:</p> <p>Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extensive redesign of application process ▪ Further development on the 'always on' recruitment ▪ Talent pooling (benchmarking candidates) ▪ Work on the new agency contract ▪ Trialling permanent recruitment via the agency contract ▪ Developing work experience with a view to applicants then applying for roles (children's homes in particular) ▪ Refreshed Recruitment and Retention Strategy for social work ▪ Attendance at careers fairs and events to promote working in Lincolnshire <p>Retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with Managers in relation to how they can support and retain their staff ▪ Completion of exit interviews to gather intelligence ▪ Work on retention payment ▪ Extensive work developing brand with 33 ▪ Development of employee proposition in Lincolnshire ▪ Career Progression Panel <p>Succession Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual workshops with Managers from all Children's Services Teams to plan for staff development and retirement, enabling the development of specific courses to support staff in reaching the next level in their career (Bridging the Gap) ▪ Development of career opportunities across the range of teams ▪ Since October work has also started with Health colleagues to integrate them into the overall Children's workforce <p>The Recruitment, Retention and Succession strategy is at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Impact/Practice Improvement</p> <p>Overall the last year has seen the most successful recruitment campaign to date for both the attraction of external experienced staff and internal promotions resulting in vacant posts below 20 for the first time in 4 years. For 2017 – 2018 21 members of staff have progressed from Level One to Level Two Social Worker through the Career Progression Panel. This has improved the ability of the teams to respond to the demand ensuring that children, young people and families receive a statutory service that's of good quality. Overall this has reduced our agency spending (a month on month</p>
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	reduction) and increased our workforce stability. This offers more consistency in terms of social work practice.
3.	Learning and Development
	<p>As a learning organisation that is committed to continuous improvement we understand that it is imperative that learning and development issues and opportunities are captured, addressed, implemented and monitored. It is important that this learning is shared with the right people and used in a meaningful way to drive improvements in practice leading to improved outcomes for children, young people and families. Learning and development is a key aspect of the role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ South Yorkshire Teaching Partnership (SYTP) – Extensive work with the partnership to develop the curriculum and post qualifying offer for social workers and other children's staff including apprentices ▪ Step Up to Social Work – input into course regional selection and assessment ▪ ASYE – Annual review of programme, development of handbook, delivering on course, moderation and assessment, coordination with Lisa Taylor, Practice Supervisor Learning and Development, of PQ consolidation module ▪ PQ Offer – development of 3 specific modules, commissioning and associated curriculum development ▪ Targeting skills gaps identified by frontline staff ▪ Reviewing L&D Programme – examining skills gaps for including in the workforce development strategy for children's services ▪ Annual Professional Judgement Staff Conference – coordination and management of conference. ▪ Social Work Development board with Adult Service colleagues to share good practice and resources. ▪ Extensive NAAS refresher programme ▪ First Line – Primary contact for coordination, selection and recruitment for the course. ▪ Delivery on several university courses and LCC Managing in the Middle. ▪ Contract management of Social Pedagogy within the Children's Homes and supporting the operations champions group including accreditation <p>Impact/Practice Improvement</p> <p>The SYTP has allowed Children's Services to influence and develop a curriculum that meets the employer's needs, this means that the social workers who qualify from this course come to the workforce better equipped to deal with social work practice. This is evidenced when these workers complete their ASYE and demonstrate more practical and academic ability to meet the demands of the role. This has resulted in higher numbers of staff (24 staff for 2017) achieving their first post qualifying (PQ) module. In relation to PQ: two Practice Supervisors have successfully completed a post graduate certificate in leadership and management and a further two staff are mid-way through this course. Four staff have completed Leadership and Mentoring post qualifying modules and four have completed the Social Worker in Court module. Three members of staff are currently completing Interventions to Promote Change and 9 members of</p>

	<p>staff are currently completing an Out of Home Care PQ module. In addition 18 Practice Supervisors have been supported to complete the First Line Management and Leadership Programme. 400 staff have completed NAAS refresher training on a range of subjects including Assessment, Public Law Outline and Preparing for Accreditation. Since September 2017, 12 people have also successfully completed Bridging the Gap. The PQ offer supports a more stable workforce as staff see this as a benefit to increasing their skills and knowledge and personal development this in turn should improve their practice with children, young people and families.</p> <p>In relation to Social Pedagogy, 8 members have successfully completed the level 3 accreditation. The evidence of impact of social pedagogy is demonstrated in the outstanding judgements awarded by Ofsted to all LCC Children's Homes.</p>
4.	Supervision
	<p>The PCFSW has led on the review of the current supervision policy, practice and process.</p> <p>This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus groups with all line managers ▪ Development of bespoke training ▪ Alignment with Signs of Safety and Restorative Practice ▪ Working with external consultants ▪ Engagement with South Yorkshire Teaching Partnership in relation to research into supervision including SOS Group supervision and also Gillian Ruch/Sue White work. <p>This review has also incorporated ideas from the Research in Practice Change Programme.</p> <p>Changes to the template used for supervision (which will be part of the new policy) were implemented in April 2018. There will be a review of the new template in November 2018 to ascertain the impact the changes have had on effective supervision. In the interim work is continuing with practitioners and managers to fully embed the template and develop the new supervision policy.</p> <p>Impact/Practice Improvement</p> <p>There is now extensive research that evidences effective reflective supervision supports practitioners in the managing of complex cases, decision making and becoming more autonomous in their role. It is therefore important that practitioners understand the value and importance of supervision in supporting less experienced staff in their professional development. This supports retention, good quality practice with children, young people and families and promotes individual practitioners sustainability in their role. Whilst this work is on-going it is important to work collaboratively with the line managers to develop a policy that enhances their ability to provide high challenge and high support.</p>

5	<p>Research Coordination</p> <p>Research is essential to the successful promotion and protection of health and wellbeing and effective social care services but at the same time, can involve an element of risk in terms of return on investment and the safety and wellbeing of participants.</p> <p>Proper research governance is essential in ensuring that the public have confidence in, and benefit from, quality research in social care.</p> <p>All health and social care providers have a duty of care to service users. We have a duty to children, their families and carers and for staff who might be the subjects of any research or where research may affect the quality of care or educational services they receive.</p> <p>The LCC Research Governance Process for Children's Services has been developed to ensure that research respects participant's rights, safety and wellbeing values diversity within society; and meets ethical standards. It also aims to establish a research culture where excellence is promoted and where there is visible and strong leadership is essential. The PCFSW is responsible for driving this forward and managing research activity.</p> <p>Research activities that have been completed to date are included at Appendix 2.</p> <p>In addition there are the following pieces of research that are either currently being undertaken or will be in the coming months.</p> <p>Currently underway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding and Education with Kings College London. <p>Planned Research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emotionally Intelligent Leadership (Dr Gail Kilman and Dr Louise Grant, University of Bedfordshire July 2018) ▪ Retention Tool (Professor Liz Frost, University of the West of England, June 2018) <p>Impact/Practice Improvement</p> <p>Research and evidence forms the basis of most practice with children and their families, it is therefore vitally important that practitioners across Children's Services have access to understand, participate in and learn from current research. The involvement in detailed research projects has enabled Children's Services in Lincolnshire to contribute on a national basis to some of the most cutting edge practice issues. This in turn helps shape the future of Children's Services and how it is delivered. It is also important that all practitioners understand how research is used and</p>
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	<p>impacts on the work they do with children and young people. It is also a key element of the knowledge and skills statements for all qualified social workers for the NAAS process.</p>
6.	<p>National Work</p> <p>The Principal Child and Family Social Worker is also involved in the following national pieces of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2016 – 2018 Co-Chair of the National Principal Social Worker Group – 4 meetings annually involves pre planning, organising, agenda setting and chairing the meetings. ▪ Two Joint Conferences with Adult PSW's – pre planning, agenda setting, delivery on the day, chairing of the conference ▪ Research in Practice – Presentation on PCFSW Role and Network ▪ Development of Practice Supervisor Training soon to be rolled out ▪ High level of engagement with Department for Education Social Reform Unit ▪ Representation on national groups for National Assessment and Accreditation System ▪ Consultation Work around practice and policy in respect of social work, regular engagement with Chief Social Worker and Minister for Children and Families <p>Impact/Practice Improvement</p> <p>As co-chair of the national Principal Child and Family Social Worker Group the impact can be seen in the work we have done in engaging with the Social Work Reform Unit around issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation/County Lines, NAAS, the establishment of Social Work England, the Care Crisis Review, the Fostering Stocktake, the development of the content for accreditation and benchmarking. The relationships between the Chief Social Worker, who was initially sceptical about the role, and the Social Work Reform Unit has meant that the voice of social work has been presented to Central Government this has led to a more considered approach to NAAS roll out and the recognition that Social Work requires a national campaign to improve the attractiveness of the profession.</p>
7.	<p>Partners in Practice</p> <p>The Department for Education's Partners in Practice programme aims to put genuine partnership between local and national government at the heart of work to improve services, with some of the very best practitioners and leaders in the driving seat of reform for children and young people.</p> <p>DfE is working with leading local authorities as Partners in Practice to understand how local authorities get to good and what it takes to move from good to excellent; to interrogate the most important practice questions facing children's social care; and to drive sector-led peer-to-peer improvement. Lincolnshire County Council is recognised</p>

	<p>as an innovative and high performing authority and has been selected to be a Partner in Practice authority.</p> <p>Each of the Partners in Practice has developed a programme of work to drive continuous innovation and improvement, to build understanding of the conditions needed for excellent practice to flourish, and to support other authorities to improve.</p> <p>The Partners in Practice programme for Lincolnshire focuses on three work streams and 8 projects that will be delivered over the next 4 years. These work streams and projects will improve practice in Lincolnshire and other Children’s Services transforming the quality of children’s social care services and early help arrangements and support the reform of the wider system, putting practice excellence and achieving more for the children we serve at its heart.</p> <p>Work stream 3 of the programme is Workforce Development. The PCFSW is the lead for this work stream, and it should be noted that this work stream crosses over all other work streams within PiP i.e. Signs of Safety and that the PCFSW is involved in all of these work streams.</p> <p>Impact/Practice Improvement</p> <p>As part of the PIP Programme the PCFSW is on the NAAS Advisory Board, this means that whilst Lincolnshire are not involved in Phase 1 or 2 of the roll out we will be fully informed of the process, this will enable us to ensure that our staff are better prepared for accreditation.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Ofsted</p>
	<p>Preparation undertaken for an initial focussed visit under the newly implemented Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services Framework (ILACS) that included targeted activity with those areas and staff members that we knew would be most involved with the visit due to the theme of the visit (Permanence).</p> <p>Whilst it was important that preparation focused on the areas that the focussed visit affected most it was equally important that work was undertaken to ensure that the wider staff group were aware of and understood the framework. Activity focused around timely communications and working with CSTM’s to ensure that information was disseminated and understood.</p> <p>Whilst the focussed visit has now been completed it is essential that preparation activity continues to be undertaken on an ongoing basis. Preparation for future inspections will focus on working alongside team mangers to enable them to highlight areas of good practice and concern within their teams. Where good practice is highlighted this can be shared across children’s services. Highlighting concerns early with enable us to rectify the issues prior to an inspection. Work will be undertaken with Team Managers to highlight common threads which need addressing. Preparation activity will also include regular and timely communications to staff.</p>

	<p>Impact/Practice Improvement</p> <p>Preparation activity in relation to the newly implemented ILACS framework has included working with Team Managers to address issues of concern and areas for development. The targeted preparation activity for the focussed visit in April, which included case sampling in the Looked After Children's Teams for example, received positive feedback from social workers and helped members of staff feel less anxious about the prospect of meeting with an inspector. This work will continue over the coming months to ensure that staff are well supported for the short inspection that we will receive under the ILACs framework.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Principal Child and Family Social Worker Role</p>
	<p>Role specific work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supporting staff to adapt to the changing landscape of social work practice, both internally and externally ▪ Social Work Health Check – co-ordination and analysis ▪ Work with the Young Inspectors in relation to quality of practice ▪ Scoping of Peripatetic Team – Management to commence July 2018 ▪ Pre Proceedings Case Manager – line management of this role by the PCFSW to ensure quality of court documents ▪ Social Care Forum ▪ Ensuring the Local Authority promotes the LGS standards for employers ▪ Completion of the quarterly workforce analysis for the Department for Education ▪ Munro Champion Group – this is a group of practitioners from every Children's Service Team. The focus of the group was to establish user feedback, good practice and where services can be improved following on from the recommendations of Eileen Munro's review. The engagement for this group is high and generally a representative from every team attends. This group also identifies areas of potential service development and potential internal areas for small scale research projects. ▪ Support and mentoring for managers including those in HR processes ▪ Participation in HR investigations and hearings as the independent manager ▪ Attends Regional Principal Child and Family Social Worker Group to share good practice and developments ▪ Attends Regional Association of Directors of Children's Services Group ▪ Works with a number of regional universities ▪ Co-ordination of shadowing days for colleagues from the Department for Education ▪ Co-ordination and management of various visits to the Local Authority ▪ One Minute Briefings for staff

10.	Finance
	<p>Costings:</p> <p>Recruitment costs for Jan 2018 to Dec 2018: £250 000</p> <p>This includes 80 listing in the Guardian for a year for all posts as required. Community care listings unlimited for social work posts children and adults these are unlimited.33 branding work, advert copy, editorial, digital.</p> <p>Peri team costs: £288 838 funded from base budget.</p> <p>SYTP: £60 000 funded from PIP budget</p>
11.	Conclusion
	<p>Principal Child and Family Social Workers were first proposed by Professor Eileen Munro in her review of child protection in 2011, which identified the importance of better communication and understanding between social workers and senior management. Munro stated that Principal Social Workers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a clear line of communication between frontline staff and senior management ▪ Champion best practice ▪ Encourage a “reflective approach” to social work ▪ Help to reduce bureaucracy and the amount of time spent on process-driven activities ▪ Support social workers to use their core skills and interventions which make a real difference to people <p>It is important for the PCFSW role to act as a critical friend to the Local Authority, in which they work, using both soft intelligence and hard evidence to highlight issues, concerns, areas for development and continuous improvement to ensure that social work practice can flourish.</p> <p>The breadth of the role gives the post holder a unique perspective of the organisation. This means that the overarching principles and connectivity are really evident, the challenge is encouraging a one team approach across the organisation to move the organisational culture from one of silo working to a more collective approach, improve internal systems to enable social workers to spend more time with children and families.</p>

12.	Proposals for Consideration
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of where the Learning and Development Team sit as a large proportion of the PCSFW role is related to learning and development activity 2. Consider how the informal quality assurance provided by the Case Manager and the work of the Peripatetic Team from July will also inform the Children's Service quality assurance process and be used to improve social work practice 3. Consider the strategic priorities for the PCSFW for the next year 4. Review of PCSFW role in Lincolnshire 5. How inspection readiness and the feedback from inspections also identifies key priorities for social work practice 6. How performance data is used to predict patterns and trends across all work streams 7. The development of a taught PHD as part of the SYTP offer 8. The development of more post qualifying modules to respond to emerging practice 9. Develop more stringent process for supporting staff when a serious incident occurs 10. Continued roll out of NAAS refresher training 11. A more consistent approach to commissioning training, managed by the Partners in Practice Programme, to ensure that long term sustainability is in place beyond the end of the programme.

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