

Case Holding Procedures for Student Social Workers

To be reviewed March 2021

1. Scope of this chapter

This chapter outlines the case holding procedures for student social workers undertaking their practice placements in Stockport Children's Social Care while they train to become qualified social workers.

2. Introduction

Within Stockport, student social workers are placed within a number of Children's Services teams while they train to become qualified social workers. It is important that student social workers are supported throughout their training and are able to meet the required capabilities. This procedure outlines the case holding procedures for student social workers.

3. Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)

The introduction of the social work Professional Capability Framework devised by the College of Social Work identifies nine capabilities to which Student Social Workers will be assessed against throughout their training.

The PCF:

- Sets out consistent expectations of social workers at every stage in their career
- Provides a backdrop to both initial social work education and continuing professional development after qualification
- Informs the design and implementation of the national career structure
- Gives social workers a framework around which to plan their careers and professional development

For further information and details of the PCF please see **the professional capabilities framework**.

4. Capability levels for student social workers

There are nine levels within the Professional Capability Framework. The first four levels relate to Student Social Workers. These represent the 'level' of capability a social work student should be demonstrating at different points in their social work training. Page 2 of



It is important that Student Social Workers understand the key purpose and 'levels' of professional capabilities as set out in the PCF:

- By the end of the first placement students should demonstrate effective use of knowledge, skills and commitment to core values in Social Work in a given setting in predominantly less complex situations, with supervision and support. They will have demonstrated capacity to work with people and situations where there may not be simple clear-cut solutions
- By the end of the last placement/the completion of qualifying programmes newly qualified social workers should have demonstrated the Key Skills and Values to work with a range of user groups, and the ability to undertake a range of tasks at a foundation level, the capacity to work with more complex situations; they should be able to work more autonomously, whilst recognising that the final decision will rest with their supervisor; they will seek appropriate support and supervision.

5. Allocation of work

The practice supervisor/educator is the allocated case holder for the student's caseload and it is their name that is recorded on the Electronic Information System. While the student will manage and work the case, the practice supervisor/educator has overall responsibility of the case and responsibility for the student's actions and decisions. Allocation of workload will be at the professional judgement of the practice supervisor/practice educator and appropriate to the students PCF capabilities level.

6. Supervisor

Student Social Workers will be supervised by practice supervisor/educator on a weekly basis in line with the Universities' requirements set out in their handbooks and Stockport Supervision Policy.

Where there is an onsite supervisor and offsite practice educator, additional supervision arrangements will need to be agreed for the student including 3-way supervision (see student handbook).

7. Case recordings, assessments and plans

All Assessments will be authorised by a Practice Supervisor /Practice Educator and all case recordings and plans will be overseen and agreed by a Practice Supervisor/Educator.



8. Joint visits

Supervision of the Student Social Workers will include joint visits and direct observations by their Practice Supervisor /Educator and other colleagues. These visits and subsequent feedback will be part of the quality assurance process and enables the practice supervisor/educator to assess the capability and development needs of the student. At least one joint visit should be undertaken within the first 6 weeks of a case being allocated.

9. Team around the Child meetings

The first Team around the Child (TAC) meeting and the 3 months review (and subsequent reviews), will be chaired by the student's Practice Supervisor/Educator, team leader or TAC senior practitioner. After the initial TAC meeting the Practice Supervisor/Educator will assess the professional competency of the Student Social Worker and their ability to chair future TAC meetings.

10. Case Loads

Student Social Workers should case work **Child In Need/Team around the Child** cases only, in no circumstances should they be the keyworker for **Child Protection** or **Looked After Children**. However, they may undertake tasks on such cases under the direct supervision of the Keyworker and Practice Supervisor/Educator if they have the appropriate competencies.

Caseloads will need to be determined by the experience, competency and University commitments of the student social worker. These need to be clearly recorded on the students' case supervision notes.

