**Childrens Social Work: Assessed and Supported Year (ASYE) Policy**

The assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE) is a programme that gives newly qualified social workers extra support during their first year of employment. The programme aims to develop their skills, knowledge, and professional confidence. *(Gov.uk)*

**Eligibility for the ASYE programme**

The ASYE programme is a 12-month programme for Newly Qualified social workers, which must be successfully completed to practice as a Social Worker at Westmorland and Furness Council.

It is mandatory for all newly qualified social workers (NQSWs), employed by Westmorland and Furness Council to be registered on the ASYE programme and with Social Work England. They must be registered for the programme within two years of successfully completing a recognised social work degree programme.

A NQSW who has not taken up a social work role more than two years after qualification will need to be able to show that they have maintained their social work skills and knowledge.

If the NQSW has been employed by another Local Authority as a social worker and failed the ASYE programme, then they are not eligible to be considered for any social work roles at Westmorland and Furness Council.

The ASYE programme is not a requirement for social workers, who have successfully completed the ASYE programme with another Local Authority, or who have completed an alternative NQSW programme before September 2012.

The ASYE programme is not available to agency staff.

**Support throughout the ASYE programme**

A registered and experienced social worker will support the NQSW through their ASYE, as their ASYE Assessor. It is desirable that the ASYE Assessor is an Enhanced Social Worker (5.5) who has previously supported a student.

Supervision will focus on critical reflection and be provided at the frequency and duration as required by the ASYE programme.

Supervision Frequency:

* weeks 1-6: weekly
* week 7 – 6 months: fortnightly
* 6 – 12 months: monthly

The duration of the reflective supervision will be at least 1 ½ hours.

The national guidance recommends that weekly supervision is made available to all NQSWs at the start of the ASYE regardless of the length of time they have been in their job role.

**Reduced workload**: the equivalent up to 90% of what is expected of a confident Social Worker in the same role in their second or third year. As detailed below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Caseload** | **Type of work**  |
| 0-3 months | 3 families | Assessments, Child in Need |
| 3-6 months | 5 families | Assessments, Child in Need |
| 6-9 months | 7 families | Assessments, Child in Need, Child Protection |
| 9-12 months | 9 families | Assessments, Child in Need, Child Protection, Co-work Pre-Proceedings & Proceedings |

If concerns escalate and the child is subsequently made subject to Child Protection or a legal framework during the 0-6month period– an experienced Social Worker will be allocated and the Newly Qualified Social Worker will shadow.

**Protected development time:**

The equivalent of 10% of the NQSW’s working time over the course of the ASYE, which equates to 2 days per calendar month for full-time employees. If working reduced hours or part-time, it is calculated on a pro rata basis.

Protected development time can include attending training sessions and other learning and development opportunities provided by the ASYE programme, as well as reading and research to support their professional development.

ASYE Assessors/Team Managers must manage the NQSWs’ workload and ensure that they make effective use of their protected development time, enabling them to cope with increasing complexity in their work.

**Timescales for completing the ASYE programme**

For full-time employees it will take 12 months to complete the ASYE programme. For part-time employees the duration of the ASYE programme would be calculated on a pro-rate basis.

It is not possible for the ASYE programme to be completed in less than 12 months.

**Can the ASYE be extended?**

There are only exceptional circumstances in which the year can be extended, which typically are: sickness, maternity leave, leave of absence, where the appropriate level of support has not been made available. The ASYE cannot be extended for capability reasons.

The ASYE programme should be suspended for a limited time to allow for support arrangements to be put in place. The suspension, the reason why and the action plan should be recorded by the ASYE Assessor in the Record of Support and Progressive Assessment (RSPA).

**Induction**

Westmorland and Furness Childrens Social Work Academy Offer, sets out the induction process for NQSW. The Practice Improvement Lead will support the NQSW to complete their induction programme.

The Practice Improvement Lead- Social Work Academy will identify an experienced Social Worker to be the ASYE Assessor for the NQSW prior to their employment commencing. They will co-ordinate an initial meeting between themselves, the NQSW and ASYE Assessor to discuss the requirements of the ASYE programme.

The Childrens Social Work Academy will register the NQSW on the ASYE programme within 4 weeks of employment, when they receive all the documentation required from the NQSW. The NQSW should complete the necessary tasks for their registration within 3 weeks of the start of their employment.

**ASYE Portfolio**

A NQSW is assessed against the post-qualifying standard: knowledge and skills statement (PQS) and the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) at ASYE level.

There is a requirement for a portfolio to be completed throughout the ASYE, as the NQSW needs to be able to demonstrate professional development and progression throughout the ASYE. It is the ASYE Assessors role to recommend at the end of the year if the NQSW has consistently demonstrated they have met the PQS and PCF.

The ASYE portfolio templates and guidance have been developed by skills for care, they will be provided to NQSWs by the Practice Improvement Lead- Social Work Academy. They can also be found at: [ASYE (skillsforcare.org.uk)](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Regulated-professions/Social-work/ASYE/ASYE.aspx)

The ASYE programme is reviewed at 3,6,9 and 12months. At each review period the NQSW provides the ASYE Assessor with the required evidence of progression over that period. It is the responsibility of the ASYE Assessor to ensure the evidence is linked to the PQS and PCF. They will make an assessment of progress and form a judgment on whether the NQSW is ‘on track’ to meet the required outcomes by the end of the ASYE.

If at a review the ASYE Assessor considers that the NQSW is not on track to pass their ASYE and the NQSW has received the required support arrangements, then the Assessor should consider with the NQSW’s team manager whether to commence informal or formal capability procedures. The objective is to support the NQSW to reach the required standard and the Assessor and NQSW must develop an Action Plan to support the NQSW, which should be:

* Specific about the practice that is expected.
* Detail the timeframe within which changes need to be seen.
* Set a date to review the action.
* Clear about the support available.

Any employment issues that arrive during the ASYE will be managed separately through HR. The Practice Improvement Lead- Social Work Academy will be made aware of any capability proceedings, which run alongside the ASYE programme.

**ASYE panel**

At the end of the ASYE, the ASYE Assessor makes a professional recommendation about whether the NQSW has passed their ASYE. This is reviewed at the ASYE panel along with the ASYE portfolio, to successfully complete the ASYE programme.

The ASYE panel will review the ASYE portfolio to ensure the NQSW has received the recommended support arrangements and that there is evidence the NQSW has met the post-qualifying standard: knowledge and skills statement and the PCF at ASYE level.

The panel may make the following decisions:

* Agrees with the Assessors recommendation to pass or fail the NQSW on their ASYE.
* Adjourn the panel to allow for amendments to documentation or further evidence to be provided.

The panel chair may in certain circumstances invite a Senior Manager to be involved in the decision-making process, where there are concerns about the NQSW practice.

If the panel does not agree with the Assessors recommendation, the panel will be adjourned and agreed action/timescales set.

Feedback will be provided to the NQSW and Assessor following panel to support both their development.

Where the panel recommends the NQSW fails the ASYE, it will trigger capability proceedings. Depending on the reason/s for the recommendation, the employer may make a referral to Social Work England.

If the NQSW decides not to complete the programme this will be referred to HR, to determine any contractual implications.

**Complaints process**

If the NQSW has concerns about their ASYE and/or their support arrangements, they should speak to their ASYE Assessor in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved, or the concerns are about their Assessor, then they should approach their Team Manager. In circumstances where the Team Manager is unable to resolve the concerns, they will escalate the matter to Service/Senior Management.

The NQSW and ASYE Assessor should inform the Practice Improvement Lead- Social Work Academy of any concerns and keep them updated throughout.

If the NQSW is not satisfied with the outcome of the ASYE panel, then they can contact Katie Allison (Service Improvement Lead).