

# Children's Social Care Working with Us





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## Introduction

We want you to share our passion for making a difference to the lives of children, young people, and families and set out all the reasons why it makes sense for you to join our service.



When you work for Children & Family Services in Leicestershire you become part of a team that puts people at the heart of everything we do. We're passionate about listening to voices, respecting culture and diversity, and supporting every child and family to reach their full potential. For children in care and care leavers, we work tirelessly to create a sense of belonging and security. Our values and behaviours, outlined in our Achieving Excellence via Purposeful Practice Plan, guide us every day. We promise respect, honesty, and compassion—and we're committed to improving outcomes and making a lasting difference.

We're committed to creating a space where you feel supported, valued, and empowered. Our goal is to help your practice thrive—giving you the tools, guidance, and encouragement to be the very best social worker you can be. We want you to build a long, fulfilling career with us, knowing that your growth and wellbeing truly matter.

This is your opportunity to join a service that is ambitious, supportive, and focused on purposeful practice. Together, we can change lives. Come and be part of something that matters.

**Sharon Cooke**

**Director of Children and Family Services**



## Our Practice Approach and Understanding Trauma

We use Signs of Safety as our practice framework when working with children, families, and professionals within Social Care and Early Help Services. This strengths-based model is focused on working with children and families toward shared aims and goals and building on what is working well for them. This gives a strong foundation for our work with families – setting out the way we ‘do business in Leicestershire’ and making our values and principles clear.

All our staff and teams are trained in this approach and are supported by regular training and workshops, a resource hub, and tailored support from the dedicated Practice Excellence Team.

We are committed to becoming a trauma-informed department where we believe “we are stronger together”. This means understanding trauma, recognising how it can affect children, families, and carers we work with, and knowing how to respond.

We know that our work with families who have experienced trauma can deeply affect us too, positively in terms of seeing families succeed and achieve their goals, and sometimes negatively with staff being at risk of experiencing vicarious trauma, through supporting families who have experienced trauma, and so we are committed to recognising this and supporting staff.

Our trauma-informed journey is being driven by our senior leaders and our principal social worker and is having a positive impact on our services, our relationships with children and families, and our working guidance and practices.

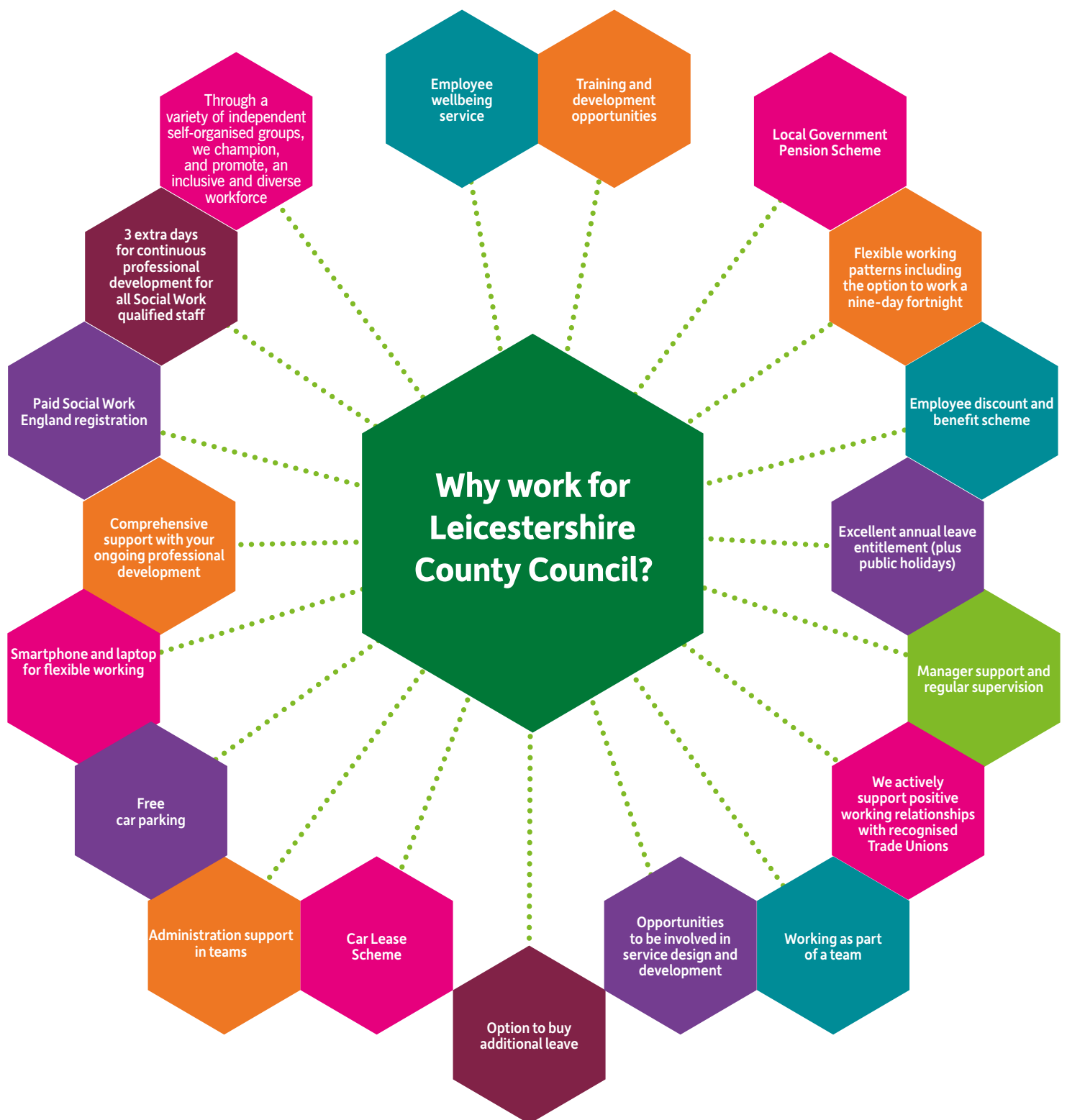
**Our Achieving Excellence Plan** outlines our commitment to building on our solid foundations to provide consistently high-standard services to vulnerable children and families and sets out what is important to us.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone to see the Achieving Excellence plan



# Why work for Leicestershire County Council?



## Our teams

### Adoption

#### Location: Glenfield

Our Adoption Team assesses prospective adopters, supports children who are moving into adoptive placements, and provides long-term therapeutic support for adopted children when needed. This team also provides support for children with special guardians.

### Children in Care, Care Leavers and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

#### Location: Glenfield

Our Children in Care and Care Leavers Team supports children who are in the care of the Local Authority throughout their childhood into adulthood, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people.

### Corporate Parenting Team

#### Location: Countywide

Our Corporate Parenting Team is made up of Children's Rights Officers who support and advocate for children and young people across the services and help with understanding of children's rights. The team also includes Children's Participation Officers who create opportunities for participation and engagement for our Children in Care and Care Leavers.

### Family Help Service

#### Location: Countywide

Our Family Help Service supports children who are subject to child in need plans.

### Family Safeguarding and Children's Disability Service

#### Locations: Countywide

Our Family Safeguarding Team supports children who have child protection plans or are going through care proceedings. Our Children's Disability Service supports children and young people with disabilities in Leicestershire.

### First Response and Vulnerability Hub

#### Location: Glenfield

Our First Response and Vulnerability Hub Team receives referrals and requests, completes initial assessments, and recommends further involvement or support. This includes our Child Exploitation Team, extended Domestic Abuse Team and Families Together Team.

### Fostering

#### Location: Glenfield

Our Fostering Team assesses prospective foster carers and kinship carers and offers long-term support for carers.

### Practice Excellence Team and Quality Assurance Team

#### Location: Glenfield

Our Practice Excellence Team provides support to the workforce to develop and support excellence in practice, thorough training opportunities, and coaching support. Our Quality Assurance Team supports in the development of good practice.

### Safeguarding Service

#### Location: Glenfield

Our Safeguarding Service provides independent reviewing officers for children in care or subject to a child protection plan. The Local Authority Designated Officer sits within this service.

### Targeted Family Help Service

#### Location: Countywide

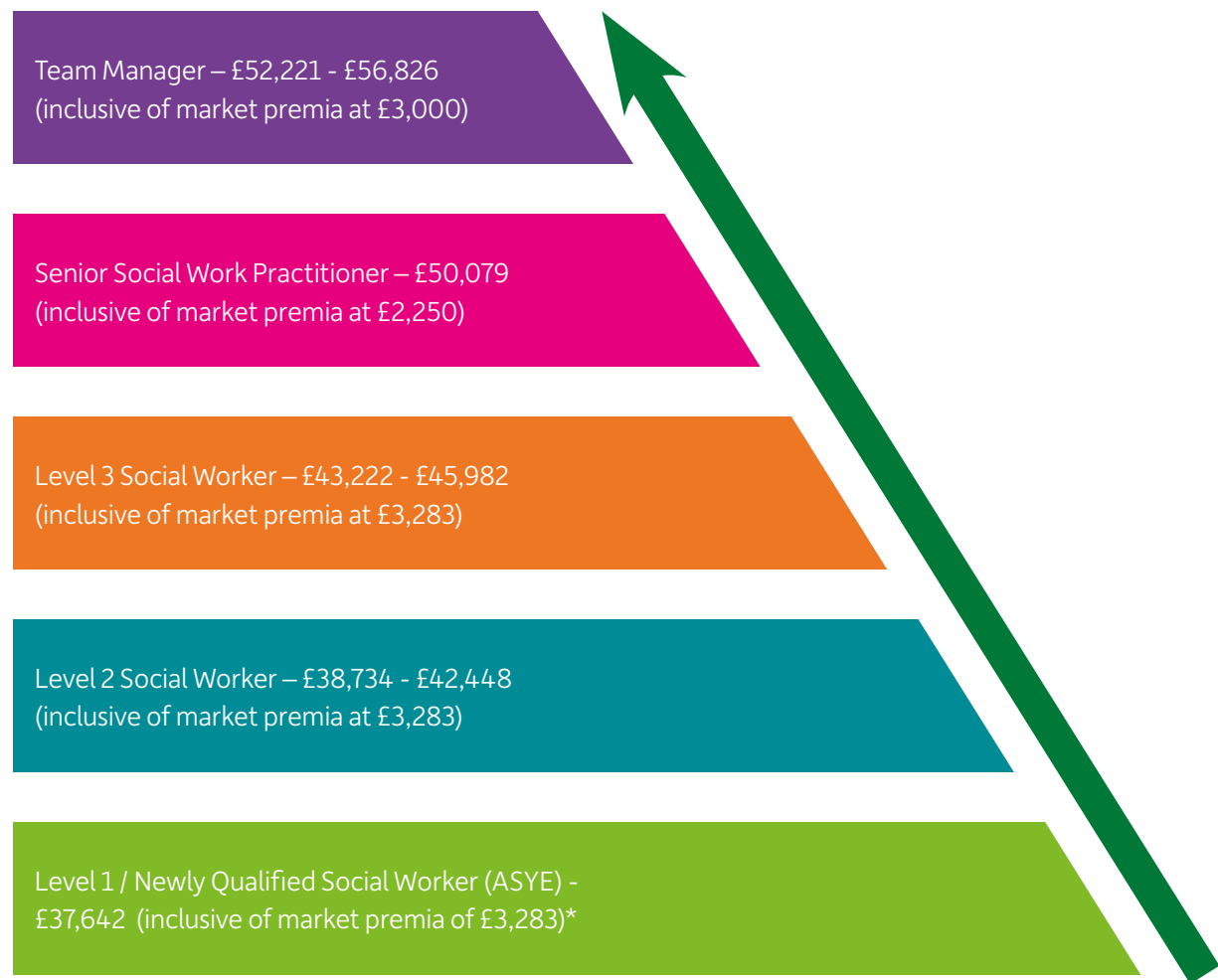
This is our early help service which is made up of many different teams and roles that support families across Leicestershire.

### Youth and Justice Service

#### Location: Countywide

Our Youth offer is a referral only service that has voluntary engagement with young people across Leicestershire via group work or one to one's. Our Youth Justice offer supports children and young people who are at risk of being criminalised or going through court or out of court processes.

## Our salaries



\*Entry level of Grade 9 (£32,070) until full social work registration is granted. Increasing to the top level of Grade 9 with market premia (£37,642) once full social work registration is granted and for the duration of the ASYE programme.



## Training, Development and Career Progression

We know how important it is for colleagues in Children and Family Services to continue to have access to high-quality training and support in their roles.

As a learning organisation we place training, learning, and development at the centre of our offer to our workforce.

### Induction

It's important to get the best start to your employment!

We've developed a robust induction process to ensure new starters get what they need to start their career in the best way.

Our formal induction period ensures that new workers do not have tasks allocated before they are fully settled into teams.

### Support from your manager and Annual Performance Reviews

Learning and growth take place in different ways for different people, and we want to work with you to find the best ways to support your personal and professional development.

You will receive:

- Personal supervision every month which includes discussions around your learning and development.
- Annual performance reviews, to reflect and discuss your successes over the year, and your goals for the year ahead, identifying any learning needs that the organisation can meet.
- Each month we make it a priority that all teams have an amount of time set aside for team learning and support, usually, this takes place via monthly team meetings.
- Managers provide reflective supervision, and we are focused on continuing to grow group supervision skills and practices across our teams.





## Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) for newly qualified social workers

Here at Leicestershire County Council, we are extremely proud of our ASYE programme and always strive to offer the best start to a career in social work, so that we can work to positively influence and improve the lives of children and their families.

Each ASYE cohort will receive a comprehensive and engaging induction process within a team whom we encourage to form close bonds, providing you with a good support network. There is a detailed training and induction process over the course of the year which includes meeting the senior management team and gaining an understanding of the roles of each service area, from door to door, through to long-term care. Alongside this, there is practical training around Section 47 processes, training in our practice model, assessment, and analysis skills, alongside other key topics.

To ensure you have the maximum support and are given the smoothest introduction to the profession, you will receive monthly network meetings with all other newly qualified social workers (either an informal meet-up or a formal session on a specific topic to support your practice), a reduced and protected case load over your ASYE year, co-working opportunities to learn from experienced practitioners and an offer of 1:1 additional support from the ASYE lead, should you feel it required. You will receive monthly supervision with your line manager, as well as monthly reflective supervision with your practice mentor.

All expectations are realistic, and we provide you with support every step of the way, including our amazing resource box for direct work with children as well as theory and reflective practice cards!

We hold an annual ASYE conference and awards ceremony to celebrate our newly qualified social workers who complete the course each year.



## Career Progression for Social Workers

We want to support all our workers to progress in their careers whilst working with us. We have a strong progression pathway programme for social workers which sets out specific training to be completed to help skill and equip you to progress.

After one year at level 2, social workers can apply to progress to level 3, via our progression panel. This is to enable progression through the social work pay grades.

Our new Advanced Skills Panel has been introduced to enable additional yearly payments to level 3 social workers who have been practicing at level 3 for over one year, to recognise their advanced skills, knowledge and experience focused on a specific area of interest.

We encourage our experienced social workers to apply for Senior Practitioner or Advanced Practitioner vacancies when they arise and have a strong pathway to support progression to management roles. Our well-established Aspiring Managers programme helps support those interested in management roles to understand key areas and develop their skills and knowledge – but also the confidence to take the next step into management.

## Our Social Care Training

We have a comprehensive and wide-ranging training programme that is open to all staff via our internal learning system Thrive. Courses include Signs of Safety, Trauma-informed practice, supervision skills, domestic abuse, Culture and Ethnicity training and many others. This is a mix of in-house delivery and external providers.

If you have a learning need that is not met by the current training on offer, you can request further training to meet that need from the learning and development team.

Our learning and development yearly brochure sets out the available training and identifies which training is required for workers in which roles. We capture key learning messages in our Think Practice learning brief and provide links to all upcoming training.

## Practice Excellence Team

Our Practice Excellence Team (PET) is dedicated to supporting teams and practitioners across children's social care and children and family wellbeing service.

The team arranges and facilitates three conferences per year including the Leadership Conference, Social Work Conference, and Pride in Practice. The team facilitates and delivers several training sessions on a regular basis which are a mix of in-person and virtual learning. The PET offers bite-sized virtual practice forums on key topics. They work closely with the quality assurance and improvement team to complete the cycle from audit to learning.

The PET offers 1:1 support, coaching, and mentoring in teams and directly to practitioners via the Advanced Practitioners who are linked to specific service areas. This can be for reflective discussions, supporting in developing plans or interventions, or supporting with challenging meetings. Learning and Improvement Managers can support team managers in quality assurance activity and drive learning and improvement across teams.

Our Principal Social Worker who sits in this team is driving our trauma-informed approach and journey and supporting teams. Our Principal Social Worker is a key link between practitioners and the senior management team. Regular 'Breaking News' videos provide a bite-size update on key messages and information to be shared with the workforce.



## Progression for alternatively qualified staff

We want to ensure that we offer opportunities for our alternatively qualified staff to progress in their career. This can be achieved by the training opportunities on offer, however, also by available routes into social work.

### Social Work Apprenticeship

In partnership with Warwick University, we run a social work apprenticeship degree scheme for employees of Children's Social Care and Children and Family Wellbeing Service, who have been working for us for a minimum of two years. The course is a three-year programme that is completed one day per week, alongside the employee's current full-time post. At the end of the process and qualification, the employee will move into a social work post and will be supported through the assessed and supported year in employment.

## Returning to social work

We support qualified social workers who have had a career break and want to return to social work practice and are required to follow a process of restoration through Social Work England.



## The Right Support

We know that working in social work, as a qualified social worker, manager, or in one of our support roles, can be challenging as well as rewarding. Due to this, we know that the support we provide to staff is essential to staff being able to work with children and families to the best of their ability, alongside taking care of their own wellbeing.

**Our Workforce Community Principles** have been developed to show our mutual commitment to creating opportunities for children and family-focused practice to flourish.

## Critical Incident Support Service

We have a Critical Incident Support Service available to all staff within Children's Social Care and Children and Family Wellbeing Service. Where there has been a critical incident at work and practitioners connected to a child/young person via the team or casework have been impacted, they are able to access support from an independent trauma therapist consultant within 48 hours. The support provided will be tailored to the practitioner's needs and will continue for a number of weeks or months.

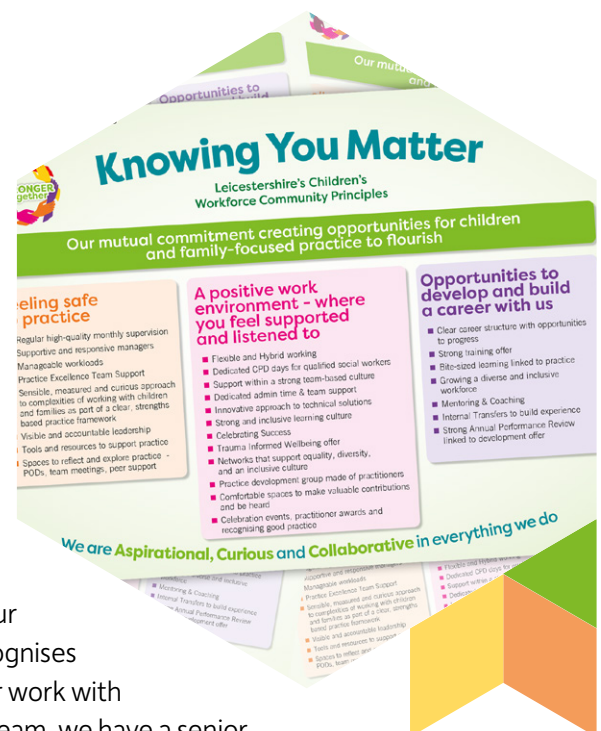
## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion are paramount within our services and teams, and we are committed to ensuring that our Children and Family Services department is a service that recognises and celebrates diversity across the workforce, as well as in our work with children and families. To help embed this practice within the team, we have a senior Strategic Lead who is helping to create the correct working environment within the department.

We have a Race Inclusion Board whose aim and purpose is to ensure a continued focus on achieving equality, diversity, and inclusion in all areas of the department, alongside a network of Race Champions who can provide specific support and guidance. We are committed to standing up against racism and ensuring equality of opportunity for all, supported by our We Care Strategy.

## Wellbeing Response Service

This is a focused wellbeing support offer where staff in children's social care can book appointments with a qualified therapist every Tuesday morning and at short notice.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone to see our Workforce Community Principles



## **Staff support programme**

We promote self-care and prioritise staff care - The Staff Support programme is available to help all staff with workplace wellbeing and provides 24-hour access to telephone counsellors every day of the year, a helpline offering advice on practical life management problems, self-help via an online portal, structured telephone counselling, and telephone career coaching.

## **Wellbeing Concern Process**

We take a proactive approach to support teams and practitioners and the wellbeing of staff and so we have developed the wellbeing alert service. This is where staff can self-refer or refer a colleague whose wellbeing concerns them. This leads to a session with an independent person, either our principal social worker or race champions, to support the identified worries to be resolved.

## **Support for managers**

We know that the support provided by managers is vitally important and so we have invested in a leadership programme to support our managers to continue to develop their skills so that they are able to provide the best support to practitioners. We are focused on providing quality reflective supervision, so that staff feel able to openly explore the work they are doing with families, as well as reflect on their own needs.

We continue to offer opportunities for managers to develop their skills and support their teams through a bespoke learning offer alongside the offer of coaching and mentoring. We hold a regular new manager meeting to offer additional support and peer support to new team managers.

## **Open and transparent communication**

We hold regular meetings that are open to all staff across Children's Social Care and Children and Family Wellbeing service where the senior leadership team shares information about recent developments within their service areas. This is an opportunity for staff to ask questions, give views and opinions and engage collaboratively with the senior leadership team.

## Listening to our staff and celebrating their practice

Our staff is our best asset, and we cannot hope to make a positive difference to the lives of children, young people, and their families if we don't have a strong and resilient workforce.

Each year as a department, we run a 'health check' for all staff where we ask you about your experience of working in the department. This is your opportunity to contribute to wider learning and create a culture we all want to work in. This feedback is used to inform our future plans.

We have an active practice development group that contributes to the development of practice, policy, and procedure across the department. We have three annual conferences to grow and develop together, alongside sharing learning and feedback.

We also have our annual Pride in Practice awards each year where we come together and celebrate our achievements.



## Practice Development

We have an established Practice Development Group which is attended by practitioners from across different teams so that practitioners at all levels can contribute to the way that our services grow and develop. We value the views, ideas, and input of practitioners through groups such as this, but also through departmental surveys and other feedback.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone to visit our webpage for more information

Find us on:

