

# Getting it right for children

Slough Children and Young People's Partnership Board  
**Children's Workforce Strategy 2014-2016**



This strategy has been developed in partnership by agencies working with children and young people: Slough Borough Council, Slough Schools, Thames Valley Police, Slough Council for Voluntary Services, Slough Clinical Commissioning Group, Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Slough  
Children and Young People's  
Partnership Board  
*Getting it right for children*





# Contents

	page
Foreword	2
Introduction	3
Scope and purpose	6
Vision	7
Our journey so far	8
Our strategic priorities 2014-2016	13
Implementation monitoring and evaluation	17
Appendices	18

## Foreword

The Slough Children and Young People's Partnership is committed to developing a children's workforce which is supported and able to deliver improved outcomes for children.

Our workforce will need to be flexible, innovative and diverse. We will have to ensure that we have a children's workforce which has the capacity to manage itself effectively and has the appropriate level of skills throughout the organisational hierarchy, to deliver improved outcomes for children, and early help to children and families in Slough at a point when additional need is identified.

We want a workforce which places the voices of children at the centre of their work; listens to families in order to ensure help is purposeful and focused. We want a workforce that works well together and understands the importance of working together in a co-ordinated way.

The Government has set out an agenda for change with a strong focus on commissioning for improved outcomes and early help and prevention. Locally we are looking at changing roles and responsibilities, delivery arrangements across existing services to meet that agenda.

These are challenging times, cuts in public sector finance has meant that there is limited funding available to invest in the training and development of our workforce, sectors within our workforce face challenges in relation to recruitment and retention.

The challenges have meant we have had to work out how to get better value for money out of the money we currently invest in training and develop comprehensive plans to fill shortages in critical areas.

This document sets out our strategic priorities for building a workforce which is able to deliver improved outcomes for children. We recognise that each individual agency will have their own internal workforce strategy or plan. This document sets out the core values and strategic priorities shared by the partnership, which partners will reflect in their respective agency plans.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pavitar Mann', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Cllr. Pavitar Mann**

Commissioner for  
Education and Children

## Introduction

The workforce strategy is aimed at supporting the development of a children's workforce that is able to meet the needs of children and families living in Slough. There is a focus on early help, which may occur at any point in a child or young person's life, from early pregnancy, throughout childhood, adolescence and beyond. There is also a drive to close the gap between those children and young people who are most vulnerable and the rest of the population.

The workforce will need to demonstrate skills in retaining a child and family centred approach which remains outcomes focused and are able to empower and support children and their families with timely and appropriate interventions.

We believe that partnership working and multi-disciplinary approaches (including co located or virtual teams) facilitating a joint approach to identifying needs, and ensuring a continuum of support is available, are critical to our delivery of good outcomes for children. This will involve, for some of our workforce, changes to practice, high collaboration between agencies and good information sharing and communication across the workforce with the families, children and young people they work with.

We need to be able to build workforce development support for emerging employers and support a wider workforce that may be made up of a mixture of public, private and voluntary sectors.

To be sure that the workforce remains well skilled and qualified we have reviewed and developed competencies and quality standards that will deliver a safe, effective and well trained staff, whoever

and wherever they are. Further work is required across the partnership. Following the Slough Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspection which judged safeguarding as inadequate in 2011 we put in place a programme of skill development and support for frontline and middle managers across the council's workforce with responsibilities for safeguarding children. The change agenda is challenging and the workforce will need to see how they will be supported to develop new skills, work in different ways and improve integrated working.

Nationally the government have made statements about a number of sections of the children's workforce.

- The Munro final report on Child protection May 2011, which has implications for the recruitment, training and development of social workers and the sharing of best practice and research
- The review of Special Educational Needs and SEND pathfinder programmes
- The development of post graduate development and research for teachers
- The drive towards expanding the workforce in health visiting
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (Statutory Guidance) Department of Education 2013
- The development of Early Help/Early Intervention approaches and the expectation around local approaches to early help (including assessment)

## Local context

Slough has a rapidly rising population, including a rising population of under 18s. Birth rates are continuing to rise year on year the total fertility rate of 2.43 per 1000 women aged 15-44 (2012) is higher than the England average, double that of Bracknell and Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, and is projected to increase significantly by 2021. The highest rates are in Chalvey, Cippenham Meadows and Baylis and Stoke.

The population is very diverse. 79.1% of pupils at Slough schools are from ethnic minority groups. 23.8 Pakistani 16.7% Indian and 11.5% white other. (Jan 2013) In the previous year Jan 2012, 77.9% of pupils at Slough schools were from ethnic minority groups. 23.6% Pakistani 16.6% Indian and 11.1% white other.

A significant proportion of the population is transient and many families do not have extended support networks locally.

The above places significant and changing demands on health and school services to children and their families

Slough has an estimated 7965 people living in poverty with over a third of children living in poverty levels above the national benchmark (21.9%) and southeast regional level (14.9%) in selected wards in Slough.

There were 3437 incidents of domestic abuse, with a repeat rate of 41.7%.

The wards with greatest rates of domestic abuse are those which are the most deprived according to the IMD these are Chalvey, Britwell, Farnham, Foxborough and Central which are now ranked as the top five wards in Berkshire for domestic abuse.



Prevalent parental factors for all open Social Care cases CYP involved with Social Care (As at April 2013) 1154 open cases with 37.9% having at least one 'Toxic Trio' parental factor logged against them

- Victim of domestic violence 20.9%
- Perpetrator 10.9%
- Drug Abuse 11.8%
- Alcohol Abuse 9.4%
- Mental Illness 11.6%

Trends in alcohol related hospital admissions are continuing to increase and are the highest in Berkshire with 5128 people estimated to be drug and alcohol dependent.

Slough has recently undertaken a significant piece of work which sets out proposals for the future shape of Early help, including an Early help Board and the concept of an Early help 'Collective' to support children and families.

There is a growth of academies and free schools locally.

The transfer to Mott MacDonald, of school support services and children's centres are likely to provide some additional opportunities for tapping into sector-specific training, there is concern that the early years and children's centre services may become disjointed from the partnership strategies for workforce development and for early help, etc. Contract arrangements are in place to mitigate against this.

'The 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy' was published by the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) in Dec 2008. Its vision is "that everyone who works with children and young people's should be:

- **Ambitious** for every child and young person
- **Excellent** in their practice
- **Committed** to partnership and integrated working
- **Respected** and valued as professionals"

This vision and the values remain relevant.

In Slough we are committed to developing a first class workforce to deliver excellent services for children and families.



## Scope and purpose

This strategy embraces everyone who works with children, young people and their families' paid or unpaid in Slough. The voluntary sector does not appear as a specific sector in the diagram as it is recognised the voluntary sector contributes across all workforce 'disciplines'.

**Figure 1. The core and wider children's workforce: everyone who works with children and young people and their families – or who is responsible for their outcomes**



## Vision

Slough Children and Young People's Partnership Board (CYPPB) is committed to improving outcomes for children and young people.

***'We want to develop a workforce that is confident, respected, well supported and able to deliver improved services and outcomes for children and young people. A workforce which has high aspirations for the children and families in Slough and high expectations of themselves'***

Our vision is based on the following principles and values

- Our workforce will have high aspirations for children and their families
- Our workforce will be well respected and deliver excellence in their practice and interventions
- We will ensure our staff are appropriately trained and qualified to deliver positive outcomes for children and their families at every point of service delivery in the child's life
- Our workforce will be committed to partnership and integrated working
- We will ensure everyone in the workforce has the skills, behaviour and knowledge to work together to safeguard children and young people
- Our workforce will be provided with the skills, knowledge and guidance which will enable the engagement and participation of children, families and carers in the design and delivery of services they need.
- Our workforce will have a shared understanding of the aims and objectives of the Slough Children and young people's plan and how they contribute to defined outcomes.



## Our journey so far

In 2011 The Children's Trust launched a workforce strategy which set out the following priorities

- Developing and embedding integrated training and development to promote trust and respect between professions to improve delivery for children and young people
- Recruitment, Retention Remodelling and Induction
- Promote a strong leadership and management development framework
- Intelligence gathering around workforce planning to meet current and emerging skills shortages

The partnership achievements are set out below against those priorities

***Developing and embedding integrated training and development to promote trust and respect between professions to improve delivery for children and young people.***

The multi-agency safeguarding training activity is planned and monitored by the Slough LSCB through the East Berkshire Training sub group, offering a rolling programme of multi-agency safeguarding training at all levels - universal, targeted and specialist programmes for the children's workforce based on degree of contact with children and/or parents/carers and their levels of responsibility.

We developed the Quality Protects programme for local community organisations within Slough. This has strengthened their understanding and response to safeguarding issues and the delivery of integrated working. To date 61 groups have received accreditation through the programme. Community groups also access the SLSCB training.

The Children's Partnership launched the use of the Slough Learning portal as a 'one stop shop' where the children's workforce can access details on multi-agency training and single agency training.

Staff from across the different sectors of the workforce have been trained in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Lead Practitioner (LP), Team around the Child (TAC) meetings and information sharing to support integrated working.

There has been the development of Team around the Family (TAF), multi-agency approaches working with families who do not meet the social care threshold developing a co-ordinated approach to supporting families. This has been particularly evident in some schools.

The recent review of our 'Early Help' model indicates, however, that whilst there are areas of good practice these are patchy and the approaches are not consistently embedded within the workforce

## Recruitment, retention remodelling and induction

### Service remodelling

New structures have been put in place within Slough Borough Council Children's Social Care, designed to follow the child's journey through the system, support the move towards a single statutory assessment and supporting more effective work across the 'threshold' into children's social care.

We have created small teams (5 social workers), managed by a Practice Manager with accountability for performance and quality, supported by a Consultant Practitioner post whose role is focused on practice improvement. These roles are consistent with the College of Social Work 'Professional Capabilities Framework'.

Phase 1 (Field social work teams) of this structure went 'live' at the end of January 2013, and we are currently extending the model to our fostering and adoption service.

Within children's social care, a Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit has been created bringing together under an additional Head of Service Post the Child Protection Conference Chairs/Independent Reviewing Officer function, Quality Assurance Manager, Local Authority Designated Officer/Safeguarding in Education post and the SLSCB Manager. This unit provides scrutiny and challenge to Children's Social Care, and supports quality assurance activity both within the service and across LSCB partnership activities.

In the spring of 2013, the Children's Partnership Board commissioned a major piece of work to help us re-model our approach to Early Help. The recommendations from this work have

been agreed by the Children and Young People's Partnership and we are in the process of implementing the recommendations which include the development of:

- An integrated 'One Front Door', bringing together the duty arrangements for children's social care and the council's targeted early help offer under a single manager. The 'One Front Door' will share information, triage and task to children's social care or targeted early help.
- A Targeted Family Support service
- A review of the current CAF process and implementation of a new Early Help Assessment, working across agencies to remove barriers to multi-agency working

SBC are also in the process of bringing together a number of 'early intervention and prevention' services (family support workers, CAMHS Tier 2 service, Family Information Service and CAF co-ordination) within the Council to form a 'Targeted Early Help' service, working with families where parenting is compromised through parental factors such as domestic abuse, drug and alcohol misuse or mental ill-health. This service, alongside the Targeted Youth Support Service and targeted family support in Children's Centres will form the Council's 'early help' offer.

Under the management of a single Assistant Director this will begin to form a single integrated model across the pathway of early help, targeted support and access into children's social care.

The Schools Services Review' within the Council has recently concluded and will see the outsourcing of school improvement and school facing services such as Educational Psychologist, Specialist Support Teachers and Children's Centres outsourced to an independent provider in September 2013.

This resulted in a revised structure for retained staffing groups within services for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The white paper will require a remodelling of services for CYP with SEN and or disabilities to ensure Slough is able to deliver education, health and care plans as specified in the white paper.

The Review of the Youth Service in 2012, has led to a re-designed Youth Offer, where universal youth services will be primarily delivered by the community and voluntary sector and targeted services delivered by the Council.

The establishment of Slough Clinical Commissioning Group and the transfer of public health to the local authority have brought about changes in responsibilities for commissioning and quality assurance of services delivered to children and their families within the health economy.

In addition Slough Borough Council has put in place a new organisational structure for the delivery of its own commissioning functions. The structure pulls together into a new single commissioning unit role and functions from across the council that are key to care group commissioning for all age groups. The structure promotes, working across age groups and between care-groups, and improved strategic synergy whilst retaining the specialism within posts of the DAAT, 0-19 commissioning and commissioning for adults staff. The structure increases staffing resources in Children Young People and Families commissioning and contract management functions.

The Children and Young People's Participation Officer is located within the unit providing an opportunity to focus on specific voice of the child engagement in commissioning and service re-design.

## Recruitment and retention

Recruitment and retention of staff within the workforce remains a challenge for particular sectors, in particular children's social care.

Work in 2012 led to the appointment to a number of senior and first line manager posts within Children's Social Care; Social Work Teams in the Looked After Children Service' are nearly fully staffed with permanent social work staff; however, we still have a significant proportion of agency staff in the Child Protection/Children in need Service. We have agreed 'market supplements' for Practice Manager and Consultant Practitioner posts as a way to attract staff to these posts.

Currently children's social care has initiated 'Getting It Right for Children in Slough: An approach to recruitment and retention to improve the quality of social work.' This programme will drive forward a recruitment and retention plan. The main components are:

- Social work teams with reduced turnover, particularly in the CP/CIN teams. Each CP/CIN team will have at least 2 social workers who are experienced and skilled child protection social workers.
- Achieving a balance of permanent and interim staff with a gradual move to rebalance the ratio in favour of permanent staff.
- Staff will have manageable workloads - no team to have an average case load per worker of more than 20 children.
- A Professional Development and Improvement Strategy with a comprehensive programme of core, mandatory and specialist training across both the children's social care and the early help workforce.

- A focus on supporting newly qualified social workers, participation in the Step up to Social Work Programme and a policy of working with local universities to offer placements to social work students.

Appendix 1 sets out in more detail the programme of activity.

Within our schools, succession planning and leadership capacity is a key focus, given the changing landscape within the Local Authority and the outsourcing of school services, including school improvement.

The Department of Health is funding a four-year transformational programme of recruitment and retention, professional development and improved commissioning linked to public health improvement. This will secure a future health visiting service that is universal, energised and fit for long-term growth. The Health Visitor Implementation Plan 2011-15 - 'A Call to Action, published in February 2011, sets out how the health visiting service will work with partners to deliver the ambition.

The Call for action recognises that the start of life is a crucial time for children and parents. Good, well resourced health visiting services can help ensure that families have a positive start, working in partnership with GPs, maternity and other health services, Children's Centres and other early year's services. This programme commits to investment in workforce expansion. It calls on the profession, those who commission health visiting services, and those who provide them to promote a revitalised service, one which ensures that all families are offered a core programme of evidence based preventative health care with additional care and support for those who need it. As well as bringing in new recruits, the programme will offer existing health visitors the opportunity to refresh and develop

their skills. For example, we will make sure that the learning from the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) and other evidence based programmes and methods aimed at helping families with complex needs is available to all.

Berkshire NHS Trust recruitment drive will deliver an increase of 8 health visitors (HV) which will increase the compliment of HV available to support Slough families.

### **Induction**

The framework for the SSCP - CWDC Children's Workforce Induction was rolled out in 2010/11. The cessation of funding has meant that the programme was discontinued.

Each agency has developed its own induction programme. There is core information which agencies have all agreed to include in their programme.

Children's Social Care has revised their induction programme and every new worker is provided with an induction pack and programme. The roll out of the Early Help proposals includes a common induction process.

### **Promote a strong leadership and management development framework**

Individual agencies have their own tailored leadership and management development programmes.

The challenge has been to develop 'space' for multi- professional and multi-agency approaches in generic subject areas through a range of developmental activities. (Workshops and training events)

The Next Generation Leaders Programme is a corporate talent management programme aimed to create and nurture a pool of potential leaders who are ready and able to take on leadership roles. Cohort 1 came to a conclusion in April 2013 and a second cohort is planned later this year with the aim of boosting and bolstering leadership potential and embedding the new leadership and management competencies and related skills, knowledge and behaviours. Seven members of staff successfully completed the course from the Children, Young People and Families service within the Wellbeing Directorate of the Council.

In 2012 Slough Borough Council provided a 12 month programme for managers in Children's Services which included a mentoring programme aimed at developing management skills and improving outcomes for the children through effective practice.



Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust support staff to undertake various leadership and management development programmes such as Leadership at the Point of Care and Certificate/diploma in Management

In the education sector the growth of academies continues to have a major impact on how we manage the development of leaders, because structures and traditional leadership roles change within schools. However this provides potential opportunity to collaborate and share leadership as well as develop and up skill our existing workforce to take on new roles. Slough learning partnership (SLP) which has a membership of all schools and academies within the Local Authority, is a key organisation for communication and information sharing. Its website already advertises training opportunities including multi-agency training for safeguarding and leadership. The Chair of the SLP has met with the external provider who is taking over the provision of services to schools from the LA from September 2013 and is keen to work in partnership with them brokering and helping to customise support packages to meet the needs of Slough schools and children.

***Intelligence gathering around workforce planning to meet current and emerging skills shortages***

Agencies within the partnership have completed this to varying degrees. Partner agencies have agreed to progress this work and share this information in the workforce development sub-group, with a view to identifying where there are gaps in skills.

## Our strategic priorities 2013-2016

Our strategic priorities outlined below are based on an analysis of need which informs the refresh and extension of our workforce development strategy.

Our aim is to have in place a highly skilled, confident and child centric workforce that is focused on delivering good outcomes for children. We want a workforce that is stable to enable continuity of 'help' to children and families, who understand the Slough approach and are ambitious to contribute to the outcomes for children and young people as set out in the Slough Children and Young People's Plan

We believe that the following strategic priorities will enable our workforce to achieve the above

- 1. Secure effective multi-agency working in Early Help**
- 2. Secure effective multi-agency working in Child protection and children in need arrangements**
- 3. Embed safe recruitment and safe practice**
- 4. Recruit and retain a highly skilled and effective children's workforce**

### **Priority 1 Secure effective multi-agency working in Early Help**

The outcome of the review of Early Help commissioned by the partnership has resulted in an agreed, re-designed Slough Early Help Model.

The new model includes a strategic Slough Early Help Board (reporting to the Children and Young People's Partnership) which will be supported by a Head of

Service (Early Help) whose role will include the strategic co-ordination of Early Help in Slough, across a range of multi-agency 'destination' services which will respond rapidly to facilitate de-escalation of need and sustainable outcomes below the threshold for children's social care and other specialist services. This role will include the lead for workforce development.

Workforce development will focus on improvements to the multiagency practice framework that supports early intervention, in ensuring effective approaches to early help assessment and planning, information sharing and a shared understanding of thresholds.

Our priorities are:

- To ensure a shared understanding of thresholds at different points in the continuum of need
- Practitioners who are trained to identify additional need at an early point
- Practitioners who are able to assess need at an early point using the Slough Early help assessment
- Practitioners who are able to act as lead professionals and work effectively together around children or families to improve outcomes.

## **Priority 2**

### **Secure effective multi-agency working in Child protection and children in need arrangements**

The principles identified for an effective child protection system are:

The system should be child-centred: everyone involved in child protection should pursue child-centred working and recognise children and young people as individuals with rights, including their right to participation in decisions about them in line with their age and maturity.

The family is usually the best place for bringing up children and young people, but difficult judgments are sometimes needed in balancing the right of a child to be with their birth family with their right to protection from abuse and neglect.

Helping children and families involves working with them and therefore the quality of the relationship between the child and family and professionals directly impacts on the effectiveness of help given.

Early help is better for children: it minimises the period of adverse experiences and improves outcomes for children.

Children's needs and circumstances are varied so the system needs to offer equal variety in its response.

Good professional practice is informed by knowledge of the latest theory and research.

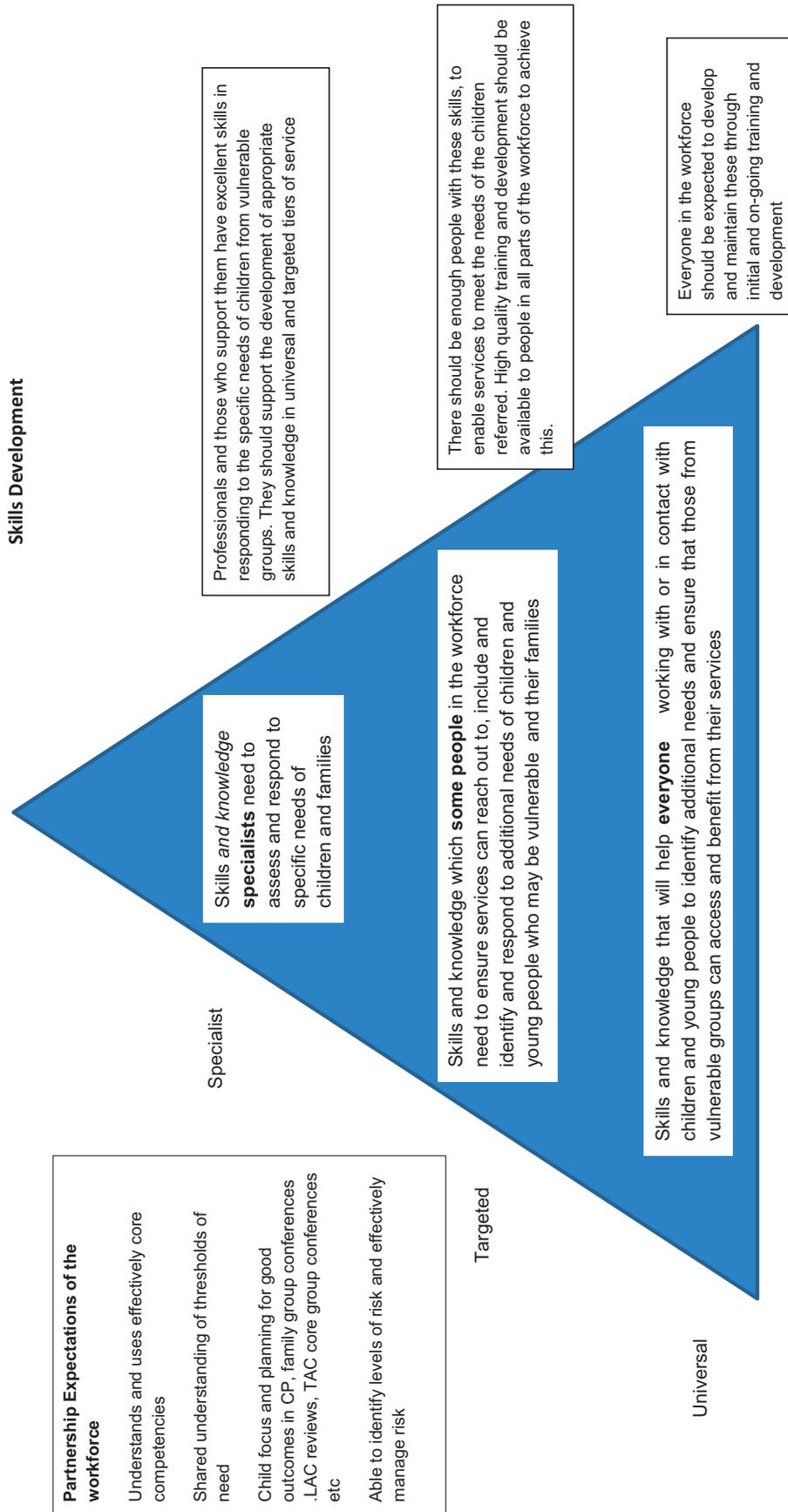
Uncertainty and risk are features of child protection work: risk management can only reduce risks, not eliminate them.

The measure of the success of child protection systems, both local and national, is whether children are receiving effective help.

Our priorities are:

- Each service to have in place appropriate single agency training and workforce development to ensure that staff understand their responsibilities to identify risk and respond appropriately when they have concerns about the safety of children. The training and development activity will be commensurate to the role of the agency
- Review the multi-agency child protection training programme to ensure that it reflects new statutory guidance and that it supports effective multi-agency child protection working at a generic and specialist level.
- To develop multi-agency training to ensure that children subject to child in need plans are supported and that effective step-down arrangements are in place
- Statutory agencies develop and deliver joint training across their respective workforces, specifically looking at more effective responses to domestic violence, parental drug and alcohol misuse, parental mental ill-health, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation.
- To ensure that the voice of the child is central in our work with children and families.

The diagram on page 15 provides an overview of our minimum standards as defined by the 2020 workforce strategy.



### **Priority 3**

## **Embed safe recruitment and safe practice**

Safeguarding underpins every aspect of our work with children and families and is everyone's responsibility. It is essential that every level within the workforce puts safeguarding first and recognises our collective responsibility to children and their families. A pre-condition for safe practice is that we have effective recruitment processes in place to support 'safe' recruitment practice.

Our priorities are:

- That each agency has in place safe recruitment processes and that they ensure that all recruitment activity is undertaken according to good practice
- That staff undertaking recruitment have undertaken appropriate training
- To work with the voluntary and community sector to support them in their drive to accredit safe practice through their Quality protects programme
- To ensure that Section 11 audits are undertaken and that we use the results to improve practice
- To ensure that each agency has effective whistle blowing policies in place

### **Priority 4**

## **Recruit and retain highly skilled and effective workforce**

Recruitment and retention of highly skilled staff remains a priority

Our priorities are;

- Implement 'Getting It Right For Children in Slough: An approach to recruitment and retention to improve the quality of children's social work'
- Fully implement the 'Call to action' Programme
- Develop multi-agency practice forums where practitioners come together to discuss cases and effective practice.
- Encourage and support opportunities for shadowing and observation across agencies.
- Develop Slough wide approaches within the Children's sector to recruitment and retention - ie build on 'grow your own' initiatives which operate within Thames Valley police, Health, Schools and SBC.



## Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

High level action plans for each strategic priority have been developed and are attached. (Appendix 2)

The Children's Workforce Development Sub-Group (CWDSG) will monitor progress. Quarterly reports on performance will be presented to the Children and young people's partnership board. (CYPPB)

Lead officers in collaboration with the CWDSG will determine what measurements are put in place to monitor the impact of the strategy against outcome measures for children and young people. This will be agreed with the CYPPB.



## Appendix 1

### Getting It Right For Children in Slough: An approach to recruitment and retention to improve the quality of social work

We have agreed the following approach to recruitment and retention in Slough.

Our objectives:

- To stabilise the social work teams and reduce turnover, particularly in the CP/CIN teams
- Each CP/CIN team to have at least 2 social workers who are experienced and skilled child protection social workers
- A balance of permanent and interim staff with a gradual move to rebalance the ratio in favour of permanent staff (we have secured this already in our LAC service)
- Manageable workloads - no team to have an average case load per worker of more than 20 cases (we have secured this already in our LAC service)
- Timely and high quality assessments and help to children and families; effective management oversight and decision making

The following form the basis of our approach and action plan. Whilst we have differentiated recruitment actions from retention actions, the 2 are linked and we will implement our proposals accordingly.

#### **Recruitment:**

We recognise that at present, Slough is not an attractive option for either prospective permanent or interim social workers. The following actions recognise this and, as a consequence, are a mixture of immediate actions which should

provide short term solutions and longer term solutions

1. To recruit experienced first line managers to the remaining Practice Manager vacancies
2. To enter into a dialogue with the providers of interim social workers with the view to securing a number of competent and experienced agency child protection social workers (2 per CIN/CP Team); alongside this we will identify those agency workers who are not performing at a sufficient standard and will let them go. We will choose replacements on the basis of quality, not cost.
3. Re-baseline our pay and conditions, ensuring we remain competitive for Practice Managers, Consultant Practitioners and Social Workers.
4. To commission a specialist recruitment agency to manage a bespoke recruitment exercise for Consultant Practitioners. This will be backed by a robust programme to develop and support their role and ensure effective implementation.
5. To invest in future social workers through participation in the Step up to Social Work Programme (to start January 2014) and take at least 2 candidates and to reinstate our offer to universities in respect of student placements.

6. To develop a strong 'Why work in Slough' offer to support recruitment (and retention) activity

All recruitment activity (including the selection process) will be undertaken to a high standard. We want to ensure that we only recruit high quality staff. We will develop and agree a 'standard' process for undertaking selection which will support this aim.

To retain the open advert on our website as this has proved successful in securing recruitment to some posts. The narrative on the site needs to be updated.

#### **Retention:**

We believe we have a number of good staff and staff who show a great deal of promise for the future. Many of our staff are highly motivated and committed to Slough. We want to hold on to these staff and help them grow into very good social workers and managers. We want to create the conditions where we do good social work so that children are safe and thrive. The following actions recognise this and are a mix of immediate and longer term actions to achieve our objective.

1. To support and develop our Practice Managers to achieve a high standard of management practice
2. To deliver a comprehensive programme of learning and development activity to our permanent social workers.
3. To provide an effective PQ programme for our more experienced social workers.
4. To commission a programme of mentoring for permanent social workers in the CP/CIN teams. The social work 'mentors' would occupy the vacant consultant practitioner posts in these teams for a 6 month period, whilst we recruit to vacancies on a permanent basis.

5. To provide effective support and learning for our newly qualified social workers through their assessed year in employment (AYSE)
6. Provide a comprehensive induction programme for all new staff
7. A Progression Policy that recognises good social work and provides a career progression.
8. Provide regular and good quality supervision where there is opportunity for reflective discussions about cases
9. Review workloads (CIN Project) to reduce current workloads and establish a 'true' workload for CP/CIN teams (consistent with statistical neighbour levels for referrals, children subject to a CP Plan and children who are looked after). This may lead to a review of staffing ratios.
10. To improve the physical conditions within which staff work

A head of service has been appointed to lead recruitment. (Taking the lead for both interim, and permanent recruitment). The children and family services management team will work together to implement our proposals for retention but our sector specialist will take the lead in respect of the practice improvement and development actions. This work will be supported by our Learning and Development Team.

This strategy is intended to govern our approach to recruitment and retention for the next 12 months. We will then take stock and review. It will also support the first of our three recently agreed priorities - a minimum of two highly competent social workers in each team.

We will develop action plans for both elements of this strategy

#### **Assistant Director Children, Young People and Families Wellbeing**

## Appendix 2

### Action plan

Priority	What we will do	Outcomes to be achieved	Measurement	When	Lead
Secure effective multi-agency early help	Refocus Early Help Services to improve outcomes for children, young people and families and prevent escalation into more specialist services	<p>Multi-agency staff contribute to the development of the new Early Help model and understand their role in this</p> <p>There is a shared understanding of thresholds at different points in the continuum of need</p> <p>Development of a 'One Front Door' to include Specialist and Targeted Services</p> <p>Partnership buy in to new Early Help model</p> <p>Improved outcomes for children, young people and families and less reliance on more specialist services</p>	<p>Feedback from staff on focus groups, workshops and HR consultation processes</p> <p>Training programmes in place</p> <p>Timescales of referrals through to service interventions. Reduced IA/CA</p> <p>Increased numbers of CAF/Single Assessment. Reduced referrals to Social Care. Increase in multi-agency training</p> <p>Reduced numbers on CPP and LAC, improved attendance, reduced exclusions, reduced access to substance misuse services, reduced referrals of domestic abuse services, reduced ASB, reduced referrals to mental health services</p> <p>Children and families receive appropriate information on local offer for children with SEN(D)</p>	October 2013 and on going reviewed 3 monthly	HOS Early Help

Priority	What we will do	Outcomes to be achieved	Measurement	When	Lead
Secure effective multi-agency early help	Ensure all staff delivering early help within the children's workforce are qualified, trained, supported and valued to provide quality services	<p>All staff have relevant qualifications, skills and experience</p> <p>Practitioners are trained to identify additional need at an early point</p> <p>Practitioners are able to assess need at an early point using the Slough Early Help Assessment</p> <p>Practitioners are able to act as lead professionals and work effectively together around children or families.</p> <p>All agency early help services have core competencies which inform training, supervision and evidence based practice</p> <p>All staff to have individual training plan and receive regular supervision</p> <p>Staff have access to learning to match their own developmental needs</p> <p>Agencies have access to relevant research and resources to inform practice</p> <p>Train all agencies in the use of universal impact assessment tool to measure outcomes for children and families engaging with all Early Help Collective services.</p> <p>Sustainable Workforce: ambitious for every child and young person, excellent in their practice, committed to partnership and integrated working, respected and valued as professionals</p>	<p>Agency QA process, supervision and training plan</p> <p>Agency QA processes</p> <p>Regular supervision, progression routes, modelling, joint working, shadowing and management support</p> <p>Improved outcomes for children, young people and families</p>	<p>March 2014 (work started July 2013)</p>	<p>HR/workforce agency leads</p>

## Getting it right for children

Slough Children and Young People's Partnership Board  
Children's Workforce Strategy 2014-2016

Priority	What we will do	Outcomes to be achieved	Measurement	When	Lead
Secure effective multi-agency early help	Roll out a new Early Help Assessment to replace the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)	<p>Partner agencies contribute to multi-agency training</p> <p>Multi-agency training programme in place for all staff using single assessment</p> <p>Shared understanding and use of threshold of need</p> <p>CAF system reviewed and used by all agencies (new Early Help Assessment)</p> <p>Quality assessments and clear robust plans with measurable outcomes</p> <p>Identify, train and support Early Help Assessment Champions in all partner agencies to increase the effectiveness of the Team Around the Child (TAC) or Team Around the Family (TAF) and ensure consistency in team membership.</p>	<p>Multi-agency sign up for Early Help Assessment, increased multi-agency assessments, reduced referrals to Social Care</p> <p>Funding in place for multi-agency training</p> <p>Numbers of agencies and staff accessing multi-agency training programme and are equipped to use the new process</p> <p>Evaluation of training programmes. Use of existing staff to provide training</p> <p>Increased multi-agency input into early help services</p> <p>Reduced inappropriate referrals to Social Care and specialist services</p> <p>Audits of Assessments and analysis of CAF data</p>	January 2014	HOS Early Help

Priority	What we will do	Outcomes to be achieved	Measurement	When	Lead
Secure effective multi-agency working in child protection and children in need arrangements	Each service to have in place appropriate single agency training to ensure that staff understand their responsibilities to identify risk and respond appropriately when they have concerns about the safety of children. The training and development activity will be commensurate to the role of the agency	All agencies working with children and young people will train staff to a minimum of basic awareness training every 3 years as per working together  Agencies to have access to guidelines to develop and deliver in-house single agency training  Practitioners are able to recognise, respond and refer when concerns about safeguarding emerge	Section 11 audits via the LSCB  Increase number of referrals from different agencies  Number of contacts made to CSC for IAG	Every 3 years / and/or annual cycle	LSCB Business Manager
	Review the multi-agency child protection training programme to ensure that it reflects new statutory (Working together 2013) guidance and that it supports effective multi-agency child protection work throughout the child's journey from needing to receiving help	Staff feel confident and able to recognise and identify, respond and refer risk to the appropriate services  Effective multi-agency child protection working which is purposeful and supports good outcomes for children and young people  Multi-agency agreement on common core competencies	Multi-agency audits  Course evaluation on impact of learning on practice - picked up through supervision back in the workplace  3 month post evaluation of impact	December 2013	LSCB- Learning and development lead



## Getting it right for children

Slough Children and Young People's Partnership Board  
Children's Workforce Strategy 2014-2016

Priority	What we will do	Outcomes to be achieved	Measurement	When	Lead
Secure effective multi-agency working in child protection and children in need arrangements	<p>Design and devise a step up/step down process</p> <p>Develop multi-agency training to communicate the new processes and ensure that children subject to child in need plans are supported and that effective step-down arrangements are in place</p>	<p>Effective multi-agency working which is purposeful and supports good outcomes for children, young people and families (CYPF)</p> <p>Families and children and young people supported in a structured way and integrated back into the community</p> <p>Practitioners are able to support CYPF in the community and be aware of local resources through the Family Information Service (FIS) and the Local Offer for children with SEN(D)</p>	<p>Reduced number of repeat referrals to CSC</p> <p>Reduced number of CPP and LAC cases</p> <p>Increased number of hits on the FIS website</p> <p>Increase number of staff taking up Multi agency training</p>	November 2013	HoS - Early Help
	<p>Statutory agencies access joint training across their respective workforces, specifically looking at more effective responses to domestic violence, parental drug and alcohol misuse, parental mental ill-health child sexual exploitation, and female genital mutilation.</p>	<p>Raise awareness and make accessible all local learning and development multi-agency and specialist training opportunities in a single point (LSCB website)</p> <p>Practitioners will be better equipped to recognise the toxic trio and be able to get support for CYPF at an earlier stage</p>	<p>Increased access to multi-agency training (DAAT, DA, CMHT and Engage - CSE Project)</p> <p>Reduced referrals for drug services, domestic violence services and mental health services</p>	On going	All agencies - CPD/ learning and development lead & LSCB training

Priority	What we will do	Outcomes to be achieved	Measurement	When	Lead
Embed safe recruitment and safe practice	Ensure partner agencies have safe recruitment practices and policies in place.	Staff employed or acting as volunteers have been rigorously vetted and assessed for their roles within the children's workforce	Partner agencies have verified that they are compliant with safe recruitment practices through the section 11 audit	On going but section 11 audit at least every 2 or 3 years	Individual organisational HR Leads/LSCB
	We will put in place a programme to review compliance with safe recruitment practices with the private and voluntary sector, to build on existing good practice	Staff employed or acting as volunteers have been rigorously vetted and assessed for their roles within the children's workforce	Annual review of contracts Number of agencies reviewed by CSV	November 2013 On going Section 11 audits	CSV -Strategic Operations Manager
	Ensure that each agency has effective whistle blowing policies in place	Staff feel confident to raise concerns and are aware of the process for doing this. Children and young people are protected	Partner agencies have verified that they have effective whistle blowing policies in place Annual audits of cases	November 2013 On going  On going	Individual organisational HR Leads/LSCB

## Getting it right for children

Slough Children and Young People's Partnership Board  
Children's Workforce Strategy 2014-2016

Priority	What we will do	Outcomes to be achieved	Measurement	When	Lead
Recruit and retain highly skilled and effective workforce	Implement the Getting it right for children in Slough: An approach to recruitment and retention to improve the quality of social work	Highly skilled staff stable workforce and continuity of care and support for children and families	Reduction in staff turnover % increase in no's of permanent staff	July 2013 - ongoing	Head of Service / AD children young people and families wellbeing (SBC)
	Continue to progress recruitment of Health Visitors through 'Call to action' programme	% increase in numbers of HV available to provide universal and targeted services to children and families	Increase in the number of families seen Health assessments completed within timescale	On going	Area Team Health Lead
	Through our programmes of multi-agency training and individual organisational development programmes support staff to deliver high quality services which they are proud of.	Agencies working for children in Slough are viewed as the chosen employer/s to work for.	Staff satisfaction surveys % reduction in turnover	On-going but at least annual measurement of turnover in partner agencies	All agencies - CPD/ learning and development lead



Priority	What we will do	Outcomes to be achieved	Measurement	When	Lead
Recruit and retain highly skilled and effective workforce	Leadership capacity is developed with in all agencies in Slough through the provision of customised leadership programmes some of which are multi-agency programmes. Staff are able to access good quality CPD	Slough is seen as a place where staff are developed and supported with training for leadership as well as more specific job related training.  This makes Slough an employer of choice and helps retain skilled staff	Slough grows and retains more of its own leaders over time  % reduction in turnover at senior levels in agencies	Ongoing but at least annual measurement of turnover of senior leaders in partner agencies	All agencies - strategic lead for leadership and development
	Robust succession planning is a feature of all agencies' workforce development plans and ensures retention and development of able, talented staff whilst providing opportunities for experienced staff to share skills and develop others	Less transition and recruitment issues to senior posts as sustained succession planning minimises disruption in all agencies over time.  Staff remain effective in senior posts for longer and are well supported by colleagues who shadow/support them	Workforce surveys of how long senior leaders stay in post and whether succession plans smooth transitions and enable agencies to continue to function effectively when there is inevitable turnover	ongoing	All agencies - strategic lead for workforce planning
	Develop multi-agency practice forums where practitioners can come together to discuss cases and effective practice.	Front-line staff are able to enhance practice and develop and sustain improved integrated working		September 2013 - on going	LSCB Learning and development lead





