



# CWN Vision and Principles for Induction to the Children and Young People's Workforce

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# Introduction

<sup>1</sup> The CWN is the national umbrella body for sectors that work with children, young people and families. The full list of members is available on the CWN website: [www.childrensworkforce.org.uk](http://www.childrensworkforce.org.uk).

<sup>2</sup> For more information about the IQF visit: [www.iqf.org.uk/](http://www.iqf.org.uk/)

## The Children's Workforce Network (CWN)<sup>1</sup> has developed a vision and principles for induction for all those who work with children, young people and families in England (Annex 1).

The vision and principles are the first step towards a common understanding and direction on induction for the children and young people's workforce. They establish an expectation that everyone in the workforce should have an induction based on the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (the Common Core), tailored appropriately to their role and setting.

Effective induction is central to good human resources practice and is the foundation of continuing professional development. It applies to staff who are newly recruited, to those who have been promoted, or to those whose existing role is changing. It applies to people working in full-time, part-time, sessional and volunteer roles. It applies to those who work with children and young people as the main part of their job, and those who come into contact with children and young people for some of the time.

The vision and principles provide a definition of induction that embraces the wide spectrum of arrangements that exist across the children and young people's workforce. These range from statutory induction requirements for newly qualified teachers, and social care staff; to introductory training programmes and induction activities that are specific to many job roles; to induction arrangements that are relevant to an individual workplace.

While acknowledging this diversity, the vision and principles identify elements of good practice that should underpin induction for workers in all roles and settings. In addition to laying emphasis on the Common Core, the vision and principles highlight the importance of preparing people to work in a multi-agency context by providing them with opportunities to meet people from other settings, to gain an understanding of the roles and priorities of other agencies, and of common tools and processes.

The vision and principles draw attention to key initiatives of the CWN that have a relationship to induction and introductory training, including:

- the Values for Integrated Working with Children and Young People (Annex 1a)
- the Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF)<sup>2</sup>

The vision and principles are not statutory guidance. They are not intended to impose inflexible new requirements. They are forward-looking, and are designed to be used as a benchmark to inform the improvement of existing practice, as well as in planning future provision. While highlighting common elements of effective practice, they emphasise the importance of tailoring induction around the needs of individual settings and job roles.

The vision and principles identify three groups with a key stake in effective induction:

- service leaders, managers and employers
- inductees
- children, young people and families

They highlight the responsibilities that rest with service leaders, managers and employers to provide effective induction; and the responsibilities of workers to undertake an induction. They highlight the benefits for all three groups that arise when effective induction arrangements are in place.

Over the next few months, CWN members will disseminate and promote the vision and principles to their stakeholders and networks. A further stage of work is planned in 2009-10, which will involve wider consultation on how the vision and principles can be exemplified in different settings, and how common approaches can be supported across settings.

Those consulted will include service leaders, managers and employers and inductees in a range of sectors and settings. Consultation has also taken place with children and young people about what they expect from newly inducted workers.

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# Annex 1

## CWN Vision and Principles for Induction to the Children and Young People's Workforce

### Our vision for induction

Everyone who has an impact on the lives of children, young people and families through their work, whether paid or unpaid, should participate in a timely, agreed, and planned induction programme in line with the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce.

Effective induction is the foundation of continuing professional development. It ensures that workers and volunteers in all settings, at all stages of their careers, have the knowledge, skills and understanding that are essential to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.

### What we mean by induction

In the children and young people's workforce, induction covers a wide spectrum of activities, from workplace orientation, to planned development and training, to statutory programmes and requirements. Broadly, activities are of two types:

- **Workplace induction** – a planned programme of activities to prepare and orient people who are new in post to their workplace. Workplace induction applies to all people starting a new role, whether as the result of an appointment, promotion, change in deployment or volunteering opportunity.
- **Introductory professional development** – activities that support the development of essential knowledge and skills. Introductory professional development builds on workplace induction for new starters. It may also apply to existing workers, who need to develop essential knowledge and skills in relation to working with children, young people and their families, for example, as the result of a change of role.

Our vision embraces all these activities.

### What we mean by the children and young people's workforce

By the workforce, we mean everyone who works with children, young people and families, whether in a full-time, part-time, sessional or volunteer capacity. This includes people whose jobs involve working with children, young people and families all the time, as well as those who do so for part of the time, or as part of their jobs. It includes people at every stage of their careers, from new entrants, who need the opportunity to develop essential knowledge, skills and understanding, to experienced and senior workers for whom the focus will be on understanding the particular workplace and context.<sup>3</sup>

### Principles of induction to the children and young people's workforce

Induction covers a broad spectrum of activities and in all cases must respond to individual and organisational needs. However, the following principles underpin effective practice for all workers in all settings.

Induction for people working with children, young people and families should:

- give a sense of belonging to the children and young people's workforce
- provide the individual with an understanding of how their job role contributes to their organisation's priorities and to improved outcomes for children, young people and families
- be based on the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (the Common Core) and provide the essential knowledge and skills that workers need in their job role and setting
- prepare people to work in a multi-agency context by:
  - providing opportunities to meet workers from other agencies
  - developing an understanding of the roles and priorities of other agencies and of how to work together
  - developing an understanding of common tools and processes
  - where possible, spend time in other settings

- demonstrate a commitment to the Children's Workforce Network Values for Integrated Working with Children and Young People (Annex A)
- have the commitment and support of senior leaders, managers and employers
- be a planned programme, agreed between the employer and the individual, that is prompt, timely and monitored for its effectiveness
- be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of part-time, sessional and volunteer workers
- include a skills audit to identify individual training and development needs
- be based on professional and occupational standards where appropriate and provide opportunities for progression to formal qualifications
- be consistent with relevant frameworks that support career progression, such as:
  - the Integrated Qualifications Framework
  - the Qualifications and Credit Framework
  - sector-specific status, such as National Qualified Social Worker, Early Years Professional Status, Qualified Teacher Status, Higher Level Teaching Assistant Status, etc.
- involve a commitment to ongoing support in the workplace through work-based learning, continuing professional development and review
- keep up to date with relevant legislation, policies and procedures

### Responsibilities and benefits

**Service leaders, managers and employers** have a responsibility to provide a planned, agreed and consistent induction programme for all workers. This includes:

- providing the opportunity for all workers to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that are essential to their jobs, including the Common Core

- ensuring workers understand how their role contributes to the organisation's priorities and to improved outcomes for children, young people and families
- valuing people and helping them develop to their full potential
- meeting statutory requirements where required
- defining clear lines of accountability for all workers
- creating a safe working environment where people are clear about their role
- benchmarking provision against national good practice
- demonstrating a commitment to equality and diversity
- promoting and championing the importance of effective induction

In providing effective induction, they will:

- have confidence that services are contributing to better outcomes for children, young people and families
- develop workers who are motivated, confident and capable; understand the contribution they make and are committed to their own development
- prepare their people to work in a multi-agency setting
- increase their capacity to manage change
- achieve value for time and money invested
- develop better working relationships within their organisation and with other agencies
- have opportunities to build and strengthen partnerships with other agencies, including through the delivery of induction
- have the opportunity to develop experienced workers by involving them in coaching and mentoring arrangements for inductees
- provide the basis for a culture of lifelong learning in their organisation

<sup>4</sup> This implies that practitioners take a view of children in the round, and do not focus exclusively on, for example, their offending or their disability or their learning needs. Practitioners understand that they may misinterpret, misdiagnose or intervene in a misguided way if they lack key information about a child's context and history.

**All workers** have a responsibility to undertake and complete a planned and agreed induction as part of their role. This includes:

- developing the knowledge, skills and understanding that are essential to their role, including the Common Core
- striving to work to the best of their ability
- seeing their induction as part of their professional development
- understanding how their role relates to other roles within the children and young people's workforce
- understanding how their role contributes to the priorities of their organisation, and how they are making a difference to outcomes for children, young people and families

Their induction will help to ensure they:

- become effective in their role more quickly
- have greater confidence
- feel valued by their employers
- enjoy their work
- have the interests of children, young people and families at the centre of their work

**Children, young people and families** have a right to expect services that are delivered by workers who have been properly prepared for their role. When coming into contact with such people they will:

- recognise workers who are capable, confident and well-informed
- have confidence in those who are working with them
- have a positive experience
- see integrated working in practice
- experience positive outcomes in their lives

## Annex A

### Values for integrated working with children and young people (adopted by the Children's Workforce Network 2008)

#### Key attributes

Children and young people value practitioners who enjoy working with them, who treat them with respect and who are good at communicating with them.

Children's practitioners place the interests of children and young people at the heart of their work. They share responsibility for a range of outcomes. They are committed to ensuring all children and young people have the chance to: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and experience economic well-being. They recognise children's fundamental right to be safe, in order to reach other goals.

Practitioners concern themselves with the whole child<sup>4</sup>, whatever their specialism. Although their own involvement with specific children may be short-term, children's practitioners work to develop the potential and capacities of children and young people for the longer term.

Children's practitioners are committed to equality of opportunity for all children and young people, and actively combat discrimination and its effects through their work. They respond positively and creatively to diversity among children and young people, families, and colleagues.

Children's practitioners pursue positive outcomes for children and young people whose circumstances place them at risk of exclusion or under-achievement.

Practitioners recognise that respect, patience, honesty, reliability, resilience, trustworthiness and integrity are valued by children and young people, families and colleagues. By demonstrating these qualities in their work they help to nurture them in others.

<sup>5</sup> Practitioners need to be aware of and responsive to other significant relationships beyond the family that can have a positive effect on children's outcomes.

<sup>6</sup> Children's rights are given international expression in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which children's practitioners should know and uphold.

### **Work with children and young people, parents, carers and families<sup>5</sup>**

Children's practitioners recognise and uphold children's right<sup>6</sup>. They involve children and young people in decisions that affect them and take account of their views and preferences taking account of their capacities. They recognise that childhood and early adulthood are times of change, and that they need to respond to changes in children's views, capabilities and circumstances.

Practitioners recognise the fundamental role played by parents in their children's well-being and development, and strive to work in partnership with them.

Practitioners are committed to engaging children, young people and families fully in identifying goals, assessing options, making decisions and reviewing outcomes. They support children's and families' involvement in issues that matter to them, including through involvement in the development and evaluation of children's services.

Children's practitioners appreciate that their work will present dilemmas to be resolved, particularly between sharing information and maintaining confidentiality. They understand that their duty to safeguard children and young people comes first, but otherwise respect the right of children, young people and families to confidentiality, and are always clear about information they are obliged to share<sup>7</sup>.

### **Integrated work with a range of colleagues**

Children's practitioners value the contribution that a range of colleagues make to children and young people's lives, and they form effective relationships across the children's workforce. Their integrated practice is based on a willingness to bring their own expertise to bear on the pursuit of shared goals, and a respect for the expertise of others.

<sup>7</sup> This is a statement of values and practitioners will need to have regard to detailed professional and inter-professional guidance in this complex area.

Practitioners recognise that children, young people, families, and colleagues, value transparency and reliability, and strive to make sure that processes, roles, goals and resources are clear.

Practitioners involved in integrated work recognise the need to be clear about lines of communication, management and accountability as these may be more complex than in their specialist setting.

They uphold the standards, and values of their own professions in their inter-professional work. They understand that sharing responsibility for children's outcomes does not mean acting beyond their competence or responsibilities.

They are committed to taking action if safety or standards are compromised, whether that means alerting their own manager/employer or another appropriate authority.

Children's practitioners understand that the knowledge, understanding and skills of integrated work may differ from those in their own specialism. They are committed to reflecting on and improving their inter-professional practice, and to engaging with relevant research and other evidence.

Work with children and young people is stimulating and rewarding. It can also be emotionally demanding, and children's practitioners are sensitive to and supportive of each others' well being.



**Children's  
Workforce Network**  
delivering together

The Children's Workforce Network is a strategic alliance committed to creating and supporting a world-class children's workforce in England.

[www.childrensworkforce.org.uk](http://www.childrensworkforce.org.uk)