

# SFPC Strategy Board

## Workforce Recruitment & Retention

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# Children's social care workforce

- Our assumptions:
  - The workforce is multidisciplinary
  - Not just social workers, but also family support workers, residential workers, foster carers, mental health practitioners, speech and language, probation practitioners, etc.
  - The wider workforce and system: early help, education, health, police, etc.

## System pressures

- 80,000 children in care
- Cost £10 billion
- 4.3m children in poverty\*
- Disruption to recruitment from Europe and elsewhere
- Global pandemic further disrupting recruitment and retention of experienced staff - staff/carer burnout, early retirement
- Cost of living crisis has increased costs for everyone - families, service providers, carers, local authorities and staff
- High cost private placements in a 'sellers market'

\* <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/key-facts/>

## Social Worker workforce

- 32,502 children & family social workers – (up 2%)
- 87% female and 23% ethnic minority
- 6,522 vacancies – highest number in last 5 years (up 7%)
- 4,995 leaving in a year – highest in last 5 years (up by 16%)
- 5,977 agency workers – (up 3%)

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childrens-social-care-workforce>

## Family Valued: Ways the innovation helps

<b>Recruitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reminding people why they came into the work/profession</li><li>● Recruit into area/return to area, to work on innovative model in new ways (e.g. MDT)</li><li>● Relational model appeals: strengths-based</li><li>● Creative approaches, e.g. recruitment ad with video (Darlington)</li></ul>
<b>Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Clarity and consistency of communication; strong culture and opportunities for collaboration</li><li>● Whole-family approach offers potential for move across system, e.g. Children to Adult Social Care</li><li>● Opportunities for creativity, innovation and imagination, e.g. Darlington podcast &amp; YouTube channel</li><li>● Clear training and progression plan, with support, e.g. 6-stage process, Darlington</li></ul>

# Family Safeguarding: Ways the innovation helps

<b>Recruitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reminding people why they came into the work/profession</li><li>● Recruit into area/return to area, to work on innovative model in new ways (e.g. MDT)</li><li>● Manageable caseloads and supportive/developmental culture attractive</li><li>● Change attitude to agency-working and convert agency staff to permanent (Lancashire)</li></ul>
<b>Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Job satisfaction from working in a multi-disciplinary team (removing need for hand-offs), and from positive feedback from families</li><li>● Less form filling, more time with families, manageable caseloads and clear line management support; senior leader buy-in</li><li>● Focus on well-being</li><li>● Good opportunities for progression</li><li>● Focus on 'growing your own': ASYE &amp; NSQW supported by academy, with tailored training &amp; development</li><li>● Family support workers supported to become Social Workers (Lancashire)</li></ul>

# No Wrong Door: Ways the innovation helps

<b>Recruitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reminding people why they came into the work/profession</li><li>● Recruit into area/return to area, to work on innovative model in new ways (e.g. MDT)</li><li>● Examples of innovation: Life Coaches, Norfolk: Recruited newly-qualified Clinical Psychologists into CSC workforce; offered market supplement to match NHS; Police recruitment aligned with NWD model</li></ul>
<b>Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Training &amp; support</li><li>● Learning from multi-disciplinary team working and specialist colleagues; culture of “constant learning” (Norfolk)</li><li>● Values-driven, e.g. relational working with young person and family</li><li>● Opportunities for skills development, e.g. Residential worker engaged with other disciplines, and outreach work</li><li>● Opportunities for career development, e.g. Residential worker step up to Portfolio Lead role</li><li>● Communities of Practice, by discipline, led by NYCC</li></ul>

## Retaining Staff: Top Tips

- Senior leadership support and recognition
- No-blame culture (hard to achieve given external pressures)
- Nurture staff; encourage and support well-being and resilience
- Focus on developing 'emotionally available practitioners'
- Stop and say 'thank you'
- Away days and staff/team socials
- Celebrate success on a regular basis, e.g. annual awards
- Encourage self-appreciation
- High quality group supervision
- High performing multi-disciplinary teams
- Values driven leadership
- Safe and supportive environment for difficult decision making



## Background: SFPC Support Partner Role

- Support and challenge for innovators in working effectively with adopters, including action and research on leadership, recruitment and retention
- Support adopters to adopt in their context - meeting local needs, working with local workforce, families and young people
- Coaching leaders/managers and teams - supporting change process, culture change, thinking about authorising environment, multi-disciplinary working, developing resilience, etc.
- Supporting Communities of Practice - to connect and support learning within and across disciplines and teams, and across innovators and their adopters
- Support capacity building and skills development for innovators and adopters, e.g. Deep Dives, Healthy Systems
- Identify learning and training to share cross-programme