

Knowledge and skills self evaluation

South East London teaching partnership

In partnership

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Southwark
Council


ROYAL borough of
GREENWICH


Lewisham

 skillsforcare

Knowledge and skills self-evaluation: South East London teaching partnership

This self-evaluation has been developed by the South East London teaching partnership as part of our commitment to embed the Chief Social Workers' Knowledge and Skills Statements in both children's and adults' social work practice.

At the heart of this is the aim to promote critically reflective practice and learning in the partnership, and to support the development of social work career progression pathways across our organisations.

This document has been split into two sections:

- **If you are employed in an adult setting you should only complete the information contained in the **green section** titled Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services.**
- **If you are employed in a child and family setting you should only complete the information contained in the **red section** titled Knowledge and skills for child and family social work.**

Acknowledgement

Thanks to Enfield Council who have shared their templates to help us produce this resource.

Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

Self-evaluation

Name	
HCPC number	
Date of workshop and start of self-evaluation	

What is your PCF level of experience? (Please tick one box)

ASYE	
Social Worker	
Experienced Social Worker	
Advanced Level: professional social work educator	
Advanced Level: advanced social work practitioner	
Advanced Level: social work manager	
Strategic level	

Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

1. The role of social workers working with adults

The Care Act 2014 puts the principle of individual wellbeing and professional practice of the individual social worker at the heart of adult social care and signals a move away from care management as the overriding approach to working with adults.

Social workers need to apply a wide range of knowledge and skills to understand and build relationships, and work directly with individuals, their families and carers to enable and empower them to achieve best outcomes. This should include undertaking assessments, planning care and support and making the best use of available resources to enable people to have better lives. Social workers should enable people to experience personalised, integrated care and support them to maintain their independence and wellbeing, cope with change, attain the outcomes they want and need, understand and manage risk, and participate in the life of their communities. Social work should focus on the links between the individual, their health and wellbeing and their need for relationships and connection with their families, community and wider society. Social workers in adult social care must understand and be able to explain the role of social work as part of the system of health and welfare support to individuals and families. They must understand the impact of poverty, inequality and diversity on social and economic opportunities and how these relate to people's health and wellbeing as well as the functioning of their families, particularly in connection with child protection, adult safeguarding and also empowering individuals who may lack mental capacity.

Date of completing this section

To what extent do you think you meet this statement from previous experience or training?
(Circle a number on the scale below)

Not at all

In full

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Reasons for self-evaluation

Taking into account the responsibilities of your current job role and future career aspirations, what will you do to move forward and develop your knowledge and skills in this area of practice?

From this identify one learning objective and record this in your professional plan at the end of this self-evaluation.

Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

2. Person centred practice

Social workers should enable people to access the advice, support and services to which they are entitled. They should coordinate and facilitate a wide range of practical and emotional support, and discharge legal duties to complement people's own resources and networks, so that all individuals (no matter their background, health status or mental capacity), carers and families can exercise choice and control, (supporting individuals to make their own decisions, especially where they may lack capacity) and meet their needs and aspirations in personalised, creative and often novel ways. They should work co-productively and innovatively with people, local communities, other professionals, agencies and services to promote self-determination, community capacity, personal and family reliance, cohesion, earlier intervention and active citizenship. Social workers should also engage with and enable access to advocacy for people who may require help to secure the support and care they need due to physical or mental ill-health, sensory or communication impairment, learning disability, mental incapacity, frailty or a combination of these conditions and their physical, psychological and social consequences.

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Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

3. Safeguarding

Social workers must be able to recognise the risk indicators of different forms of abuse and neglect and their impact on individuals, their families or their support networks and should prioritise the protection of children and adults in vulnerable situations whenever necessary. This includes working with those who self-neglect. Social workers who work with adults must take an outcomes-focused, person-centred approach to safeguarding practice, recognising that people are experts in their own lives and working alongside them to identify person centred solutions to risk and harm. In situations where there is abuse or neglect or clear risk of those, social workers must work in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as part of improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety. Social workers should take the lead in managing positive interventions that prevent deterioration in health and wellbeing; safeguard people (who may or may not be socially excluded) at risk of abuse or neglect, or who are subject to discrimination, and to take necessary action where someone poses a risk to themselves, their children or other people. Social workers who work with adults must be able to recognise and take appropriate action where they come across situations where a child or young person may be at risk. Social workers should understand and apply in practice personalised approaches to safeguarding adults that maximise the adult's opportunity to determine and realise their desired outcomes and to safeguard themselves effectively, with support where necessary.

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Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

4. Mental capacity

Social workers must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) and Code of Practice and be able to apply these in practice. They should always begin from the presumption that individuals have capacity to make the decision in question. Social workers should understand how to make a capacity assessment, the decision and time specific nature of capacity and hence the need to reassess capacity appropriately. They should know when and how to refer to a Best Interest Assessor. Social workers must understand their responsibilities for people who are assessed as lacking capacity at a particular time and must ensure that they are supported to be involved in decisions about themselves and their care as far as is possible. Where they are unable to be involved in the decision-making process decisions should be taken in their best interests following consultation with all appropriate parties, including families and carers. Social workers must seek to ensure that an individual's care plan is the least restrictive possible to achieve the intended outcomes. Social workers have a key leadership role in modelling to other professionals the proper application of the MCA. Key to this is the understanding that the MCA exists to empower those who lack capacity as much as it exists to protect them. Social workers must model and lead a change of approach, away from that where the default setting is "safety first", towards a person-centred culture where individual choice is encouraged and where the right of all individuals to express their own lifestyle choices is recognised and valued. In working with those where there is no concern over capacity, social workers should take all practicable steps to empower people to make their own decisions, recognising that people are experts in their own lives and working alongside them to identify person-centred solutions to risk and harm, recognising the individual's right to make "unwise" decisions.

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Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

5. Effective assessments and outcomes based support planning

In undertaking assessments, social workers must be able to recognise the expertise of the diverse people with whom they work and their carers and apply this to develop personalised assessment and care plans that enable the individual to determine and achieve the outcomes they want for themselves. The social worker must ensure the individual's views, wishes and feelings (including those who may lack mental capacity) are included as part of their full participation in decision making, balancing this with the wellbeing of their carers. Social workers should demonstrate a good understanding of personalisation, the social model of disability and of human development throughout life and demonstrate a holistic approach to the identification of needs, circumstances, rights, strengths and risks. In particular, social workers need to understand the impact of trauma, loss and abuse, physical disability, physical ill health, learning disability, mental ill health, mental capacity, substance misuse, domestic abuse, aging and end of life issues on physical, cognitive, emotional and social development both for the individual and for the functioning of the family. They should recognise the roles and needs of informal or family carers and use holistic, systemic approaches to supporting individuals and carers. They should develop and maintain knowledge and good partnerships with local community resources in order to work effectively with individuals in connecting them with appropriate resources and support.

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Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

6. Direct work with individuals and families

Social workers need to be able to work directly with individuals and their families through the professional use of self, using interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence to create relationships based on openness, transparency and empathy. They should know how to build purposeful, effective relationships underpinned by reciprocity. They should be able to communicate clearly, sensitively and effectively, applying a range of best evidence-based methods of written, oral and non-verbal communication and adapt these methods to match the person's age, comprehension and culture. Social workers should be capable of communicating effectively with people with specific communication needs, including those with learning disabilities, dementia, people who lack mental capacity and people with sensory impairment. They should do this in ways that are engaging, respectful, motivating and effective, even when dealing with conflict - whether perceived or actual - anger and resistance to change. Social workers should have a high level of skill in applying evidence-based, effective social work approaches to help service users and families handle change, especially where individuals and families are in transition, including young people moving to adulthood, supporting them to move to different living arrangements and understanding the impact of loss and change.

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Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

7. Supervision, critical reflection and analysis

Social workers must have access to regular, good quality supervision and understand its importance in providing advice and support. They should know how and when to seek advice from a range of sources including named supervisors, senior social workers and other professionals. They should be able to make effective use of opportunities to discuss, reflect upon and test multiple hypotheses, the role of intuition and logic in decision making, the difference between opinion and fact, the role of evidence, how to address common bias in situations of uncertainty and the reasoning of any conclusions reached and recommendations made, particularly in relation to mental capacity, mental health and safeguarding situations. Social workers should have a critical understanding of the difference between theory, research, evidence and expertise and the role of professional judgement. They should use practice evidence and research to inform the complex judgements and decisions needed to support, empower and protect their service users. They should apply imagination, creativity and curiosity to working in partnership with individuals and their carers, acknowledging the centrality of people's own expertise about their experience and needs.

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Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

8. Organisational context

Social workers working with adults should be able confidently to fulfil their statutory responsibilities, work within their organisation's remit and contribute to its development. They must be understand and work effectively within financial and legal frameworks, obligations, structures and culture, in particular Human Rights and Equalities legislation, the Care Act, Mental Capacity Act, Mental Health Act and accompanying guidance and codes of practice. They must be able to operate successfully in their organisational context, demonstrating effective time management, caseload management and be capable of reconciling competing demands and embrace information, data and technology appropriate to their role. They should have access to regular quality supervision to support their professional resilience and emotional and physical wellbeing. Social workers should work effectively and confidently with fellow professionals in inter-agency, multi-disciplinary and inter-professional groups and demonstrate effective partnership working particularly in the context of health and social care integration and at the interface between health, children and adult social care and the third sector.

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Knowledge and Skills Statement for social workers in adult services

9. Profession ethics and leadership

Social workers should be able to explain their role to stakeholders, particularly health and community partners, and challenge partners constructively to effect multi-agency working. They should contribute to developing awareness of personalisation and outcome-based approaches to improving people's lives. Social workers should be able to demonstrate the principles of social work through professional judgement, decision making and actions within a framework of professional accountability. They should be able to work collaboratively to manage effectively the sometimes competing interests of service users, their families and their carers ensuring that the needs of all parties are appropriately balanced, but that where children are involved, the children's interests are always paramount. They should be able to acknowledge the inherent tensions where there is a dual role of care and control; be able to meet eligible needs within limited resources and manage the emotions and expectations of service users and carers. They should be able to identify potential deprivations of liberty and understand the process for assessing and authorising these in individuals' best interests. They should feedback the views and experiences of clients and their colleagues to contribute to the continued improvement of services, policies and procedures within the organisation. They must be able to recognise and address poor practice and systemic failings which put people at risk, whether in their own organisation or the organisations and institutions with which they are working, making appropriate use of whistle-blowing procedures.

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Reasons for self-evaluation

Taking into account the responsibilities of your current job role and future career aspirations, what will you do to move forward and develop your knowledge and skills in this area of practice?

From this identify one learning objective and record this in your professional plan at the end of this self-evaluation.

Professional development plan (adults)

KSS	How will you meet the learning objective?	Timescales	How will you know if the objective has been met?	Review: What was the impact on your practice?
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In addition to completing this summary you may also want to use the critical reflection log template (separate document) to record your planning and reflection in more detail.

Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

Self-evaluation

Name	
HCPC number	
Date of workshop and start of self assessment	

What is your PCF level of experience? (Please tick one box)

ASYE	
Social Worker	
Experienced Social Worker	
Advanced Level: professional social work educator	
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Strategic level	

Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

1. Relationships and effective direct work

Build effective relationships with children, young people and families, which form the bedrock of all support and child protection responses. Be both authoritative and empathic and work in partnership with children, families and professionals, enabling full participation in assessment, planning, review and decision making. Ensure child protection is always privileged.

Provide support based on best evidence, which is tailored to meet individual child and family needs, and which addresses relevant and significant risks. Secure access to services, negotiating and challenging other professionals and organisations to provide the help required. Ensure children and families, including children in public care, receive the support to which they are entitled.

Support children and families in transition, including children and young people moving to and between placements, those returning home, those being adopted or moving through to independence. Help children to separate from, and sustain, multiple relationships recognising the impact of loss and change.

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

2. Communication

Communicate clearly and sensitively with children of different ages and abilities, their families and in a range of settings and circumstances. Use methods based on best evidence. Create immediate rapport with people not previously known which facilitates engagement and motivation to participate in child protection enquiries, assessments and services.

Act respectfully even when people are angry, hostile and resistant to change. Manage tensions between parents, carers and family members, in ways that show persistence, determination and professional confidence.

Listen to the views, wishes and feelings of children and families and help parents and carers understand the ways in which their children communicate through their behaviour. Help them to understand how they might communicate more effectively with their children.

Promote speech, language and communication support, identifying those children and adults who are experiencing difficulties expressing themselves. Produce written case notes and reports, which are well argued, focused, and jargon free. Present a clear analysis and a sound rationale for actions as well as any conclusions reached, so that all parties are well informed.

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

3. Child development

Observe and talk to children in their environment including at home, at school, with parents, carers, friends and peers to help understand the physical and emotional world in which the child lives, including the quality of child and parent/carer interaction and other key relationships. Establish the pattern of development for the child, promote optimal child development and be alert to signs that may indicate that the child is not meeting key developmental milestones, has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Take account of typical age-related physical, cognitive, social, emotional and behavioural development over time, accepting that normative developmental tasks are different for each child depending on the interaction for that child between health, environmental and genetic factors. Assess the influence of cultural and social factors on child development, the effect of different parenting styles, and the effect of loss, change and uncertainty in the development of resilience.

Explore the extent to which behavioural and emotional development may also be a result of communication difficulties, ill health or disability, adjusting practice to take account of these differences. Seek further advice from relevant professionals to fully understand a child's development and behaviour.

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

4. Adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, physical ill health and disability

Identify the impact of adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, physical ill health and disability on family functioning and social circumstances and in particular the effect on children, including those who are young carers. Access the help and assistance of other professionals in the identification and prevention of adult social need and risk, including mental health and learning disability assessment.

Coordinate emergency and routine services and synthesise multi-disciplinary judgements as part of ongoing social work assessment. Use a range of strategies to help families facing these difficulties.

Identify concerning adult behaviours that may indicate risk or increasing risk to children. Assess the likely impact on, and inter-relationship between, parenting and child development. Recognise and act upon escalating social needs and risks, helping to ensure that vulnerable adults are safeguarded and that a child is protected and their best interests always prioritised.

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

5. Abuse and neglect of children

Exchange information with partner agencies about children and adults where there is concern about the safety and welfare of children. Triangulate evidence to ensure robust conclusions are drawn. Recognise harm and the risk indicators of different forms of harm to children relating to sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect. Take into account the long-term effects of cumulative harm, particularly in relation to early indicators of neglect.

Consider the possibility of child sexual exploitation, grooming (on and offline), female genital mutilation and enforced marriage and the range of adult behaviours which pose a risk to children, recognising too the potential for children to be perpetrators of abuse. Lead the investigation of allegations of significant harm to children in consultation with other professionals and practice supervisors. Draw one's own conclusions about the likelihood of, for example, sexual abuse or non-accidental injury having occurred and the extent to which any injury is consistent with the explanation offered. Commission a second professional opinion and take legal advice where necessary.

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

6. Child and family assessment

Carry out in-depth and ongoing family assessment of social need and risk to children, with particular emphasis on parental capacity and capability to change. Use professional curiosity and authority while maintaining a position of partnership, involving all key family members, including fathers. Acknowledge any conflict between parental and children's interests, prioritising the protection of children as set out in legislation.

Use child observation skills, genograms, ecomaps, chronologies and other evidence based tools ensuring active child and family participation in the process. Incorporate the contributions that other professional disciplines make to social work assessments.

Hold an empathic position about difficult social circumstances experienced by children and families, taking account of the relationship between poverty and social deprivation, and the effect of stress on family functioning, providing help and support. Take into account individual child and family history and how this might affect the ability of adults and children to engage with services.

Recognise and address behaviour that may indicate resistance to change, ambivalent or selective cooperation with services, and recognise when there is a need for immediate action, and what other steps can be taken to protect children.

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

7. Analysis, decision-making, planning and review

Establish the seriousness that different risks present and any harm already suffered by a child, balanced with family strengths and potential solutions. Set out the best options for resolving difficulties facing the family and each child, considering the risk of future harm and its consequences and the likelihood of successful change.

Prioritise children's need for emotional warmth, stability and sense of belonging, particularly those in public care, as well as identity development, health and education, ensuring active participation and positive engagement of the child and family. Test multiple hypotheses about what is happening in families and to children, using evidence and professional judgement to reach timely conclusions. Challenge any prevailing professional conclusions in the light of new evidence or practice reflection.

Make realistic, child centred, plans within a review timeline, which will manage and reduce identified risks and meet the needs of the child. Ensure sufficient multi-disciplinary input into the process at all stages. Apply twin and triple track planning to minimise chances of drift or delay, being alert to the effectiveness or otherwise of current support plans

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

8. The law and family justice system

Navigate the family and youth justice systems in England using legal powers and duties to support families, to protect children and to look after children in the public care system, including the regulatory frameworks that support the full range of permanence options. Participate in decisions about whether to make an application to the family court, the order to be applied for, and the preparation and presentation of evidence.

Seek advice and second opinion as required in relation to the wide range of legal issues which frequently face children and families involved with statutory services including immigration, housing, welfare benefits, mental health and learning disability assessment, education and support for children with learning difficulties.

Use the law, regulatory and statutory guidance to inform practice decisions. Take into account the complex relationship between professional ethics, the application of the law and the impact of social policy on both.

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

9. The role of supervision

Recognise one's own professional limitations and how and when to seek advice from a range of sources, including practice supervisors, senior practice leaders and other clinical practitioners from a range of disciplines such as psychiatry, paediatrics and psychology. Discuss, debate, reflect upon and test hypotheses about what is happening within families, and with children.

Explore the potential for bias in decision-making and resolve tensions emerging from, for example, ethical dilemmas, conflicting information or differing professional positions. Identify which methods will be of help for a specific child or family and the limitations of different approaches. Make use of the best evidence from research to inform the complex judgements and decisions needed to support families and protect children.

Reflect on the emotional experience of working relationships with parents, carers and children, and consciously identify where personal triggers are affecting the quality of analysis or help. Identify strategies to build professional resilience and management of self.

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Knowledge and skills for child and family social work

10. Organisational context

Operate successfully in a wide range of organisational contexts complying with the checks and balances within local and national systems which are a condition of employment. Maintain personal and professional credibility through effective working relationships with peers, managers and leaders both within the profession, throughout multi-agency partnerships and public bodies, including the family courts.

Act in ways that protect the reputation of the employer organisation and the social work profession, whilst always privileging the best interests of children. Manage the specific set of organisational tasks relating to lead responsibility for children with the support of an appropriately qualified supervisor and use of the multi-agency support network.

Contribute to the organisation's role as corporate parent to children in public care, encouraging and advocating for organisational focus, resource and support so that children and young people can thrive and enjoy their childhood and move into independence with confidence in and ambition for their futures.

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Professional development plan (child and family)

KSS	How will you meet the learning objective?	Timescales	How will you know if the objective has been met?	Review: What was the impact on your practice?
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

In addition to completing this summary you may also want to use the critical reflection log template (separate document) to record your planning and reflection in more detail.

