

# Safeguarding and Family Support (SFS)

Introduction

Service Manager Claire Hope

# Service Structure

- 4 sets of SFS teams in the service (A,B,C, D)
- 1 Parenting assessment team and the clinical hub.
- 1 Private Fostering Senior Social Worker
- Each set is comprised as below;

Head of Service Antoinette Johnson

Service Managers (Set A Joyce Patton, Set B Irene Wamugi, Set C Asabi Wright, Set D Claire Hope)

3 – 4 Team Managers

5 social workers (1 could be an ASYE)

Linked clinical practitioners

Linked Family Support Workers

Linked Practice Coordinator

# Child's Journey in SFS

## Transfers

- SFS work with children and young people across Child in Need (CIN), Child Protection (CP) and Looked after Children (LAC) plans. This could also be under the pre-proceedings or care-proceedings framework under the Public Law Outline (PLO.)
- SFS receive transfers from Assessment and Intervention at a Child in Need meetings and Child Protection conferences.
- SFS can also receive out of borough transfers which Multi Agency Screening Hub (MASH) review and then transfer to SFS.
- Designation of cases in care proceedings initiated by other Local Authorities can be transferred via the legal route.

## Post transfer

SFS work with children and young people across Child in Need (CIN), Child Protection (CP) and Looked after Children (LAC) plans. This could also be under the pre-proceedings or care-proceedings framework under the Public Law Outline (PLO)

- Engaging & Communicating with Children & YP
- Recording & Report Writing
- Completing Home Visits
- Risk Assessment & Safety Planning
- Safeguarding & S47 enquiries
- Chairing Meetings
- Care Planning & Permanency
- Care Planning
- Preparing Genograms & Chronologies

# Practice Standards for Social Workers

We should be ensuring good multi agency working, especially with schools around;

- \*EHCP / Virtual School (LAC) / working together to safeguard children and improve attendance.
- \*Ensure schools are involved in all CiN and CP meetings and have relevant invites.
- \*Regular communication with professionals.
- \*Evidence based worries (Attendance records, authorised absences, behavioural issues, records of disclosures, presentation) reported to SFS in a timely manner.

## What we need from schools;

- \*Early notification of any behaviour issues / attendance / disclosures.
- \*Notification of suspensions or EHCP referrals. Also need EHCP review dates and times to ensure SW attendance and contribution.
- \*Any challenge to social work practice, follow escalation policy by calling TMs then SMs to deescalate to address challenges and work together smoothly.

# Challenges within SFS

## Staffing

- \* High number of complex cases leading to competing demands for social workers. Some of these can have an impact to staff's emotional and mental wellbeing.
- \* Personal commitments, cost of living, social mobility can impact on staff retention.
- \* Resilience of social workers impact on longevity and social workers leaving / retraining.
- \* Sickness can be an issue long / short term.

## Financial pressure

- \* Continued financial stress on families leading to families requesting financial assistance.
- \* SFS are having to reduce spending by over 3M this financial year. Biggest costs are children's placements and staffing. Less money to provide to families.
- \* Budgetary cut and council wide savings.

# Mitigating challenges

## **Staffing**

- \*Southwark are offering incentives for agency worker to go from temp to perm contracts.
- \*The Government are tightening up restrictions for agency workers to encourage perm recruitment.
- \*EAP / OH referrals and specialist equipment if needed for staff wellbeing are commissioned.

## **Social work reforms**

- \*The Gov has put out it's Family First Agenda which will reduce movement and changes in social workers from family early help through to child protection.
- \*The aim is also to have multi agency working set as standard for social work teams in order for families to access services easily.

# Feedback for the Local Authority?

- Please e-mail if you have any queries or feedback outside of this meeting;
- [Claire.Hope@Southwark.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Hope@Southwark.gov.uk)

