

Response ID ANON-AA8Q-75GN-C

Submitted to **Knowledge and Skills Statement for Achieving Permanence**

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Response form

1 What is your name?

Name:

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3 What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Gateshead Council

4 What sector do you represent?

Sector:

Children's services

5 Are the five sections in the statement the right ones?

Yes

Please give your views:

6 Are there any knowledge and skills that a child and family worker needs to have to decide on the best permanence option for a child that are missing from section 1?

Yes

Please give your views:

social workers need to have an understanding that permanence can be achieved in a number of ways and they need to be open to exploring all realistic options to secure good outcomes for the child/children. The process and decisions need to be evidence based and recorded accurately. They need to have an understanding of family systems if permanence is to be achieved within the birth family and the skills to assess sustainable change.

Plans should be outcome focussed and workers need to be skilled in completing these

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7 Are there any knowledge and skills that a child and family social worker needs to have to negotiate the legal process that are missing from section 2?

Yes

Please give your views:

Reports should also draw on research findings to support the recommendations. Reports need to include compelling evidence, which will enable courts to make decisions in a timely manner, thus avoiding drift and delay. Social workers need to be confident that the plan being presented is the best plan for the child whilst having an understanding that they might be challenged and therefore they need to be confident in presenting their case to court and also need some level of tenacity and emotional resilience, especially when their plans are not accepted by the court..

8 Are there any knowledge and skills that a child and family social worker needs to have to help a child find permanence quickly that are missing from section 3?

Yes

Please give your views:

The supervisor needs specific skills to enable them to address "unconscious bias" with the social worker and help the social worker be reflective practitioners.

P11 refers to social workers "recognising...." Social workers need to be able to recognise and respond to all situations to achieve the best outcomes for children. This needs including throughout the document as there are other places where the statement is to recognise.

9 Are there any knowledge and skills that a child and family social workers needs to have to support families in transition that are missing from section 4?

Yes

Please give your views:

In relation to direct work undertaken with children the word "thoroughly" is too woolly. This needs to be more specific to ensure there is clarity for social workers about what is expected of them and for them to be able to identify and evidence how the child will be supported to enable them to make positive attachments and transitions within their permanent family.

The section also talks about professional expertise - what is actually meant by this? This statement needs to be more skill based and less ambiguous if we are to achieve consistency across all agencies

In relation to supporting carers supervising social workers will need the skills to promote training and encourage reflective practice from foster carers to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to support a child.

Social workers will also need to have knowledge and an understanding of contingency planning, especially if the plan is for a child to return home

10 Are there any knowledge and skills that a child and family social worker needs to have to support the placement, including managing disruption and breakdown, that are missing from section 5?

Yes

Please give your views:

In relation to therapy options social workers will need to have an understanding of different therapeutic models/interventions, be able to identify the most appropriate and know how to source / commission these.

There will need to be an understanding from social workers that whilst managing disruptions they will need to manage their own emotions. They will need to be reflective on both a professional and emotional level and understand the impact of placement disruptions on all parties.

11 Which child and family social workers should the permanence continuous professional development programme be aimed at?

Please give your views:

This programme should be undertaken by all child and family social workers including newly qualified workers, social workers involved in assessing families, social workers undertaking permanence planning, fostering social workers, adoption workers, IRO's and supervisors/managers

12 Do you have any further comments?

Please give your views:

Some of the words and phrases used need to be more specific in order to produce consistency and continuity in the implementation of this work.