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## **One Minute Guide: Social Work Reform Board (SWRB) Employers Standards and Supervision Framework**

### **What is this about?**

In 2012, the Social Work Reform Board (SWRB) introduced as part of its programme of reform a set of eight 'Standards' and a supervision framework for employers of Social Workers across all sectors. More recently, Ofsted have introduced the Standards for Employers into the inspection framework and will be looking for evidence that employers understand the basic principles – supervision, caseload management, workforce development, management and governance. It is hoped the 'Standards' will ultimately have a positive impact upon practice, and importantly on those who use the services.

### **What are the 'Standards'?**

1. Have in place a social work accountability framework informed by knowledge of good social work practice and the experience and expertise of service users, carers and practitioners.
2. Use effective workforce planning systems to make sure that the right number of social workers, with the right level of skills and experience, are available to meet current and future service demands.
3. Implement transparent systems to manage workload and case allocation in order to protect service users and practitioners.
4. Make sure that social workers can do their jobs safely and have the practical tools and resources they need to practice effectively.
5. Ensure that social workers have regular and appropriate social work supervision.
6. Provide opportunities for continuing professional development, as well as access to research and practice guidance.
7. Ensure social workers can maintain their professional registration.
8. Establish effective partnerships with higher education institutions and other organisations to support the delivery of social work education and continuing professional development.

The basic principles of the Standards are – supervision, caseload management, workforce development, leadership and governance – very similar to the areas covered in the Social Worker 'Health' Check survey, which we undertake in Children's Services annually.

### **What is the Supervision Framework?**

The Framework is a list of elements, broken down into specific points, which research shows form the basis of good supervision. The elements are:

1. Quality of decision making and interventions.
2. Line Management and organisational accountability.
3. Caseload and workload management.
4. Identification of further personal learning, career and development opportunities.

They also stipulate that at least elements 1 -3 of individual supervision, should be carried out by a Line Manager who is also a Social Worker.

### **Why are they important?**

Evidence for the need for employers standards and a supervision framework came from work undertaken by the Social Work Task Force. The resulting Standards and Framework set out the shared core expectations of employers which will enable social workers to receive positive supervision and work effectively, therefore having a positive impact on services being delivered to children, young people and their families or carers as well as improving outcomes.

### **How are Redbridge Children's Services performing against the Standards?**

The Standards are subject to regular audit using a tool which seeks identification of evidence and gaps where further development is required. The tool also identifies responsible lead officers to ensure accountability. Implementation and on-going upholding of the Standards is monitored on a monthly basis by the Children's Trust Social Work Transformation Board, chaired by the Managing Director. Checks have already taken place to ensure that the CS One-to-One and Supervision Policy (V2, August 2012) covers the fundamental elements of the Supervision Framework.

### **How can I find out more?**

For further information, the background to the SWRB and the Standards can be found via:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/swrb/a0074263/standards-for-employers-and-supervision-framework>

or contact [workforcedevelopment@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:workforcedevelopment@redbridge.gov.uk).

Copies of the audit will be made available after each update, via the Social Work Transformation Board, and shared specifically with the CTMT Leadership Forum with Service and Team Managers.

### **How can I become involved?**

Feedback is welcome on how you think the Standards are being implemented and what development still needs to take place. Please send your comments to:

[CSStafffeedback@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CSStafffeedback@redbridge.gov.uk) In addition, feedback can be passed via your Team Manager during Team Meetings or by including your comments in the next SW 'Health' Check, due to be circulated in November 2013.