

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Children's Services – Social Care
Social Work Caseloads Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out the Service's aspirations in respect of social work caseloads across the service which we will be working towards as we recruit the additional managers and workers within the remodel.

There is no clear national or local guidance regarding caseloads, a number of local authorities use different caseload weighting loads. As a leadership team we bring a collective experience of managing and leading social work teams and services, upon which we base our proposals. The Children's Social Care Service re-model has been designed and will be delivered with a strategy of 'front-loading' the Service. In summary this means that caseloads at the 'front' of the services (MASS and First Response) will be reduced in order that an engagement with children, their families and partner agencies can be effective with an eye to prevention.

The requirements of caseloads elsewhere in the service will be slightly higher, but will be at a reasonable level to ensure that direct work with children and families can be undertaken at a practitioner level and that reflective practice supervision can be delivered by practice managers.

Service Specifics

1. Multi-Agency Screening Service (incorporating Sunrise)
 - A Practice Manager with responsibility for co-ordinating the MASS will not have social workers to supervise. They will have line management responsibility for the Referral Information Co-ordinators.
 - A Practice Manager with responsibility for Sunrise will have line management/supervisory responsibility for 4 social workers (fte).
 - These workers will not have statutory case work responsibility but will be co-workers for children/young people who have an allocated Social Worker; working with between 10 – 15 cases to enable them to undertake CSE specific risk assessments, undertake preventative and direct work in respect the risks for the young person.
2. First Response and Child in Need
 - There will be 6 social work teams within this service each with a Practice Manager and 8 social workers.
 - Practice Managers – will have responsibility for line management/supervision of 8 social workers (fte) and a social care worker.
 - Social workers - we aim for them to have allocated children circa 12 and will undertake one week in 6 on duty in the MASS were they will be allocated Single Assessments and Section 47 enquiries.
 - Social Care Workers will work alongside the Social Workers adding value and undertaking specific tasks as required. They may be allocated circa 8 Child in Need cases following a social work assessment.
3. Children with Disabilities
 - The Children with Disabilities Team is a multi-disciplinary team which consists of Occupational Therapists, Resource staff who work on short break provision and Early Years Workers. The Team sit alongside Education staff such as Educational Psychologists and Specialist Teachers and support staff with a team of social workers who undertake the statutory elements of the work.
 - The Social Work Team Manager has line management/supervisory responsibility for 7.5 social workers (fte)
 - Social workers will have a circa 25 children/young people.

4. Child Protection and Care Proceedings

- Practice Managers will have responsibility for line management and supervision of 5/6 social workers (fte).
- Social workers will have allocated circa 18 children.

5. Cared for Children

Field Work Teams

- There will be 3 Cared for Children teams within the Service
- In each team there will be a Practice Manager, 7 social workers and 3 personal advisors.
- The Practice Manager will have line management/supervisory responsibility for 7 social workers and 3 personal advisors.
- The social workers will have circa 18 children/young people.
- The Personal Advisors will have a maximum of 20 allocated children/young people.

Fostering

- There will be 3 teams within this service.
- Practice Managers will have line management/supervisory responsibility for 4/5 social workers and a Support Worker.
- Two teams will have 5 social workers and the other 4.
- Social Workers will have allocated circa 20 fostering households

Adoption

- There will be 2 Adoption Teams within this Service Social Workers will have allocated circa 20 adopters.
- Practice Managers will have line management/supervisory responsibility for between 4-6 social workers (fte)
- One team will have 4 social workers and the other will have 6 (fte)
- Social Workers will have a caseload circa 18 children/adopters.

Supported Year in Employment

1. Learning Agreement

A Learning Agreement should be completed at the beginning of the ASYE programme setting out the dates of the programme and reviews, supervision sessions and how the NQSW's workload will be managed. It should also include a Personal Development Plan and the length of time to be devoted to protected development. The Learning Agreement should also set out how the NQSW will collect evidence for their Portfolio and the process by which this will be assessed. The Learning Agreement should be signed by the candidate, their Line Manager and Senior Manager and their assessor if they are different from or acting in addition to the candidate's Line Manager.

2. Regular good quality reflective Supervision

The suggested frequency of supervision in Rochdale is fortnightly during the ASYE programme taking place with the candidate's line manager and mentor alternatively and should include time for the NQSW to reflect on their work, its affect upon them and their development needs in an open and well supported way and their progress against the PCF.

3. Workload management

The candidate's workload should be managed and balanced. It should be protected in order to enable the NQSW to spend time in ASYE developmental activities. The amount of this time should be specified in the Learning Agreement.

This Policy will be reviewed 3 months after the implementation of the Children's Social Care re-model (April 2014).

Children's Social Care Senior Management Team
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