**Document 3 - Practice Leadership Programme ITT Specification**

**1. Introduction and Background**

This contract is an exciting opportunity to be part of pioneering work to design, develop and deliver a national Practice Leadership Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Programme for child and family social workers in England.

We envisage that the successful supplier or group of suppliers will develop and deliver high quality CPD to approximately 1000 social workers each contract year, (2000 across the initial 2-year contract). This contract is to design, develop and deliver a cohesive leadership programme, that includes a range of models, and is tailored to reflect the needs and aspirations of leaders at the following stages of a social worker’s leadership journey, as defined by the Department for Education (DfE):

* Practice Supervisor
* Middle Manager
* Head of Service
* Practice Leader

The programme will support those already in post working as Practice Supervisors and both in-post and aspirant Middle Managers, Heads of Service and Practice Leaders to ensure there is consistent, high-quality leadership across the sector and to develop a pipeline of leaders in the child and family social work workforce by providing a pathway to senior leadership. We encourage creative development and ideas for delivery that meet the programme aims as outlined below.

**Programme aims**

One of the Department for Education’s four priority outcomes is to support the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people through high-quality local services so that no one is left behind. Ensuring there is a consistently high quality of social work practice and leadership in every area is key to achieving this outcome.

The aim of the leadership programme is to ensure children and families receive the highest quality practice. This leadership programme will offer a consistently high standard of leadership and management training to child and family social workers at each leadership level that is central to deliver the best practice for children. To achieve this aim, we expect the programme to:

1. Equip child and family social workers with the skills they need to be effective leaders and managers throughout their career.
2. Develop a pathway for leaders from Practice Supervisor through to Practice Leader level, providing a clear career journey to senior leadership.
3. Empower leaders to embed their learning and development in the workplace and model high quality practice, underpinned by theory and best evidence.
4. Inspire leaders to champion the Post Qualifying Standards (PQS) for Practice Supervisors and Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS) for Practice Leaders and support the development of knowledge and skills in the managers and frontline practitioners that they supervise.

As part of our drive to establish a professionally based career pathway, Post Qualifying Standards (PQS) and Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS) for Practice Supervisors[[1]](#footnote-2) and Practice Leaders[[2]](#footnote-3) will be the foundation of the programme. This will provide a consistent, evidenced approach, allowing leaders to demonstrate they have the right knowledge and skills to carry out their role effectively and ensure social workers are being trained to a high standard. We also want the programme to use the learning of the 7/7/7 model for social work practice (see document 9 for more information) and embed the learning from the 7/7/7 model into the programme. We envisage that this approach will establish a legacy of identifying all training and development needs against the national standards, addressing those needs with an evidence-based learning solution that combines expertise in andragogy with expertise in social work practice.

The new programme will replace and build upon the success of the current offer when contract and grant arrangements expire for three existing programmes in March 2022: Practice Supervisor Development Programme (PSDP), Firstline and Practice Leader Development Programme (PLDP).

We want to build on the strengths of the existing leadership programmes, widening the scope and reach to ensure a joined-up offer from Practice Supervisor to Practice Leader level. We want the programme to have the breadth to improve leadership right across a social worker’s leadership development journey, providing clarity and direction through a leadership pathway and a consistent pipeline of senior leaders with access to high quality training at each stage of their development to becoming an excellent leader.

Useful documents regarding the current offer are:

* Practice Supervisor Development Programme Website[[3]](#footnote-4)
* Practice Supervisor Development Programme Annual Report[[4]](#footnote-5)
* Review of the impact of the Practice Supervisor Development Programme[[5]](#footnote-6)
* Firstline Programme Website[[6]](#footnote-7)
* Firstline Programme Evaluation Report[[7]](#footnote-8)
* Practice Leader Development Programme Evaluation Report[[8]](#footnote-9)

**Key stakeholders and users**

The key stakeholders for the programme are groups and individuals with an interest in the programme, such as children and families, the Principal Social Work (PSW) Network and the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS). The users of the programme will be local authorities (LAs) and their Children’s Trust partner organisations as employers, and child and family social workers as participants.

We have consulted with a range of key stakeholders including end users (child and family social workers). We have heard a consistent message that there is a need for a clear leadership pathway and CPD framework and both stakeholders and users will welcome a joined-up programme with a focus on developing leadership in the sector.

The successful contractor(s) will engage directly with key stakeholder groups throughout the process of development, including children and families, social workers and local authorities to ensure their needs are being met in the design and delivery of the programme.

**Leadership levels**

Leadership terms as defined by DfE may incorporate multiple roles and responsibilities which vary between local authorities/trusts (See annex A below for a detailed breakdown of example job titles and responsibilities at each level). Leadership levels as defined by DfE:

**Practice Supervisors** are qualified social workers whose primary responsibility is to supervise the practice and decision-making of Child and Family Practitioners, and to develop the skills of individuals and teams within child and family social work services.

**Middle Managers** are qualified social workers who are managers of Practice Supervisors but are not Heads of Service. They will have operational and management responsibilities.

**Heads of Service** are managers of a children’s service area. The Head of Service is both operational and strategic, with each leader having oversight of a service area. This role may also be referred to as a service manager.

**Practice Leaders** are qualified social workers with the day-to-day operational responsibility across the whole local system for child and family social work practice, ensuring it operates correctly and overseeing child and family frontline practitioners and leaders. Most usually, this is referred to as the Assistant Director of Children’s Social Care or Director of Family Services or an equivalent position.

**Programme foundation**

**PQS/KSS**

The Post Qualifying Standards[[9]](#footnote-10) and Knowledge and Skills Statements[[10]](#footnote-11) are the foundation for the introduction of a post-qualification leadership career pathway and set the standards for child and family social work. The leadership programme should embed the PQS and KSS at its heart and use them as a reference point in content and programme development.

**7/7/7 model**

The learning from the evaluation of round one of the Children’s Social Care Innovation Programme identified seven key features of good social work practice and seven enablers of improvement which result in seven key outcomes for children, families and children’s social care teams. They are therefore pivotal in transforming children’s social care and sustaining improvements. The 7/7/7 model is an evidenced approach to social work practice. The contractor(s) should use the model when developing the leadership programme and will be expected to demonstrate how it has been incorporated during the design phase. The programme should equip leaders with the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop and embed knowledge throughout social work practice in their organisations and develop and/or influence their wider organisations to ensure enablers are in place so that social workers deliver excellent practice.

An evidenced approach will provide a clear leadership journey with a golden thread of specific skills running through each differentiated stage, drawing on the PQS, KSS and 7/7/7 leadership model. The offer will plug the existing training gaps and create a clear pathway to senior leadership while delivering value for money. The programme will support leaders to develop the skills necessary for leading and improving children’s services, appropriate to their role.

See document 9 for more information on the 7/7/7 model.

**Child Safeguarding National Review Panel and Ofsted**

In the development of the programme, we would like to see references to the learning from the child safeguarding national review panel which has identified areas of weakness in child and family social work practice. Additionally references to learning from Ofsted inspection reports, specifically on practice and leadership should be considered when developing the programme.

[Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/child-safeguarding-practice-review-panel)

**Future vision**

This contract represents the first step to bringing greater coherence to the post-qualification landscape for child and family social workers, by bringing together the design and delivery of training at different leadership levels. In the future, we are seeking to gain greater coherence between these development programmes and the national assessment of social workers. While this should not affect the content of training programmes, we will need to consider both the appropriateness of the current assessment approach and its delivery, and we would expect the successful contractor(s) to input into those decisions an over the course of the contract.

**2. Description of Requirement**

The aim of the procurement exercise is to award a single contract, which could be operated by a group of suppliers as a single constituted entity, to design, develop and deliver a cohesive national leadership programme for child and family social workers in Practice Supervisor, Middle Manager, Head of Service and Practice Leader roles. The programme should be tailored to meet the needs of participants and be focused on addressing the challenges that social work leaders are dealing with, equipping them with the right skills for their work. This will require the successful supplier(s) to collaborate with local authorities and other employers and use the national standards and 7/7/7 model as a basis for identifying the training needs of potential participants. They may also like to review existing materials to assess suitability for inclusion in any future content (see page 2). Content will be reviewed at the end of the first contract year to embed lessons learned and respond to the latest evidence.

The supplier(s) will require expertise in social work and in managing high quality CPD programmes and should demonstrate how they will use their expertise in the development of the programme. They will also need to demonstrate an understanding of the development needs of leaders at all levels, as defined by DfE (see page 3). Proposals will be required to evidence how the leadership programme meets and is responsive to user needs.

We also expect the supplier(s) to work collaboratively with the DfE to respond to future changes in policy. This includes, but is not limited to, responding to recommendations from the independent review of children’s social care[[11]](#footnote-12) and working with the DfE on the future vision of the post qualification offer (see page 4).

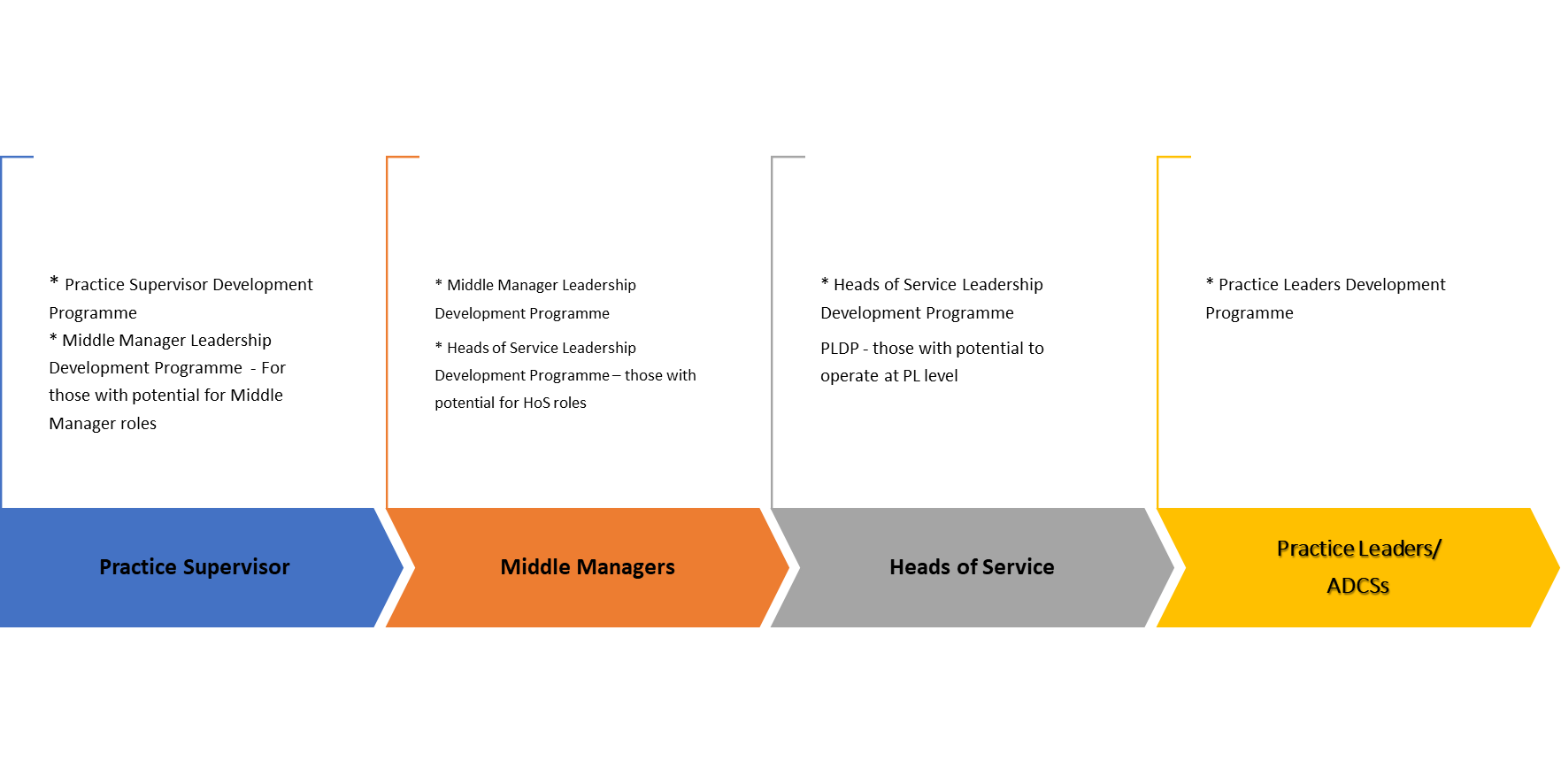
The supplier(s) will be expected to design, develop and deliver a programme to leaders that:

1. Includes an application process which is straightforward, transparent and equitable to all for both the aspirant and in-post elements of the programme.
2. Has a clear assessment process to determine suitability of candidates applying to the aspirant strands of the programme. This should include endorsement by the applicant’s employer. Employer endorsement would also be expected for the in-post applicant.
3. Uses the Practice Supervisor PQS and Practice Leader KSS to identify candidates’ development needs and meet those needs with high quality programme content that is flexible to existing local authority programmes and models of practice.
4. Demonstrates join up from Practice Supervisor through to Practice Leader levels. The offer should be presented as a single programme and should not have branding for each individual level. It should be recognisable and cohesive in its content and delivery but should also meet the differing needs of each leadership level.
5. Is reflective of place-based issues and where appropriate, and in consultation with the DfE, targets where the greatest impact can be made.
6. Has a mixed delivery model, that considers how people are currently working and is manageable around the pressures they are facing in the day-job and accessible to all regardless of location.

**Pathway, Aspirant & In Post** – Practice Supervisor development will be offered for candidates who are in post at that level. For all other levels (Middle Manager, Head of Service and Practice Leader levels) there will be an offer for social workers aspiring to work at the next leadership level as well as those already in-post. The aspirant cohorts should include similar content to the next level in-post (e.g. aspirant Middle Manager and in-post Middle Manager) but this may be delivered differently or have nuance in the content to meet the needs and desired outcomes of the distinct levels and cohort types.

Aspirant cohorts will include an application process including endorsement from employers to ensure applicants meet the criteria for the programme and that their learning will be supported by their employer. The supplier(s) will be responsible for ensuring the endorsement and recruitment processes for applications is equitable for all, working with employers to ensure this outcome. The recruitment process should identify suitable candidates for the aspirant cohorts. The purpose of the aspirant cohorts is to ensure we are developing and stretching leaders so that they are ready to operate at a higher level of practice. We want to ensure there is a pipeline of excellent candidates for any vacancies that arise at the next level. However, we will be looking for bidders to demonstrate measures of development beyond candidates securing promotion. Participants on these cohorts should therefore have the capability of moving to a development role with more breadth and responsibility within 2 years of starting the training. We acknowledge that not all participants will move to higher level roles (due to multiple factors, including where vacancies arise) so we expect their learning on the programme to improve their effectiveness as a leader in their current role and for the supplier(s) to demonstrate development of participants that is not only vertical moves.

The purpose of in-post training is to ensure all leaders have access to high quality CPD which enables them to extend their capability to deliver excellent leadership performance, demonstrating positive impacts on their organisation’s performance, facilitating excellent social work practice and driving improvements in the service for children and families. This training is aimed at all staff in post who may benefit, including new starters or those with more experience in their role. Participants for in post training will need endorsement from their line manager, the purpose of endorsement is to ensure participants are supported in their learning.



**Building on the success of existing programmes** – we want to build upon the success of our existing leadership programmes and do not envisage entirely new delivery models at Practice Leader and Practice Supervisor levels. Firstline, Practice Leaders Development Programme (PLDP) and Practice Supervisor Development Programme (PSDP) are successful and well regarded in the sector. At Practice Supervisor and Practice Leader levels we expect the new programme to retain and build upon the good practice and core delivery that exists in the current programmes. However, the existing programmes do not have the scope to be cohesive, do not provide a clear pathway to leadership and do not link up as an overarching leadership development programme. The new leadership programme will address this and mitigate the gaps that exist in the current offer, providing a single cohesive leadership programme.

We expect the successful contractor to make links with Staff College[[12]](#footnote-13) to ensure content of the programme is appropriate at all levels; addresses the most significant challenges facing leaders at each level and that there is logical progression between this programme and the Upon[[13]](#footnote-14) programme. There may be helpful resources and contacts that could be shared between the organisations. There may be links that could be made in terms of building relationships (Upon participants are current and future DCSs). Helpful learning in delivering CPD programmes, accessing experts and developing thinking on latest or emerging sector issues could helpfully be shared.

**Leadership Levels Numbers**

We require supplier(s) to deliver a leadership programme to a minimum of 1000 child and family social workers per year of the contract. We have given a guide as to how many social workers should go through each level but encourage supplier(s) to adjust the numbers at different levels and cohort ratios based on the development period, engagement with the sector, and demand in the sector at each leadership level. Each level should meet the leadership needs required and be distinct but also form part of a cohesive development pathway. Please find link to child and family workforce figures below.

[Statistics: children's social work workforce - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childrens-social-care-workforce)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Leadership Level** | **Year 1 Participant Numbers** | **Year 2 Participant Numbers** |
| Practice Supervisor | 600 | 600 |
| Middle Manager | 300 (150 in post 150 aspirant) | 400 (200 in post, 200 aspirant) |
| Heads of Service | 50 (25 in post, 25 aspirant) | 50 (25 in post, 25 aspirant) |
| Practice Leader | 50 (25 in post, 25 aspirant) | 50 (25 in post, 25 aspirant) |

**Cohesive Programme: Factors across all levels**

Cohorts will retain flexibility in content/delivery and allow adaptation of programmes in future years to continue to meet sector needs. The initial year and development phase should test demand and the number of participants expanded in the second year if there is sector demand, remaining within the budget constraints. Design and delivery of programmes, for example cohort types and length, need to reflect the needs of each leadership level and be evidenced as part of a bid. This is likely to result in differences in delivery across the leadership levels but the contractor should still ensure that the programme is as cohesive as possible overall.

Core delivery themes should run through each level:

**Networking:**Improve networks across the social care workforce, across regions and across a range of employers, helping to facilitate networking opportunities at each level. Evidence from existing leadership programmes shows the value of networks is increasingly important at more senior leadership levels.

**Reflective learning:**Deliver maximumtransfer of learning, facilitating a learning culture that is reflective and analytical of social workers and leaders’ experiences.

**Practice learning & applying theory and evidence***:* Content will be reflective of child and family social work evidence-based practice leadership and management demands. The delivery approach will support participants’ development of evidence-based best practice, including best practice in learning transfer so that high quality practice is embedded in local authority child and family social work.

**Culture:**Fostering a culture that enables:

* Permission to challenge leadership
* Accountability and visibility of leaders
* Fostering support over blame
* Focus on quality of practice and striving for the best outcomes
* A chain of support from managers to social workers who help social workers wellbeing and supports and prioritises learning and development.

**Multi Agency Working:** Effective Multi Agency working including delivering in line with legislation in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the new multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children, and the lessons learned from the Wood Review of their implementation.

[Wood Review of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/987928/Wood_Review_of_multi-agency_safeguarding_arrangements_2021.pdf)

**Anti Racism***:* Anti-discriminatory, anti-oppressive and anti-racist practice form a fundamental part of leadership development. The programme must explore and challenge how leaders can create a supportive culture for minority ethnic groups in the workforce, and ensure equity through the application and endorsement process, delivering a high-quality equitable programme for all.

**Coaching & Mentoring***:* Embed coaching and mentoring offers within the programme to help aid leaders’ development and embed transfer of learning.

All stages of the programme must offer equal opportunities to applicants from all backgrounds and avoid discrimination against participants for any reason other than their suitability and eligibility to secure a place on the programme. This includes working with employers during the endorsement process to deliver equity for all. For example, there is evidence of disproportionate under-representation of black and ethnic minority leaders in the workforce, and under representation of women in senior leadership positions. The successful contractor(s) will be required to demonstrate how the leadership programme will be equitable and work to improve the leadership opportunities for underrepresented groups. All aspects of the application and selection process must adhere to statutory and legal requirements for equality and diversity and delivery should be accessible and equitable to all participants. Further information about the Equal Equality Act 2010 is available at:

[Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance)

**Cohesive Programme: Factors at individual levels**

Leadership levels are defined on page 3 and in annex A of this specification.

**Practice Supervisor, Stage 1**: will be open to all qualified child and family social workers in post as Practice Supervisors. The programme should:

1. Build on the success of the existing Practice Supervisor Development Programme widening the scope and aims to cohesively link to the broader leadership programme.
2. Provide an additional bespoke offer that meets regional needs where targeted support is required.
3. Instil Practice Supervisors with the confidence to lead teams and manage frontline practitioners’ workloads and wellbeing.
4. Equip Practice Supervisors with the skills to facilitate reflective supervision.
5. Empower Practice Supervisors to embed their learning and development in the workplace and model high quality practice underpinned by theory and best evidence.
6. Inspire Practice Supervisors to champion the PQS for Practice Supervisors and frontline practitioners and to support the development of knowledge and skills in the frontline practitioners that they supervise.

**Middle Manager, Stage 2:** will have two cohort types:

1. In-post - open to all child and family social workers in a Middle Manager role.
2. Aspirant - for Practice Supervisors who have the potential and aspiration to progress to Middle Manager within 24 months, preparing participants for roles as Middle Managers.

**Head of Service, Stage 3:** will have two cohort types:

1. In-Post Heads of Service.
2. Aspirant – for Middle Managers who have the potential and aspiration to work as Heads of Service within 24 months, preparing participants for roles as Heads of Service.

**Practice Leader, Stage 4**: will also have two cohort types:

1. In-post for those already working as Practice Leaders.
2. Aspirant - for Heads of Service aspiring to work as Practice Leaders within 24 months, preparing participants for roles as practice leaders.

The Practice Leader level programme should:

1. Build on the success of the existing PLDP, currently open only to Heads of Service with the potential to work as Practice Leaders, widening the scope of the programme to in post Practice Leaders, and ensuring both elements cohesively link to the broader leadership programme.
2. Include content that is based on the KSS.
3. Have a greater networking focus which includes offering additional opportunities for face-to-face networking.
4. Maintain the Practice Leaders Network for all Practice Leaders in England and its directory. The directory will be handed over as part of exit arrangements by the existing supplier. This will involve:

* Ensuring the Practice Leaders database is up to date
* Collaborating with DfE to engage with the Practice Leaders network
* Setting up meetings and events with the network and DfE
* Sharing information with the network on behalf of DfE

We understand that it may not be possible for one contractor to provide all the requirements to fulfil this contract and we welcome bids from constituted groups as well as individual organisation bids.

**The maximum award (including VAT) for this lot is shown below.**

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|  | **2022-23**  August 22 -March 23 | **2023-24**  April 23 –March 24 | **2024-25**  April 24 – July 25 |
| TOTAL | £3,350,000 | £5,000,000 | £1,545,000 |

We expect demonstration of Value for Money (vfm) to underpin the full lifecycle of this agreement. We encourage the identification and implementation of efficiencies to deliver added value to the public purse throughout the contract.

**3. Out of Scope**

As the Director of Children’s Services (DCS) role is wider than children’s social care, many DCSs come from outside of children’s social care and the current contract is in place until March 2023, the Upon programme for DCSs is not in scope.

Aspirant Practice Supervisors is also out of scope as this was not identified as a priority during DfE’s stakeholder consultation which took place early in 2021. In role practice supervision was seen as more of a priority for CPD.

**4. Contract Length**

The contract is intended to run from 1st August 2022 until 31st July 2024, with the option to extend by a further 24 months on the determination of the Department.

**5. Outputs and Deliverables**

The DfE do not intend to prescribe the exact model of delivery for this programme. Suppliers will need to consider possible methods of delivery for the programme and outline the rationale for their recommended approach. This should include its suitability for the contract value and anticipated volumes of course participants.

Across all requirements, the successful contractor must demonstrate the following:

1. knowledge and understanding of the current context and challenges relating to child and family social work;
2. experience and expertise in engaging and working with stakeholders in the sector;
3. experience of delivering a contract of a similar scope and scale;
4. the ability to ensure effective national coverage to deliver high quality support in every local authority area;
5. experience in developing quality assurance mechanisms; and
6. the ability to provide value for money solutions.

The successful bidder(s) will need to demonstrate how they would deliver the following requirements:

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| **Requirement** | Page number |
| **Requirement 1**: Design, Develop and Manage Operational Delivery of Practice Leadership CPD Programme | 10-12 |
| **Requirement 2**: Project Management, Reporting arrangements and Evaluation | 12-14 |
| **Requirement 3**: Contractor Management and Governance | 14-15 |
| **Requirement 4**: Costs and Value for Money | 15-16 |
| **Requirement 5**: Communications and Engagement | 16-17 |
| **Requirement 6:** End of Contract | 17-18 |
| **Requirement 7:** Social Value | 18-19 |

**Requirement 1: Design, Develop and Manage Operational Delivery of Practice Leadership CPD Programme**

The contractor(s) will be expected to:

1. Develop, design and deliver a coherent national programme that develops high quality leaders at each level of leadership (Practice Supervisor, Middle Manager, Head of Service, Practice Leader) and provides a pathway to senior leadership.
2. Work with and oversee third party and/or partner CPD delivery organisations as appropriate or necessary as part of delivering a coherent national programme that will meet the needs of local authorities and programme participants.

1. Use a proven, evidenced delivery approach to achieve positive long-term practice and behavioural change by embedding learning and development in local authorities and their Children’s Trust partner organisations.
2. Handle all data in accordance with Government best practice, as outlined in the terms and conditions.
3. Whilst Upon is out of scope, the supplier(s) shall work with the current provider of Upon, Staff College, to ensure as far as possible the new leadership programme forms part of a broader and more cohesive leadership suite.

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| I. The bidder(s) will need to set out, in detail, a clear, innovative delivery approach and demonstrate how that approach will:     1. Develop, design and deliver a coherent national programme that provides a clear pathway to senior leadership from Practice Supervisor through to Practice Leader and meets the needs of local authorities and participants at all levels. 2. Develop a leadership pathway that embeds leadership skills at each level of the programme based on the PQS and KSS for Practice Supervisors and Practice Leaders that meets sector need. 3. Allow local authorities, trusts and participants to access high quality evidence-based learning and development, regardless of location. 4. Be reflective of place-based issues and, where appropriate, target additional CPD or supplement the nationwide offer with additional place-based action to meet bespoke needs. This should include the piloting of a holistic programme offer (i.e., providing leadership support at all levels offered by the programme within an organisation) to 1-2 local authorities/trusts to test organisational impact. 5. Demonstrate a clear approach to testing and evaluating potential innovations in the delivery model to continue to deliver efficiencies without compromising quality.      1. Publicise the programme and support candidate selection and endorsement for the aspirant programmes by the local authority and how the programme and selection will be equitable for all. 2. Support local authorities, including those authorities with specific improvement needs, by using the PQS, KSS and 7/7/7 model to identify the training and development needs of potential participants for the programme.      1. Link CPD to candidate needs, existing local authority programmes and local models of practice.      1. Provide participants with some form of recognition of participation. 2. Support participants’ development of evidence-based best practice, including best practice in learning transfer so that high-quality practice is embedded in local authority child and family social work. 3. Support the development of a wider legacy of CPD in local areas at the end of the contract.   II. Bidder(s) should include an overview of how the programme could be delivered to complement and enhance existing local professional development programmes.    III. The bidder(s) should provide a data security plan that explains how departmental or personal data will be protected, in particular how they will.   1. Collect a series of data on participants and their status during the leadership programme at individual and employer level, including data about the protected characteristics of all applicants in regard to the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 and in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidance[[14]](#footnote-15) on behalf of DfE as the Data Controller.      1. Ensure any data or management information transferred to DfE or employers   is done so in an agreed Government secure method.     1. Make available to DfE any item of data (in the supplier’s possession) within 3 working days. |

**Requirement 2: Project Management, Reporting arrangements and Evaluation**

Robust project management and regular accurate reporting is essential throughout the entire contract agreement to monitor programme development and delivery, manage risks and issues, and to fulfil governance-reporting requirements to build and give confidence that the programme delivery will be completed to the required level of quality.

The contractor(s) will be expected to:

1. Ensure that day-to-day operational management of the programme, both at design and delivery stages, is of an excellent quality and is conducted professionally against agreed ways of working and standards of behaviour by building a collaborative working relationship between the supplier(s) and DfE.
2. Have robust management controls and management information to provide a comprehensive view of actual progress of delivery against an agreed plan, with supporting evidence as necessary.
3. Ensure potential problems are reported to the DfE as early as possible and corrective actions are taken to keep delivery on track.
4. Obtain DfE approval for a plan of comprehensive corrective actions, mitigations and specific timescales in the event of any slippage, in order to restore progress back to plan.
5. Put in place clear internal governance arrangements that allow for rapid and effective decision-making and the escalation of issues requiring resolution and provide DfE with a copy of the same (and any revisions).
6. Utilise sector knowledge to work with the Department to refine key delivery KPIs once the programme has been designed, including reaching agreement on design questions such as participant numbers at each level.

1. Work with department to agree feedback questions and methodology with participants, line managers and direct reports to monitor and evaluate programme impact.
2. Facilitate collaboration in feedback and external evaluation, including obtaining agreement from participants and line managers that participation in the programme is a commitment to take part in feedback and any external evaluation (in the event that an external evaluation is commissioned), in line with GDPR guidance.
3. Work collaboratively with any external third-party evaluator on the leadership programme in the event of an external evaluation.
4. Produce an end of year report summarising the year of programme delivery. Content and feedback questions will be agreed with DfE at the start of the contract. An end of year report will include but not be limited to:

* Participation numbers, broken down by cohort, local authority, region and protected characteristic.
* Protected characteristic summary focussing on experience, access and content. Feedback questions will be agreed with DfE at the start of the contract.
* Lessons learned and suggested improvements for future years delivery.
* Summary of feedback on participant experience and participant, line manager and direct report assessment of impact. Feedback questions will be agreed with DfE at the start of the contract.

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| I. Bidders should set out in detail their project management and reporting arrangements and how they relate to effective governance of the work by the Department, including:     1. An outline plan to show how key project milestones will be met.      1. A project plan outlining critical activities to be undertaken to achieve each milestone, the resource required to do so, and if they work as a group, which members of it (and stakeholders and communications where appropriate) will lead which elements to achieve it.      1. How they will effectively resource this contract, outlining the proposed staffing and management structure. 2. How they will provide a comprehensive view of actual progress of delivery against the project management plan with supporting evidence as necessary, including setting out appropriate attendance of any subcontractors/group members at review meetings, board meetings and other reporting or update meetings. 3. How DfE will be provided with management and performance information including in advance of planned meetings and in response to ad hoc requests. This should also include how the DfE will be provided with participant and manager feedback, programme evaluation data and year-end reports.     II. Bids should include a risk register, defining specific risks or issues in delivering the proposal and set out:     1. How they will ensure potential problems are identified and escalated as early as possible both within the supplier group and to the DfE so that corrective actions can be taken to keep delivery on track.      1. A plan of comprehensive corrective actions, mitigations, contingencies and specific timescales in the event of any slippage against plan in order to restore progress back to plan. |

**Requirement 3: Contractor management and governance**

We understand that it may not be possible for a single supplier to provide all of the professional development for participants across all areas as required by this contract. Accordingly, we welcome bids from groups as well as single organisations.

We require a contractor, if bidding from a group, **to clearly show in detail who the lead member is** and how they will effectively manage the joint-working arrangement and ensure that all deliverables are met to the required standards and within the required timeframes.

We would expect to see, within **any** bid, a contractor that is made up of a range of professionals, such as social work experts, social work CPD experts and leadership and management training experts.

Alternatively, it would be possible for the supplier(s) to coordinate activity across other professional development suppliers across different regions and the wider professional development market. Any such approach would need to set out clearly how delivery would be managed, supply of the programme assured, and the payment process delivered.

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| I. The bidder(s) will be expected to set out, in detail, the management approach for the delivery of the contract which includes:     1. A clear governance and management structure that combines efficient decision-making with accountability and transparency. 2. How the programme will be effectively and efficiently organised and managed and the relationship between the key strands of activities planned. 3. The responsibilities and experience of different organisations/group members, how they will work together, and who will lead the group (if applicable), including evidence of previous experience and expertise in:  * leading contractor groups * developing and/or delivering CPD to social workers * developing and/or delivering leadership and management training to child and family social workers or other professional groups * social work practice/working with social workers.  1. How the contractor(s) will ensure there are sufficient staff with the right skills and expertise to manage the efficient and effective delivery of the programme. This should include information about key operational and strategic posts, the rationale for these posts, their responsibilities and the skills required to undertake those functions. The bid should include a CV for each key person attached as an annex using no more than one side of A4 paper, in no less than 12-point Arial font). 2. How subcontracts with third party suppliers will be managed, including an effective approach to managing potential conflicts of interest. This should also include details of confidentiality agreements that will be in place with group members and sub-contractors (if applicable).      1. How CPD material and delivery by partners and/or subcontractors will be quality assured and how feedback gathered from quality assurance activity will be used to improve delivery of the programme. |

**To note, the DfE will have no direct role in contracting outside the sole contract with the successful supplier(s). Contract arrangements between the supplier(s) and third-party supplier(s) will be covered within the total value of the sole contract (£9.9m) for two years.**

**Requirement 4: Costs and value for money**

The approximate budget is **up to £9.9 million (inc. VAT)** in the contract period of two years. We have not mandated the breakdown of set-up and operational costs as this will be subject to the design and delivery model proposed.

Where the contract price agreed between the Department and contractor is inclusive of any VAT, further amounts will not be paid by the Department should a vatable supply claim be made at any later stage.

It is the responsibility of tenderers to check the VAT position with HMRC before submitting a bid.

All payments will be made by BACS transfer, Following receipt of a valid invoice. The successful tenderer(s) should provide details of discounts for prompt payment.

We expect to see a fixed cap on any expected expenses. All travel and subsistence costs must be in line with DFE thresholds (These are available upon request).

The supplier(s) is/are expected to:

1. Deliver a high-quality practice leadership CPD programme, within the approximated budget of £9.9m that offers the best value for money.

1. Monitor and evaluate leadership delivery costs.

1. Prepare options for the longer-term sustainability of the CPD programme.

1. Manage payment arrangements with third party suppliers.

1. Identify lessons learned and opportunities for improving delivery and value for money through each contract year, and test, evaluate and, if demonstrating success, implementing improvements.

**To note, the DfE will have no direct role in payment management arrangements outside the sole contract with the successful supplier. Payment management arrangements between the supplier and third-party suppliers will be covered within the total value of the sole contract (£9.9m).**

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| I. The bidder(s) will need to complete the cost matrix table provided (Document 5) and demonstrate costs against each of the following requirements:     1. Clearly present a price based on current expectations, set up, and running costs up to the value of this requirement.      1. Clearly present the cost per participant (DfE’s assumption is that delivery costs per participant will vary dependent upon the training delivery model). The bidder(s) will need to balance the intensity of training required to make a significant impact on participants with the time needed to complete each programme level when considering the costs per participant and the best value for money.      1. Clearly present forecast costs on a monthly basis, including project management and professional time, workshop venues, cost for materials, and travel and subsistence etc. as appropriate. It should be made clear who will receive T&S under their contract conditions and that are outside standard running costs.     II. They will also need to:     1. Show how the programme offers the best value for money, within the set budget and against the requirements set, explaining the steps taken by the bidder to enable this and manage the proposed budget over the lifetime of the contract, showing rationale and clearly evidenced cost calculations including the costs of:      * Engaging the sector. * Developing the CPD offer. * Each participant completing the leadership programme.      1. Include clear plans for how they will record and report where costs may increase/decrease and their potential impact on delivery. 2. That appropriate assumptions have been made in developing the cost model. 3. What additional risks have been factored into the cost of the bid and the steps that the bidder will be taking to mitigate these risks.      1. Show clear plans to review running costs, delivery numbers and implement spend and delivery plan changes for the contract period.      1. Formulate options about the longer-term sustainability of the CPD offer. |

**Requirement 5: Communications and engagement**

I. The supplier(s) will need to produce communications and engagement activity that:

1. Raises awareness of and demonstrates the high standard of leadership and management training available to child and family social workers under the programme name “Practice Leadership Programme for Social Workers". We would like to refer to this as “Practice Leadership Programme” (the PLP) to distinguish it from the current PLDP programme.

1. Encourages child and family social workers, local authorities and employers to engage and take part in the programmes.

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| I. The bidder(s) will be required to set out, in detail, their proposed communications strategy, including:   1. A strategic narrative that is consistent with the DfE’s vision for social worker CPD. 2. Messaging that is consistent across the different levels of leadership in the programme whilst highlighting the unique value of each and the broader long-term career pathway of social workers. 3. Zero cost marketing tactics, such as owned and earned channels, as no budget will be provided for communications activity. 4. How the programme will be promoted to local authorities, employers and social workers, to maximise interest and take-up. 5. How the supplier(s) will engage and share insights from local authorities, employers and social workers on the successes and challenges of the programme, to inform and shape future training. 6. A ‘look and feel’ that is consistent across the entire leadership programme, including:  * A stand-alone website that addresses the full audience journey, from prospective applicant to programme participant, housing all relevant content online. The website should signpost and provide a point of information for application and endorsement processes. * Platforms such as social media channels, a blog and newsletter that can be used to promote the programme and engage with the target audience without the use of paid for marketing activity. |

**To note: Please see Terms and Conditions for intellectual Property Rights**

**Requirement 6: End of contract**

We require a contractor(s) that will ensure there is a formal closure procedure, including having an exit strategy in place for handover of the system, if required, within 6 months of contract start and to be reviewed each year of the contract.

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| I. The bidder(s) will be required to set out a high-level plan that will be finalised upon contract award which includes:     1. A plan for formal project closure including any TUPE arrangements where required.      1. An exit strategy for handover, if required, of all aspects of the service in approximately June 2024 to a new provider or organisation and DfE.      1. An exit plan for engagement with local authorities and participants on the programme including outstanding training, results and/or feedback as appropriate.      1. The methodology for presenting all evaluation material from the contract into a final report for the DfE.      1. A summary of outputs (including participation), lessons learned and outstanding issues arising during the contract. |

**Requirement 7: Social Value**

Since 1 January 2021, all procurements covered by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 must include a social value element.

For full details on The Government’s Social Value Model including the policy themes, outcomes, reporting metrics and suggested activities that could demonstrate your delivery of these please see the procurement policy note on taking account of social value in the awarding of central government contracts[[15]](#footnote-16) which articulates the areas of priority focus for social value delivery in the form of policy themes and outcomes. We have identified the following as areas of priority focus for the leadership programme and delivery of the associated contract.

I.  Bidders will only be asked to submit a response that covers **ONE** of the following:

1. Tackle Workforce Inequality– bidders will be required to demonstrate during procurement what measures they take to ensure their own workforce, and those of paid third parties, are representative of the characteristics of wider society at all levels of the organisation(s).
2. Effective stewardship of the environment– bidders will be required to provide detail of actions they have taken to minimise or off-set their environmental impact.

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| If the bidder is responding to the **Tackle workforce inequality** requirement you should:   1. Demonstrate your understanding of the issues affecting inequality in employment, skills and pay in the market, industry or sector relevant to the contract, and in your own organisation and those of your key subcontractors. 2. Provide a timed project plan and process, including how you will implement your commitment and by when. Also, how you will monitor, measure and report on your commitments/the impact of your proposals. You should include but not be limited to:    1. Timed action plan.    2. Use of metrics.    3. Tools/processes used to gather data.    4. Reporting.    5. Feedback and improvement.    6. Transparency. 3. Demonstrate how you will influence staff, suppliers, customers and communities through the delivery of the contract to support the Policy Outcome, e.g., engagement, co-design/creation, training and education, partnering/collaborating, volunteering. 4. Describe the proposed measures to tackle inequality in employment, skills and pay in the contract workforce.   If the bidder is responding to the **Effective stewardship of the environment** requirement you should:   1. Demonstrate your understanding of additional environmental benefits in the performance of the contract, including working towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions and collaborative working with the supply chain. 2. Provide a timed project plan and process, including how you will implement your commitment and by when. Also, how you will monitor, measure and report on your commitments/the impact of your proposals. You should include but not be limited to:    1. Timed action plan.    2. Use of metrics.    3. Tools/processes used to gather data.    4. Reporting.    5. Feedback and improvement.    6. Transparency.   For either requirement bidders should pay particular attention to the reporting metrics described alongside [PPN 06/20](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/940828/Social-Value-Model-Quick-Reference-Table-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf) as these will be used by the Department to monitor your progress against your commitment in your bid. |

**6. Methodology**

There is an expectation the supplier will engage with the sector to benefit from professional expertise to test content and design. This scoping exercise will enable the supplier to develop a menu of evidence-based, quality assured CPD material that is attractive to local authorities and social workers across the country.

The contractor(s) is/are expected to:

1. Engage with the sector to test the content and design of the programme to ensure suitability for the leadership programme.
2. Develop a CPD programme for leaders from Practice Supervisor through to Practice Leader around the PQS and KSS which meets the needs of local authorities and the social workers they employ.
3. Provide the DfE with a report at the end of the scoping exercise that sets out how the findings will be used to develop a high-quality, evidence based CPD package, including methods for delivery.
4. Show evidence of how a leadership pathway will be created that embeds consistent leadership skills based on the PQS and KSS and 7/7/7 model at the differentiated leadership levels.
5. Identify the potential training needs of Practice Supervisors, Middle Managers, Heads of Service and Practice Leaders, with direct reference to the PQS for Practice Supervisors and KSS for Practice Leaders. Identify the current use of CPD for potential participants at all levels as well as understand the existing barriers to taking up CPD.
6. Engage with the sector to identify and assess the range, strength, quality, evidence-base and value for money of existing professional development programmes and evidence-based materials suitable for the leadership programme.
7. Ensure content is reflective of child and family social work evidence-based practice and management demands.
8. Ensure that any “Off-the-shelf” content used is quality assured and is current.
9. Develop and quality assure bespoke content to address and respond to a need in professional development options.
10. Work in collaboration with the sector to ensure the programme meets the needs of individual local authorities, including those authorities with specific improvement needs, and the potential participants and number of participants at all levels likely to participate in the programme.

**7. Ensuring quarterly key performance and delivery plan updates.**

For this contract, the Department acknowledges the importance of measures that focus on how much of something is being delivered, like the data we are requesting be provided monthly, but we also want to be confident that the contract is making a difference.

We want to work with the successful contractor to be able to better demonstrate the impact the contract is having on leaders in Children’s Social Care and, as such, would like to challenge bidders to help define what measures should be used to demonstrate that those engaged with the leadership programme are better off for their experience.

Whilst the Department is clear on what areas we see as key to the success of this programme, we also understand that the different ways bidders may intend to achieve the outcomes of the contract may require different methods of measurement. To ensure the measurement aligns with the chosen delivery method, we are asking bidders to help define no more than ten (10) KPIs, which will be used to demonstrate success in these key areas. These KPIs will be agreed prior to contract signature and will form the Contractual KPIs to be included in Schedule 10 of the T&Cs.

**The Department’s key areas are:**

* **Reducing inequality of programme access and outcomes experienced by participants with protected characteristics.**

We know that some groups of participants are under-represented in more senior leadership roles. They are less likely to access the leadership programme or achieve the same outcomes as others during the programme. The successful contractor(s) will be required to continue working to address this disproportionality.

We will require at **least one KPI** that demonstrates the impact the contractor(s) has on addressing these inequalities. We are particularly interested in measures which evaluate the experiences, access and programme journey (from pre-application to completion) and outcomes for participants from underrepresented backgrounds in senior leadership positions.

***Please note***; we accept that the measures in this area may take longer to develop, due to the lack of current intelligence, so will accept a proposal that utilises year one as an exploratory and benchmarking period, with the final KPI measures being agreed to start at the beginning of year two.

* **Increasing the awareness and reach of leadership CPD and the quality and consistency of leadership in the sector.**

The successful contractor(s) will be expectedto ensure that the leadership programme has contributed to more consistent and higher-quality leadership in the child and family social work sector. They will also be required to demonstrate how they have maximised interest in and take-up of the programme, in order to ensure delivery to a minimum of 1000 participants in each year of programme delivery.

We will require **KPIs** which demonstrate that programme content and delivery are of a sufficiently high standard to meet the needs of participants at the different leadership levels (as defined by DfE) and result in a positive impact on both the quality and consistency of leadership in the sector. KPIs should also show that promotion of the programme has maximised applications/ participation and ensured delivery to minimum participant numbers.

***Please note***: Any KPIs proposed for this area **must include** a measure that demonstrates that ***at least 90% of employers are satisfied with quality of the programme.***

* **Developing a pathway for leadership and development.**

The successful contractor(s) will be expectedto ensure that leaders with the potential for career progression receive appropriate support to develop their skills, making them ready for the next level of leadership or for a developmental role with greater responsibility.

We will require **KPIs** that demonstrate that the programme content and delivery is appropriate, relevant and of a sufficiently high standard to contribute to the development and/or career progression of leaders, particularly those in the aspirant cohorts.

***Please note***: Any KPIs proposed for this area **must include** a measure that tracks the career destinations of the aspirant cohorts.

* **Contributing to workforce stability and staff retention.**

To ensure the leadership programme is meeting the needs of sector employers, the successful contractor(s) must have mechanisms in place to demonstrate how the programme has had a positive impact on the retention of frontline practitioners and sector leaders.

We will require **at least one** **KPI** which demonstrate this impact. We are particularly interested in KPIs which gather the feedback of participants about how participation in the programme has increased the likelihood that they will remain in social work and with their current employer.

* **Demonstrating the Social Value impact delivered by the contractor(s).**

This key area is covered under the specific Social Value requirement, so bidders will have to allow for this KPI as part of their proposed, maximum 10, and will not be expected to revisit their proposal as part of this requirement.

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| Bidders will be required to submit a response that outlines how they will demonstrate success in the key areas.  For each area the bidder must:   1. Describe what metrics they are proposing for measurement, including what target they are proposing and the frequency of this reporting. 2. Demonstrate how they have set the target to ensure that it is stretching yet achievable over time. 3. Describe why this is the right metric, including describing any other metrics considered and why, where applicable, they have been discarded. 4. Describe the process by which they will continuously improve these metrics so that they will always be focussed on ensuring the right data is being captured to demonstrate impact in each area. |

**Annex A**

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| **Practice Supervisor**  Job titles may include:   1. Team Manager/Leader 2. Practice Educator 3. Advanced Practitioner 4. Independent Reviewing Officer 5. Child Protection Chair 6. Consultant Social Worker 7. Assessed and Supported Year in Employment Lead 8. Deputy Team Manager 9. Assistant Team Manager 10. Senior Social Worker 11. Principal Social Worker 12. Senior Practitioner 13. National Assessment and Accreditation Lead   Responsibilities may include:   1. Line Management 2. Facilitating the development of social work practitioners 3. Managing service delivery 4. Reflective practice supervision and practice support 5. Communicating the rationale/supporting others through change 6. Supporting multi-agency and multi-team working |

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| **Middle Manager**  Job Titles may include:   1. Principal Child and Family Social Worker 2. Senior Manager 3. Operations Manager 4. Team Manager 5. Area Manager 6. Group Manager   Responsibilities may include:   1. Implementing/monitoring organisational strategy, policy and procedures 2. Influencing change processes/ensuring 'voices from below' are heard 3. Communicating the rationale/supporting others through change 4. Leading and managing integrated services/teams 5. Supporting and monitoring effective interagency working in relation to direct practice 6. Managing and overseeing HR policies, systems and processes (e.g., sickness absence, lone working, rotas etc) 7. Managing individual staff performance 8. Professional support and supervision 9. Identifying and supporting staff learning and development needs 10. Team development 11. On-call responsibilities (out of normal working hours) 12. Directing and supporting frontline practice 13. Responding to complaints, comments, and suggestions |

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| **Head of Service**  Responsibilities might include:   1. Providing critical support to and co-ordination of the service area 2. Ensuring services are safe, efficient and meet all regulatory standards 3. Leading on strategic multi-agency collaboration 4. Commercial and financial strategy/management 5. Driving service/ organisational improvements and innovation 6. Leading, managing and developing teams |

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| **Practice Leader**  Responsibilities might include:   1. Providing and promoting clear, strategic leadership across the service 2. Ensuring effective service delivery 3. Establishing systems of target setting and management which encourage high levels of performance 4. Line management, development and supporting the effective performance of Heads of Service and Managers 5. Driving service improvements, developing service improvement plans and fostering innovation 6. Establishing, overseeing and monitoring new services and programmes 7. Budget monitoring and fundraising |

1. [Post-qualifying standard: knowledge and skills statement for child and family practice supervisors (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/708705/Post-qualifying_standard-KSS_for_child_and_family_practice_supervisors.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [Knowledge and skills statement for practice leaders (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691540/Knowledge_and_skills_statement_for_practice_leaders.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [Landing Page - Practice Supervisor Development Programme Repository (rip.org.uk)](https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PSDP_Year_3_report_exec_sum.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. <https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/impact-of-the-psdp/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. [Firstline programme | Frontline (thefrontline.org.uk)](https://thefrontline.org.uk/firstline-programme/) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. [Firstline: evaluation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/firstline-evaluation) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. [Practice leader development programme (PLDP) evaluation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/practice-leader-development-programme-pldp-evaluation) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. [Post-qualifying standard: knowledge and skills statement for child and family practice supervisors (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/708705/Post-qualifying_standard-KSS_for_child_and_family_practice_supervisors.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. [Social work post-qualifying standards: knowledge and skills statements - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knowledge-and-skills-statements-for-child-and-family-social-work) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. <https://childrenssocialcare.independent-review.uk/> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. [The Staff College | Developing People - Building Capacity](https://thestaffcollege.uk/) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. [About - Upon (uponleaders.co.uk)](https://uponleaders.co.uk/about/) [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. [Guide to the General Data Protection Regulation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation) [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. [Procurement Policy Note 06/20 – taking account of social value in the award of central government contracts - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0620-taking-account-of-social-value-in-the-award-of-central-government-contracts) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)