

CSCPAG Annual Report 2021/2022

Introduction

Welcome to the second annual report from the Children's Social Care Practice Advisory Group (previously Social Work Practice Advisory Group).

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the directorate on the progress the group has made across 2021/2022 in supporting Children's Social Care towards achieving Bromley Excellence.

The group have had a busy year and are excited to share with you the development and completion of several work streams.

Progress on 2020/2021 priorities:

The 2020/2021 annual CSCPAG identified 3 recommendations:

- Change of name: Attendees proposed that the group name is changed to the 'Children's Social Care Practice Advisory Group'.

Update: The name of the group changed from the Social Work Practice Advisory Group (SWPAG) to the Children's Social Care Practice Advisory Group (CSCPAG) following feedback from staff across the directorate. Staff expressed that SWPAG was not inclusive of the wide range of professional roles and expertise across the directorate. The group relaunched as the Children's Social Care Practice Advisory Group in November 2021 and the name encompasses all roles in Children's Social Care.

- Work on the following work streams:
 - Professional curiosity
 - Safety and contingency planning
 - Depth and quality of management oversight
 - Quality of analysis in supervision and assessments

Update:

Professional curiosity: now features in the mandatory Children's Social Care induction for all new starters. Relevant service area leads are responsible for new starters accessing the training through the learning and development programme.

Safety and contingency planning: A new safety plan template was designed and trialled between March and June 2021 with a final version finalised in July 2021. The new safety plan has been built into a standalone form on Liquid Logic and will promote a consistent practice approach across Children's Social Care. The new safety plan was created, with a holistic systemic approach in mind, which encourages children and young people to contribute to developing their safety plan. The new safety plan embeds the Bromley Relationship Model of working "with" our children, young people, young adults and their families. A safety plan training programme will be led by the Reviewing Officers from the Quality Improvement service between January 2022 to January 2023. The ambition is for all children with a child protection plan to have a

safety plan that outlines the safety concerns, identify the help needed and from who with a review framework.

Depth and quality of management oversight and quality of analysis in supervision and assessments: The Practice Assurance Stocktakes have a laser lens on improving these areas. Due to the similarities in both areas, it has been decided to combine the training with the target audience as Group Managers, Team Managers, Consultant Social Workers and Senior Practitioners. Workforce development are actively commissioning a training provider with a view of a training programme launching in March 2022.

- Representation: Each service area to identify two representatives to attend the Social Work Practice Advisory Group. One as main attender and one act as a back-up in the event of workload, absences or departure. Each representative is to provide the group with an update on:
 - key developments in the service
 - examples of practice to celebrate
 - practice challenges for the group to discuss and explore how to improve

Update:

There is a representative from each service area now attending the CSCPAG, however the aspiration for 2 representatives from each service has not been achieved. This remains under continuous review by the Senior Management Team for Children's Social Care.

The group continuously encourages staff across the directorate to join and represent their service area to ensure there are service updates, reflection on practice challenges and a celebration of the important work completed across the directorate.

The CSCPAG Research group:

The CSCPAG research group continues to be a secure and stable feature within Children's Social Care. It is designed to be a forum to discuss new and relevant research papers to ensure practice is informed by research. The group meets monthly and is facilitated by practitioners with good attendance from practitioners and managers.

The facilitators seek ideas from staff on research discussion points and has resulted in discussions on many relevant topics including the impact of Covid-19 on social work, burnout and emotional resilience, unconscious bias, and gender differences in child sexual exploitation.

The feedback from staff continues to be positive with staff sharing they are keen to develop research groups within service areas. The Youth Offending Service developed their research group in January 2022 in addition to existing Group Supervision. Our ambition is for this to be emulated across the directorate.

The research group serves as a hub to help unify services and teams that might otherwise not have regular contact. Staff often express delight when they have been able to put names to faces and the group recognises its role in creating and sustaining professional relationships.

The CSCPAG research group is ambitious and will be encouraging more participation from staff to include presentations on research relevant to their service area and/or specialism, increase opportunities for Students to present their dissertation research and findings to support our practice and engagement with children, young people, young adults and their families.

One of the CSCPAG research group aims is to support staff to be more curious and use research to inform their thinking, hypothesis and evidence-based practice.

CSCPAG achievements:

The CSCPAG continues to meet every six weeks with an agenda circulated in advance. The administration for the group is well supported by the Personal Assistant to the Assistant Directors, Children's Social Care who ensures the group functions effectively and meaningfully.

Reflecting on workstreams is an essential element of the group's agenda recognising the impact that can be made to supporting and improving practice ensuring Bromley's Children's Social Care are Getting to Excellence.

The CSCPAG are proud to share their achievements:

1. Supporting mandatory inductions:

Welcoming new starters into Bromley Children's Social Care is important to convey key messages and promoting our commitment to the organisation's REAL values. An induction programme was developed in July 2021 that includes features of the Practice Improvement areas, professional curiosity and safety planning. These are essential to embed consistent practices across Children's Social Care. In addition, the induction programme includes Bromley Relationship Model training to ensure new starters are clear about our relational, compassionate and value-based practice when working with children, young people and their families. The induction programme was updated in January 2022 for new starters to understand how to effectively work with Early Intervention and Family Support Services. This will provide clear understanding of the early intervention offer within Bromley Children's Social Care and the referral processes to access this provision.

2. Digital Direct Work Toolkit

Members of the CSCPAG have created a direct work toolkit, which will be digitalised and available on the CSCPAG SharePoint page. The direct work toolkit will provide managers and practitioners useful tools to support meaningful engagement and effective relationship building with children, young

people, young adults and their families. The aspiration is for the direct work toolkit to be launched in Spring 2022.

The direct work toolkit will provide useful resources to support several practice areas including and not limited to adult domestic abuse, child on parent abuse, safeguarding, life story work, direct work under Covid-19, working with non-verbal children and child exploitation.

3. New supervision policy

Supervision is recognised as essential in supporting reflective and evidenced based practice that enhances good outcomes for children and families. The CSCPAG has revised the Bromley supervision policy to reflect the Bromley Relationship Model, REAL values, critical reflection and equality. The policy has been designed to encourage 4 key areas for effective and meaningful supervision:

1. Managerial: reflecting on and reviewing competence, accountability, and performance.
2. Developmental: exploring continuing professional development and supporting life-long learning.
3. Supportive: providing personal support and reviewing physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing. Supporting a relationship based and restorative approach to all relationships and practice.
4. Inclusion: reflecting on equalities, equity, diversity and inclusion ensuring the Supervisee is accessing support, services, and opportunities to achieve their best performance.

The policy will be launched in March 2022.

4. CSCPAG on SharePoint

The CSCPAG have used SharePoint to provide useful information for members and staff interested in the workstreams completed by the group, which includes and not limited to:

- CSCPAG research group facilitators profiles
- Recordings of the CSCPAG research group
- Direct work resources
- Bromley Relationship Model resources
- Practice guidance for safety plans
- Career progression information and guidance.
- Principal Child and Family Social Worker newsletters

Challenges

Attendance:

The CSCPAG has experienced irregular attendance from some representatives with the primary reason being finding time to attend is difficult with demanding workloads.

It is important that the CSCPAG has regular attendance from all service areas to support diverse reflection, help identify practice improvements and celebrate good practice.

2022/2023 Priorities:

1. The CSCPAG identified there is a need to develop an evidence bank of good practice to support new starters to understand Bromley's practice expectations and to support developing practitioners. The evidence bank will be located on the CSCPAG SharePoint page, and all records will be completely anonymised to ensure confidentiality.

The evidence bank will be developed by each representative from the CSCPAG obtaining examples of the following that are applicable to their service area. The quality of the evidence will need to be quality assured by the relevant Head of Service before shared with the CSCPAG and fully anonymised. The evidence bank will consist of and not limited to:

- Safety plans including contingency plans
 - Child and family assessments
 - Child in need plans
 - Child protection plans
 - Pre-proceedings letters
 - Children looked after plans
 - Pre-proceedings plans
 - Pre-proceedings working together agreement
 - Cultural genograms
 - Ecomap
 - Direct work examples
 - Asset plus assessment
 - Common Assessment Framework
 - Personal Education Plans
 - Strategy discussion/meeting record
 - Child protection enquiry (section 47)
2. Supporting services and teams to have reflective practice groups.
 3. Developing Action Learning Sets for Newly Qualified Social Workers on completion of the Assessed Year in Employment.
 4. Develop a guide to accompany the Children's Social Care consent form to provide to children and families explaining consent, how their information is used, information sharing arrangements and how to amend consent.