

Appendix A (DRAFT)
Children’s Social Work; Workforce Development Plan 2024-2030

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION		
Aim	How will we know	By when / link to The Promise?
<p>Aberdeen’s Children’s Services Management Team are committed to providing scaffolding for the workforce by setting the conditions which will ensure our workforce feel safe and held whilst working in an extremely challenging context.</p> <p>Ensure that caseload allocation is carefully carried out via line manager discussion, based on type of work, intensity and experience of employee with recognition of their wider caseload.</p> <p>Developing our induction, support and supervision of social workers in training who are undertaking placements with Children’s Social Work.</p> <p>Continue to deliver and develop our Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW) Supported Year programme, ensuring that it aligns and adheres to national commitments i.e. Supported Year.</p> <p>To raise awareness of job and career opportunities within CSW (CSW) to as wide a pool of applicants as possible, including creative recruitment campaigns, attending job and careers events, links with local and national learning provides etc, in collaboration with colleagues in People & Citizen Services</p> <p>To encourage retention of our existing CSW workforce and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased recruitment and retention across CSW services leading to fewer vacancies reported. Reduction in the number of absences across the service. Cease use of Recruitment Agency staff, due to improved recruitment and retention. Increased numbers of social workers who have undertaken student placements within Children’s Social Work, seeking permanent or fixed term posts. Seek feedback from all new appointments to feedback whether the following were positive influences in their applying for a post; CSW publicity via RGU, recruitment events; positive communication shared by the wider partnership; social media; positive encouragement from CSW workforce. Increase in number of diverse staff recruited. Continue to support the succession planning pathways to develop trainee social workers from our internal workforce, via collation of data on number of trainee social workers who successfully complete and move into Social Work roles. Higher numbers of social workers in training and NQSW’s reporting feeling confident and who aspire to secure and remain in permanent roles? Increase in our qualified social workers stepping into management roles. 	<p>People, Voice, Care</p> <p>May 2026</p>

<p>further provide scaffolding by offering a range of continuous professional development and other development opportunities as well as career progression opportunities to encourage employees to develop either broader experience or into management roles.</p> <p>Work closely with stakeholders to increase awareness of CSW values, priorities, and future recruitment opportunities so that new recruits with potential and talent are aware of the high expectations we hold and are motivated and inspired to join our services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of interviews where young people who have lived experience of services are able to make a meaningful contribution to the recruitment process. • Caseloads will be protected dependent on experience, role and other key factors. • NQSWs will be offered protected learning time, peer support and mentoring. • NQSWs will meet their NQSW core learning elements during their supported year, including mandatory learning activities as part of their CPD. • Seek feedback from NQSWs, advanced years practitioners, wider workforce to give evidence as to whether they have received the right levels of supervision and support for their professional development and learning, from ACC and from peers and colleagues. • Increase the average length of time of all who work within CSW. 	
<p>Support the development of the 'grow our own' approach and ensure future career pathways are available within CSW for example the Trainee Social Worker pathway, working in collaboration with colleagues in People & Citizen Services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in retention – data showing an increase the average length of service of qualified social workers. • Increase % staff who report they have received training and development for their future development. • Review and maintain system of overview of staff training to inform workforce development and shape L&D budget. • Staff survey on satisfaction with supervision. 	<p>People, Scaffolding</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p>

Develop and enhance an induction programme geared towards new CSW staff who are not newly qualified social workers—this can follow the format of the NQSW induction programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction evaluations and summary feedback from staff who attended 	People, Scaffolding, Care, Family, Voice July 2025
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SUPERVISION TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING		
Aim	How will we know	By when / link to Promise?
<p>Staff are supported to achieve a healthy work/ life balance through flexible working where practicable and in line with exigencies of the service. This will include taking regular breaks that they are entitled to, and planning and taking holidays/annual leave across the year.</p> <p>To further develop scaffolding of the workforce, staff can access a range of flexible working options to suit their home and work commitments, and these will be accommodated where possible to support employee mental health and wellbeing, encourage retention, and reduce absences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of employees will use all their allocated number of leave days within the calendar year. • Staff who work flexible working patterns will feedback accordingly the positive benefits they feel this affords them. • Staff will feedback that the focus on wellbeing across CSW has impacted positively on their wellbeing. • Absence rates will indicate that MH&W is not a growing feature. 	People, Scaffolding December 2024
<p>CSW will provide scaffolding to ensure staff will all feel they are safe, supported and have autonomy to do their job day-to-day. This support will come from a variety of means, formal and informal supervision, team, peer and colleague support; leadership and management support; access to training; and support to live a healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>Our workforce will forge positive, compassionate and supportive professional relationships with children and families, as well as with each other and the wider children's services partnership in Aberdeen City, which will foster a climate of increased levels of safety for children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reporting that can be monitored through an annual short 'staff wellbeing survey'. • The number of children listed on the child protection register, whom we have no./ted we are finding it hard to engage with, will stay below the national average 	People, Scaffolding, Care, Family, Voice July 2025

<p>CSW Values will be displayed at all times towards those we are serving to protect, but also towards each other.</p> <p>We will address discrimination experienced by any of our workforce.</p> <p>To further develop effective scaffolding, a firm focus on the importance of mental health and wellbeing will be widely promoted and incorporated into practice.</p> <p>Staff feel that supervision has a clear mental health and wellbeing focus, and they will feel empowered to seek support they require it, including encouragement to access support outside of their workplace to maximise this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will become a cultural norm within CSW, with inclusion in supervision, team meetings, structures, service wide communication and communication with the children and families we work with. • QA supervision practices. • Self-reporting of staff via an annual wellbeing survey. • Numbers of staff taking up L&D opportunities and taking up promoted positions within the service. 	<p>People, Care, Scaffolding</p> <p>December 2025</p>
<p>Further develop CSW 'keeping us informed' approach, that will keep the workforce updated on service, local, and national updates, including the opportunity to recognise and celebrate achievements of staff.</p> <p>Staff are involved in decision making and are aware of service demands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from staff directly via team meetings and 1 to 1 discussion. • Self-reporting of staff via an annual wellbeing survey. • Number of staff being 'recognised' for good practice. • Number of suggestions received via the 'suggestion box'. • Star Awards? 	<p>Scaffolding, Voice</p> <p>December 2025</p>

GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES [Taking stock and moving forward]		
Aim	How will we know	By when / link to Promise?
<p>Explore available and emerging technologies in order to support CSW infrastructure and development to reduce demand on the system and ensure our resources are focused</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collected on completed forms/sections on D365. • Staff self-reporting effectiveness of technologies 	<p>Scaffolding</p> <p>July 2025</p>

<p>on where they are required, including CSW continue to influence the development of D365 and the testing and early adoption of MS Copilot to explore how this could support the workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff involved in Copilot testing will offer constructive feedback to inform future planning. 	
<p>Re-design, adapt, and improve services where required for the benefit of staff, children and families, aligned with QAF and in light of ongoing changes in need, developments in our Family Support Model, and insights from our workforce data.</p> <p>To offer growth and development opportunities and enhance workforce scaffolding, for all our staff, to enhance their experience of working for us, but also to encourage them to progress to promoted posts.</p> <p>Specialist teams are a source of knowledge which can be accessed by workers across our service. We will further develop ways of rolling this expertise out wider, to enhance the skills and knowledge across our workforce.</p> <p>Services are co-designed with feedback from staff, children and families to deliver the best possible outcomes and support.</p> <p>Opportunities to integrate services will be maximised to the benefit of children, young people and families. Including, further development of opportunities with our key partners (Education, Family Learning, Housing, NHS, AHSCP, Third Sector), in delivering a Family Support Model across services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update from CSWO annual report and self-reporting from staff via annual wellbeing survey. Children and Young People self-reporting regarding feeling that CSW have listened and adapted and made improvements to services and lives of children and young people. Number of children and young people using Mind of My Own as a platform to provide feedback. Number of sessions held to raise awareness of specialist teams. Staff reporting feeling more knowledgeable and skilled in dealing with specialist areas. Number of opportunities where services are integrated. Number of integrated services actively delivering a Family Support Model. 	<p>People, Care, Scaffolding, Voice, Family</p> <p>December 2025</p>
<p>Review and set the CSW learning and development plan aims and learning needs for the future [1yr / 5yrs / 10yrs]. Training needs are logged, reviewed and contribute to future planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of training courses delivered/purchased. Number of attendees. Feedback from training sessions. 	<p>People, Scaffolding</p> <p>May 2025</p>

<p>of service wide training requirements. Review the current CSW workforce demographic and actively promote leadership and shadowing opportunities – have a clear structure and progression plan.</p> <p>All staff are supported to increase their learning on the current and changing policy and legislation, via workshops, learning sessions and in-house training, and the use of CareKnowledge.</p> <p>CareKnowledge used to develop workforce knowledge & skills.</p> <p>Staff continue to be supported to complete Mandatory Training as per the L&D strategy. This will help foster a learning and improvement culture, embed values and learning practices.</p> <p>Incorporate WRAM into Mandatory Training offer. Ensure workforce is engaging with the National Trauma Framework and receive the appropriate level of trauma training for role/team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff benefitting from CareKnowledge platform. • Staff self-reporting of feeling more confident and knowledgeable. • Feedback from attendees at development discussions/sessions held by teams. • Number of staff reported to have completed training [via 1-2-1/Manager survey] 	<p>October 2024</p>
<p>Staff are kept informed of national and local policy and legislative changes including updates from The Promise, etc.</p> <p>Review CSW wide induction – welcoming new staff, providing an opportunity for orientation, and introduction to CSW.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff self-reporting of feeling more informed, valued, and supported via annual survey. • Data from evaluation forms completed by new recruits. • Time new staff stay in post after joining CSW. 	<p>People, Care, Scaffolding, Voice, Family</p> <p>December 2025</p>