

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

15 January 2019

Information Items

The following information items are enclosed:

- Social Worker Retention Policy
- Celebrating the Achievements of Young People in Warwickshire

Please note that the Case Studies should be treated as exempt and any questions on individual cases should be taken in closed session as it may be possible to identify individual young people.

Retention of Children & Families Social Workers

Our Pledge to Children & Families Service

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Warwickshire County Council's "Our People" vision is that the council is a great place to work with outstanding leadership, and a talented, agile workforce. Children & Families services rely upon well trained, supported and motivated Social Workers and other practitioners. The aim of this Retention Policy or Pledge is to deliver a stable, skilled and motivated staff group that is fit for current purpose with the flexibility and agility to meet future challenges.
- 1.2 Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is an employer of choice for many and Children and Families service have a good history in recruiting and retaining staff with a focus on creating an environment for good practice to flourish. We are committed to provide high support and high challenge to staff at all levels of the service. Our values and behaviours influence all that we do.

Our Warwickshire Values



High performing



Collaborative



Customer focused



Accountable



Trustworthy

Our Warwickshire Behaviours



do what we say.



move with purpose
and energy.



focus on solutions.



help people and
communities to find
their own solutions.



build strong working
relationships.



be the best we can be.

- 1.3 Warwickshire County Council's core purpose is to make Warwickshire the best it can be. Our key outcomes as an organisation are:
- Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent.
 - Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training and skills and infrastructure.
- 1.4 The Children & Families Service have three set strategic objectives, which are:
- Children's needs do not escalate and become complicated & expensive.
 - Fewer children need to come into or stay in care.
 - Children are in good quality placements that deliver value for money.
- 1.5 In Warwickshire we believe that family is sacrosanct. This means the County Council will work to do all we can to make families the best they can be through empowerment and

enabling. We will not over intervene in family life but the safety of our children is our number one priority. So we will take decisive action and intervene in family life if children are at risk or are suffering significant harm.

- 1.6 We want our Social Workers and other Practitioners to feel part of the family of Warwickshire County Council. Like we are for the children of Warwickshire, we are ambitious for our people and we want to be an employer of choice for children's social care practitioners. Warwickshire Children and Families Services have had success in recruiting Social Workers but many are newly qualified and this success has enabled WCC to reduce reliance and spend on agency workers. However, the more challenging issue is attracting and retaining more experienced Social Workers.
- 1.7 This retention plan and pledge relates to Social Workers and Managers. A separate retention and career pathways are still in development for Family Support Workers, Youth Workers and other practitioners which will be published later 2019.

2. Context

- 2.1 Warwickshire needs to ensure it has sufficient Social Workers to meet demand over the next decade and beyond. Effective workforce planning and development is vital to increase stability across the social care workforce. Local authorities can be in competition with each other in trying to attract Social Workers, our pledge is about understanding who comes to work here and who stays.
- 2.2 Warwickshire is not alone in struggling to recruit and retain Social Workers and this is national issue. Compared to many of our neighbours, we have managed to fair reasonably well, whilst our pay is not as competitive as others, we have managed to recruit nearly to establishment, without needing to introduce "golden hello's". Although we have seen an increase in the usage of agency Social Workers, overall levels have remained low in comparison and we are working towards a position of no agency Social Workers.

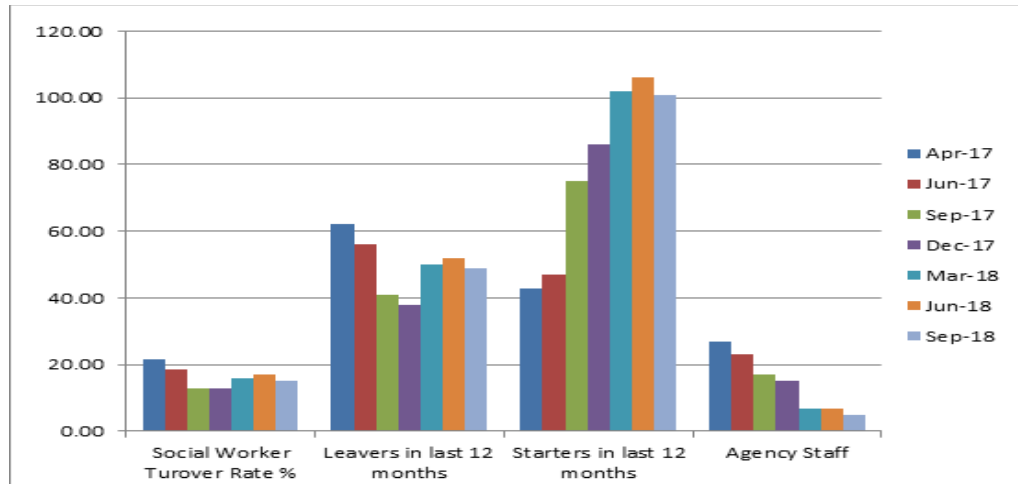
3. Social work data

3.1 Retention Data

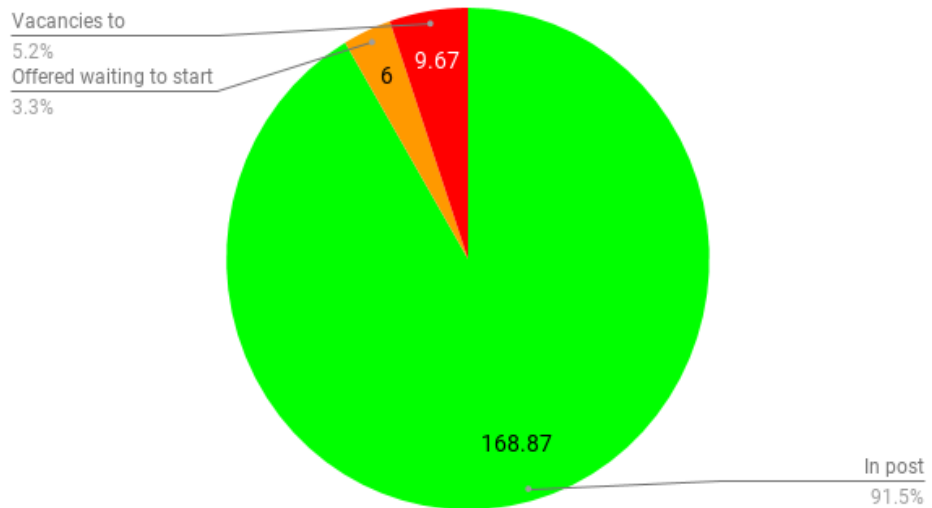
The following charts show the trends for Social Workers in respect of turnover rate, leavers, new starters and agency. As you can see recruitment has been successful, however retention is still a cause for concern. The reduction in agency staff is positive and has been achieved through targeted recruitment and planning.

Over the last 18 months there has been an initiative to recruit an additional 40 front line Social Workers, which has subsequently led to the increase in the establishment of Social Workers as show in the diagram below.

3.1 position as at the end of August, against the target to be at establishment.



Social Work Recruitment against Establishment



3.2 Levels of Experience

3.2.1 As well as the ability to recruit Social Workers it is important that we have the right balance of experience. The ideal position would be to have more level 3 workers than level 2. Figure 3-2 illustrates the current position for WCC.

3.2 Illustrates the current position for WCC.

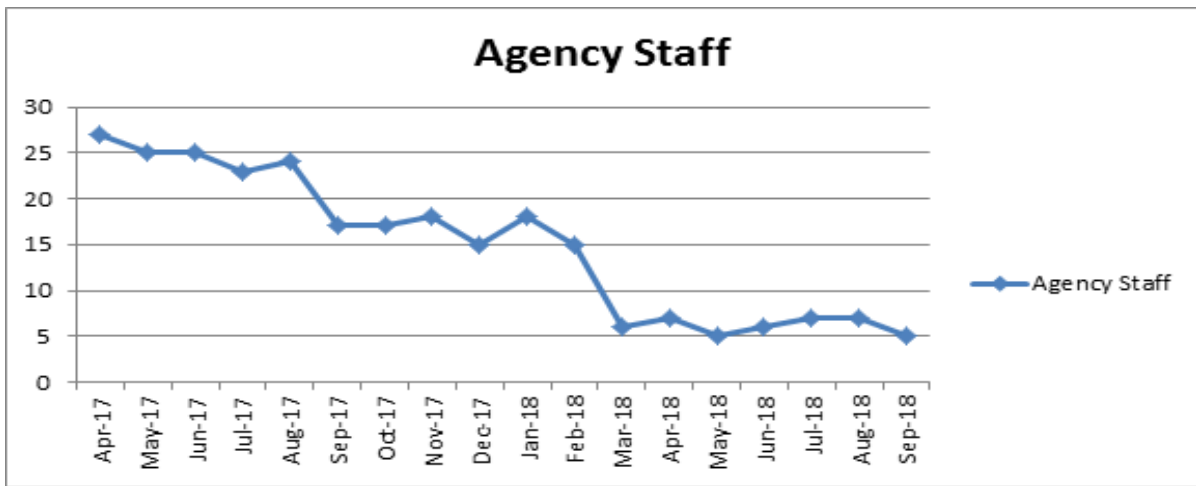
Social Workers by level of experience			
	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	FTE	FTE	FTE
30/09/2016	89.59	65.45	29.2
30/12/2016	96.2	67.72	25.27
30/03/2017	104.5	67.01	45.24
30/06/2017	103.12	65.8	41.16
30/03/2018	121.6	73.47	38.66

30/06/2018	137.28	66.54	48.6
30/09/2018	162.7	65.5	57.26
Baseline increase	73.11	0.05	28.06

3.3 Agency Workers

3.3.1 It has been necessary to employ agency workers to cover posts in front line teams. In April 2017, WCC employed 27 agency staff and this number has steadily declined as new Social Workers take up posts, reducing to 5 in September 2018.

3.3 Illustrates the reduction of agency social worker at WCC



3.4 Leavers

3.4.1 Staff turnover in all children's social work posts in Warwickshire has shown some turbulence over the past year 17/18, however the overall trajectory is now again on a downward direction.

3.4 Leavers Data by length of service 2017-2018

Leavers by Length of Service - 1st October 2017 - 30th September 2018											
Level Of SW	Less than a year	01-Feb	02-Mar	03-Apr	04-May	05-Oct	Oct-15	15-20	20-25	25+	Total
L2	7	8	9	1	1						26
L3	3		3	2	4	5	4		1		22
L4	11	1				2	1				5
Total	11	9	12	3	5	7	5	0	1	0	53
%	Up to 3 years			3 - 10 years			10 years plus				100%
	60%			28%			12%				
Level 2	45%			4%			0%				49%
Level 3	11%			20%			10%				41%
Level 4	4%			4%			2%				10%
Total											100%

3.4.2 The data illustrates that 60% of staff turnover is within the first 3 years of service meaning that is the most vulnerable group of staff to leave WCC. This rate reduces somewhat within the next three years of service as the attrition rate declines to 28% and 12% respectively.

3.4.3 The average length of service of Social Worker leaver was 3.82 years, with a clear pattern emerging of newly qualified Social Workers that are recruited from higher education Institutions, are leaving the authority within 1 to 3 years, peaking as they are in the second year. These leavers are then often replaced with another NQSW, losing the ability for an increase in experienced workers to take on a higher caseload and growth in professional maturity and experience. Social Worker turnover has decreased from 26.78% in April 17, dipped at 15% in September 18.

3.5 Leavers Intelligence

3.5.1 Although exit interviews are offered to all leavers, not many take up the opportunity and therefore our leaver intelligence is limited, however the feedback we have received

indicates the following most common reasons for leaving Social Worker jobs at WCC:

- that high caseloads
- working long hours
- lack of career progression

3.6 Retention Workshop

3.6.1 During the summer of 2018 a series of retention workshops were held with staff which looked at 3 main questions about working for Warwickshire:

- What they liked;
- What frustrated them;
- What would encourage them to stay?

3.6.2 The feedback from these sessions has been used to develop the action plans developed to support the Pledge.

3.7 Benchmarking

3.7.1 According to the children's workforce return in September 2017, the following data was collected:

3.7

Benchmark	National as at 30/9/2017	West Midlands Region as at 30/9/2018	WCC as at 30/9/2018
FTE Turnover	13.7%	14.1%	14.94%
% Agency	15.8%	16.7%	1.85%
% Vacancies	17%	19.2%	4.61%

3.7.2 The data shows that whilst we are still slightly higher than the benchmarks for turnover, we are well below for both % Agency and Vacancy factor. This is why the focus now needs to move from recruitment to retention.

4. The Workforce Pledge for Social Workers

Warwickshire County Council's vision for "Our People" is that Warwickshire County Council is a great place to work with outstanding leadership, and a talented, agile workforce.

The Children and Families business unit recognise that it is difficult to recruit and retain Social Workers and as such want to pledge the following to its social work workforce in order to recruit and retain our social work talent.

4.1 Outcomes we are seeking to achieve through our pledge

The outcomes we are seeking for Social Workers at WCC will:

- Feel able to cope with their workload;
- Have a say about the way in which they carry out their work;
- Feel supported by their managers and leaders;
- Work in a high performance culture;
- Have clarity on their role, contribution and responsibilities (clear parameters and expectations);
- Have the right tools to manage organisational change;

We want to support, reward and retain Social Workers so they stay and feel valued.

4.2 Pay, Reward and Progression

- There is a clear and transparent pay structure for Social Workers, which is linked to career progression and continuous professional development. Other financial benefits include reimbursement of HCPC registration fees, access to a credit union, the Local Government Pension Scheme and relocation packages.
- **At Warwickshire our Social Workers have a future. We will provide chances for progression.** We have a career pathway, linked to our pay, which will combine your experience as a Social Worker with professional development, through your Assisted, Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), Embedding Professional Development (EPD) and an opportunity to gain a postgraduate award and or become a practice educator.
- We understand that not all experienced Social Workers wish to become managers and therefore we also offer opportunities to specialise in practice such as becoming a systemic practitioner or systemic family therapist in our specialist Systemic Family Therapy Team. Alternatively you may prefer to lead practice, through the roles of principal social work practitioner, independent reviewing officers, and within specialist teams such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), fostering, as well as the Regional

Adoption Agency, Adoption Central England which Warwickshire hosts for five local authorities.

Your Social Work Career

ASYE

NEWLY QUALIFIED

- ASYE 12 months
- Build strong foundations
- Portfolio (PCF/KSS) and moderation panel
- APEL portfolio to gain 20 credits, enrol on PG Certificate

EPD

EARLY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- EPD 12 up to 18 months
- Consolidate practice
- In house portfolio (PCF/KSS) and moderation panel
- CPD through in-house training programme
- Move to level 3

LEVEL 3

EXPERIENCED SOCIAL WORKER

- 12-18 months
- Support the learning of others, supporting best practice
- CPD through university modules (20 credits each)
- Practice Educator; stage one, stage two or Research Module
- Complete three modules (one being ASYE APEL) to gain PG Certificate

LEVEL 4 plus

ADVANCED SOCIAL WORKER

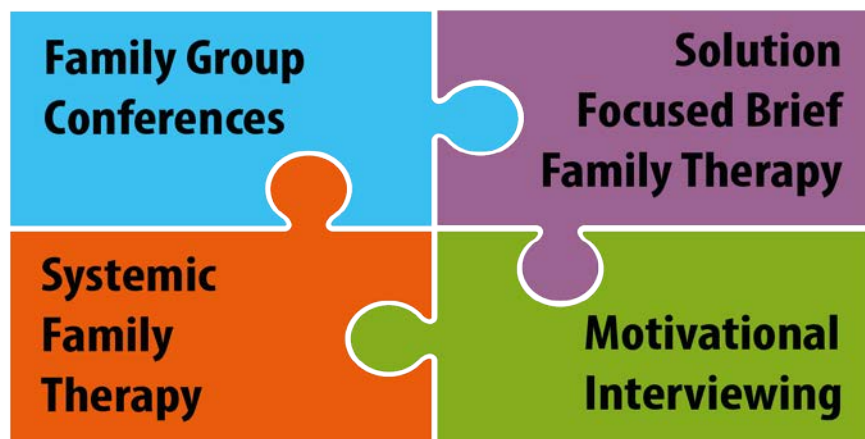
- Application and interview for Level 4 (PCF/KSS)
- Practice Expertise and specialist knowledge
- New roles; Consultant Social Worker. Principal Social Work Practitioner

Social Work Teams in Warwickshire

- Front line Case Management - Duty and Assessment - Adoption - Special Educations Needs and Disability Service - Fostering - Asylum and Leaving Care - Mash - CSE and Missing - Principal Practitioner - Independent Reviewing Officers - Local Authority Designated Officer

workforus@warwickshire.gov.uk

- A rich and interesting learning and development environment is available to all. We are committed to innovative methods of practice and ensuring we identify and respond swiftly to the changing needs of our workforce. All of our training is based upon restorative principles and led through our Restorative Hub. To compliment this we provide training in the following restorative methodologies for all Social Workers.



- In addition we also provide specialist training which includes Achieving Best Evidence, Trauma Informed Practice and Non-Violent Resistance.

- We are also committed to developing social work degree apprenticeships with local universities to provide a route into social work for our wider workforce. All staff who undertake career progression study will be able to access generous study days.
- We are committed to the personal development of individuals for the benefit of both themselves and the service and welcome applications to the Assistant Director for the consideration of funding of such courses. This is open to Family support workers, youth workers and Social Workers. Opportunities have included funding therapeutic training or leadership programmes for those wishing to develop as a manager. This will require a formal application to be submitted to the Assistant Director.
- Warwickshire is committed to coaching and mentoring and will allow you to take up opportunities for self-development and reflection. A personal development plan will be provided to all Social Workers and will be reviewed at least once a year.

4.3 Manageable & Varied Workload

- We want our Social Workers to have a safe and manageable caseload, and realise that you cannot always put a number on this. Through supportive supervision we promise that if caseloads become unmanageable, there will be a clear route for these to be discussed with a senior manager.
- We want Social Workers to be supported to spend as much quality time with children and families as possible. We will enable Social Workers to do this through a safe and management caseload. Senior Managers receive weekly reports on caseloads and will take proactive action to ensure caseloads above average are understood and action taken to address this.
- We will support social workers to obtain a variety of experiences through a mixed workload. Furthermore, through an exchange programme we will encourage social workers to gain experience in working in other areas of social work. This will include an exchange with social workers in other West Midlands local authorities or further afield. It will also include exchange to experience work in the voluntary and/or private sector providers.

4.4 Supportive Managers

- We are investing in our managers and their development to ensure that they can support you in delivering high quality services to children and their families. We have a first line manager development programme and we will provide opportunities for managers to undertake management and leadership programmes.
- Our supervision policy is rigorous and robust, but does not just focus on your workload, but also on you and your wellbeing. Alongside this, the Principal Social

Work Practitioners also offer regular reflective group supervision and all team managers are expected to have a weekly formulation and reflective meeting with all their supervisee's to enable peer support and challenge.

- Performance data is used as a tool to enhance your work as a Social Worker and allows managers to understand the context in which their teams are working.
- Regular access to the Senior Leadership team, including Senior Leaders spending time with teams as part of regular Practice weeks and have a visible presence in teams.

4.5 Practice Priorities - Modern Working

- Warwickshire are committed to a consistent family friendly flexible working environment to enable its workforce to balance the demands of work and home, where employees are trusted to do a good job. Our pledge is to ensure Social Workers are equipped with the skills required for the role. We want to make sure we have got the right opportunities for everyone to have a consistent level of skills and provide opportunities to expand practice and knowledge.
- We are committed to providing you with high quality technology to enable you to do your job from anywhere. Technology is provided to enable a fully flexible working environment, including laptops and smart phones,
- Warwickshire is committed to coaching and mentoring and will allow you to take up opportunities for self-development and reflection.
- We take action to remove and prevent bureaucracy in systems, process and governance to allow you to concentrate on your role in enabling parents and supporting children and young people.

4.6 Wellbeing

- Warwickshire wants its workforce to be fit and healthy, but also recognises that there are times when this may not be the case. Organisational support for emotional well-being is a priority.
- We have a number of wellbeing initiative as well as Occupational Health and Staff Support that all staff can access. This includes access to an independent employee assistance programme which offers information, support and guidance on a wide range of topics including work/career, relationship/family, money management, debt and health and wellbeing. Telephone, online and face to face counselling services are available.

- We recognise that the work Social Workers undertake to protect children and young people from abuse and neglect can have an impact upon wellbeing. Therefore we will offer all staff in Children & Families Service a Personal Wellbeing plan and will provide all Social Workers with a Personal Wellbeing day each year. We will also provide an opportunity for staff to have access to a trained counsellor to discuss your experiences with a confidential and independent service. These support services will be flexible to respond to the needs of Social Workers and other staff
- We offer excellent sporting facilities for staff. In Warwick we have a staff sports ground includes a bowling green, two tennis courts, cricket and football pitches and a pavilion available for table tennis and social functions.
- We encourage staff to engage in other activities for wellbeing. This includes the daily mile, walking clubs, rounder's matches and even team yoga sessions provided at lunch time or before or after work.
- Disabled access features – [DisabledGo](#) has a detailed access guide, showing a graphical summary of the venue's accessibility using access icons and detailed information of the key features of the venue.
- Bupa's Cash Plan is available to staff and can help to provide a valuable and effective healthcare benefit allowing employees to claim money back towards everyday healthcare costs

4.7 Recognition and Appreciation

- We are committed to celebrating your successes with you, including achievement award celebrations and acknowledgement from senior managers and members of a job well done.
- We celebrate success in many ways, including annual foster carer conference, annual celebration event, star awards for performance. WOW awards and recognise achievements with thank you and recognition by senior leaders and Portfolio Holder.
- To celebrate long standing and committed Social Workers with 10 years' service will be invited to a celebration event, hosted by the Assistant Director and Strategic Director.
- All ASYE and EPD Social Workers on successful completion of these programs will be invited to an award ceremony hosted by the Assistant Director and Strategic Director.

4.8 Environment

- Warwickshire is a beautiful place to work with excellent transport links, interesting history and a vibrant local economy.
- Warwickshire is the heart of Shakespeare's England. In Stratford-upon-Avon, there are the theatres of the Royal Shakespeare Company with miles of canals and stairway locks which beckon you for pub lunches and picnics. Step back to the Middle Ages in Warwick with streets overhung by timber-framed houses and market squares. Royal Leamington Spa is also home to the Heritage Motor Centre where you can see England's connection to the motor industry and motor sport. The legacy of North Warwickshire's pivotal role in the industrial revolution and its coal mining heritage is evident in an extensive network of rivers and canals, lakes and nature reserves, which today provide lovely walking throughout the region. Dotted with pretty villages, and lots of things to do and see! To the east lies the market town of Rugby; home of Rugby School; the setting for novel Tom Brown's Schooldays and the place where the sport that took its name was born
- Within the Council, we also have a number of modern and attractive offices with good meeting spaces and breakout areas for staff.

4.9 Other Benefits

- Comprehensive and tailored induction;
- Generous annual leave and bank holiday allowance;
- Relocation assistance;
- Access to a staff lifestyle discount portal and childcare vouchers;
- Car fuel allowances and access to pool cars;
- Access to WCC staff car parks;
- Staff engagement and employee forums;
- Wellbeing initiatives as well as access to occupational health and employee assist staff support services.
- Access to research in practice;
- Comprehensive learning and development offer;
- Direct work bag full of tools and ideas for working with children.

5. Social Work Career Pathway

NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKER - Grade J – Level 2 Social Worker - £28,221 - £30,756

- Assisted Supported Year in Employment (ASYE 12 month Program);
- Building on strong foundations;
- Portfolio of evidence based on the Professional Capabilities Framework and Knowledge and Skill Statements (PCF/KSS) culminating in a moderation panel;
- APEL the portfolio to gain 20 Post Graduate credits and enrolment on Post Graduate Certificate pathway;
- Reduced caseload and with appropriate support for more complex cases
- Study days plus 8 workshop days;
- Practice Learning Sets offered in addition to the 8 workshops;
- Named Principal Practitioner assigned to every ASYE.

SOCIAL WORKER - EARLY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Grade K – Level 3a Social Worker - £30,756 - 33,136

- In House EPD program 12 up to 18 months;
- Consolidation of practice evidenced in an in-house portfolio based on the Professional Capabilities Framework and Knowledge and Skill Statements (PCF/KSS) culminating in a moderation panel;
- Continued Professional Development (CPD) through an in-house training programme;
- Full caseload, mix of complexity with appropriate support;
- Access to practice learning sets;
- 3.5 study days.

EXPERIENCED SOCIAL WORKER - Grade L – Level 3b Experienced Social Worker - £33,136 - £35,229

- Program based on individual progression, but up to 2 years is common completion time;
- Supporting the learning of others and supporting best practice CPD through university modules (20 post graduate credits each - Practice Educator; stage one, stage two or Practice Educator stage one and Research Module;
- Complete three modules (one being ASYE APEL) to gain PG certificate;
- Full and complex caseload.

ADVANCED SOCIAL WORKER - Grade M/N – Level 4 a/b advanced Social Worker - £35,229 - £39,002

- Application and interview for Level 4. Evidence of advanced practice from a direct observation, casefile audit and discussion about enhanced practice following EPD portfolio;
- Practice expertise and specialist knowledge;
- Opportunity to develop into new roles; consultant Social Worker. principal social work practitioner;
- Opportunities to develop a social work specialism;
- Caseload dependent on role.

When children's Social Workers are newly appointed, depending on their experience they could be graded between a Grade J and N.

Incremental progression between a Level 2 Social Worker (Grade J) and a level 3 Social Worker (Grade K and L) is automatic on completion of ASYE and EPD. Progression from Level 3 to Level 4 (grade M and N) takes place after successful completion of study and a formal interview. No new portfolio of work is required. Successful individuals are then offered level 4 vacancy rather than just automatically going to level 4 in their current position.

In addition the progression from CSW03a to CSW03b and from CSW04a to CSW04b is with Assistant Director approval which is generated through the HR Service Centre, so no action is required by managers.

Incremental progression between the levels can only be undertaken by the appropriate operations manager.

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee 15 January 2019

Celebrating the Success of Children and Young People in Warwickshire

1.0 Recommendation

That following previous request the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note through the observation of case studies, the tangible progress made by a number of local children and young people, potentially at risk of poor outcomes or being disadvantaged.

2.0 Summary

- 2.1 In providing an overview for this area of focus, the Department for Education (DfE) has recently undertaken and subsequently shared research which looks at successful approaches to supporting a number of children and young people at risk of poor outcomes. More information pertaining to the DfE research can be found in the background papers section of this note.
- 2.2 Included in the exempt appendices of this report are a series of case studies, illustrating the positive progress made by a number of Warwickshire's children and young people. These outcomes have been achieved despite this cohort facing various personal barriers to progress.

3.0 Background

The [Warwickshire Education \(WE\) Strategy 2018 to 2023](#), sets out the key priorities for the work of Warwickshire's education and learning community:

- [WE1](#): Our challenge is to foster children's love of learning from birth through early childhood and into Year 1 so that all young children achieve their potential.
- [WE2](#): Our challenge is to promote a broad, empowering and creative curriculum, focusing on times of transition, and prioritising vulnerable groups.
- [WE3](#): Our challenge is for all learners to enjoy a high - quality learning experience.
- [WE4](#): Our challenge is to champion employability by promoting the best opportunities for all learners.

- 3.1 Local area children and young people service provider professionals have been asked to present some case studies that show disadvantaged children and young people achieving highly. This piece of work supports WE2(b) of the Warwickshire Education (WE) Strategy 2018-2023, which aims to close the gap between the achievements of learners eligible for pupil premium and those of their peers.
- 3.2 The information provided in the appendices of this paper also supports the implementation of WE2(d) of the Warwickshire Education Strategy, as some of the case studies will focus on our children and young people achieving highly, who have special educational needs and/ or disabilities (SEND).
- 3.3 WE4 of the Warwickshire Education Strategy will also be represented, as it will focus on the employability and skills of individuals who access our Adult & Community Learning local offer.

4.0 Background Papers

- [Warwickshire Education Strategy 2018-2023](#)
- [Research to understand successful approaches to supporting the most academically able disadvantaged pupils](#)

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): None

Cabinet Portfolio Holders: Cllr Colin Hayfield and Cllr Jeff Morgan

Committee Chair and Spokespersons:

Councillors: Yousef Dahmash, Chris Williams, Jonathan Chilvers, Corinne Davies and Jerry Roodhouse.