



DEVELOPING TOGETHER
SOCIAL WORK
TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

2020-21 Progress Report: Evaluating Our Success

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Welcome

Since October 2018, the South West London and Surrey Teaching Partnership (TP) has successfully worked on a broad range of activities to champion the training, learning and development of social workers. Our TP is one of the largest of the 23 active partnerships in England with 14 partners in local authorities, the children's voluntary sector and Kingston University.

After initially receiving Department for Education funding for two years, we were pleased to receive funding for a third year and we have recently been informed that the Department intends to fund Social Work Teaching Partnerships (SWTP) for a further year. This is testament to the fast and effective progress these partnerships have made in recent years and is reflected in the [national evaluation](#) (2020), which reported that the SWTP Programme has formalised collaborative working and been a catalyst for cultural change in the way partners work together to train and develop social workers. As Isabelle Trowler, the Chief Social Worker for Children & Families, recently said:

"The fact that teaching partnerships have survived this long is indicative of the current value of social work and how it is perceived and how the investment is necessary. We must keep fighting for that."

The ongoing success of our TP requires the continued active engagement of our members at a time when there are competing priorities and financial pressures for local authorities, higher education institutions and voluntary sector organisations. It is heartening to see that engagement has not waned across South West London and Surrey and our partnership remains strong, in spite of us all needing to prioritise our response to a global pandemic over the last year.

As we begin the fourth year of our programme, I encourage all partner agencies to continue investing their time and expertise in the TP. It is important that we build on the clear successes we have achieved so far and continue to benefit from the economies that our collaboration brings. The foundations we have laid and the networks we have established give us the opportunities we need to secure continued excellence in the training and ongoing professional development of our social workers.

Ian Dodds

Ian Dodds

Director of Children's Services,
Kingston and Richmond
(Achieving for Children)





Executive Summary

This report provides an evaluation of the work carried out by the Teaching Partnership (TP) between April 2020 and March 2021 (the team structure can be found in [Appendix 1: Organisational Structure](#)). The methods of evaluation included a review and analysis of quantitative and qualitative performance data and feedback from key stakeholders, obtained via a Stakeholder Survey sent to those who sit on the Strategic Board, Steering Committee and Pre-Qualifying Alliance. Findings show that performance is strong in the following key areas:

- The improved academic attainment of Kingston University students;
- A significant increase in the provision of statutory placements from within the TP;
- A significant improvement in the employability of Kingston University students when applying for their first social work role;
- The development of practice educator, onsite supervisor and ASYE Assessor skills, and the establishment of a Practice Education Community of Practice;
- The learning and development opportunities provided to early career social work managers;
- The development of key frameworks and infrastructure to support the ongoing development of staff, including a Career Pathways & CPD Framework and an Early Professional Development Framework;
- The provision of a comprehensive continuing professional development offer, made up of opportunities from the TP Team, external facilitators, employers and the HEI;
- The reputation, brand and identity of the TP, both internally and externally, resulting in significant income generation in the last twelve months.

The report finds that the vast majority of deliverables for 2020-22 that were identified at the Visioning Day in January 2020 have progressed exceptionally well, in spite of the pandemic, and are either embedded, or making good progress towards being embedded. Some identified priorities, mainly those that relate to recruitment strategies, have not yet been explored with partners, and this area of work will need to have a renewed focus for 2021-22, providing this is reaffirmed as a priority at the 2021 Visioning Day. There have also been many additional areas of work, arising from the pandemic, that the TP has led on or played a significant role in, in order to support students, practitioners, people with lived experience, the University and Employers.

The value of the TP programme has become easier to evidence as the medium to long term project outcomes are now being realised, as evidenced throughout this report. This has contributed to a much more consistent level of engagement amongst partners, enabling the programme of work to gain momentum, despite all partner agencies working under extremely difficult circumstances over the last year.



This report has generated the following recommendations:

- The membership of the Teaching Partnership (TP) and governance structure should remain consistent. There are many moving parts to the programme and numerous activities in flight at any one time and the current arrangements are proving to work well in terms of communication, understanding and engagement;
- In light of the recent confirmation that the DfE will provide further funding for the National SWTP Programme, those agencies who pay an annual membership fee should use this report as a basis for reviewing their return on investment. Even with the DfE funding and the independent income that the TP has begun to generate, it would not be possible to sustain the TP beyond March 2022 in its current form without this vital contribution;
- All primary partner agencies (Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Adults, Sutton Children, Sutton Adults, NSPCC, Welcare and Kingston University) should attend the annual Visioning Day, where future priorities are agreed. It is also essential for a consistent senior leader from within each agency to attend the quarterly Strategic Board;
- The TP should take advantage of how accustomed those across the TP have become to working virtually, moving the majority of governance meetings online to enable maximum attendance and reduce the administrative burden on partners. This should also be extended to the CPD offer, taking a blended approach to learning, with a mixture of online and face to face provision;
- The TP should further build on engaging with and sharing information with key professional and regulatory bodies and networks to promote its achievements and communicate future priorities within the sector.



1. Introduction

Developing Together (TP) is a Social Work Teaching Partnership (SWTP) covering South West London and Surrey aiming to offer an ambitious and comprehensive programme of education, training, support and professional development for Social Workers across the region. Developing Together builds on an existing successful partnership, the South West London and Surrey Social Work Alliance, collaborating since 2008.

In April 2018, the Partnership was awarded government funding over two years to create a world class Social Work education community. Social Work employers within South West London and Surrey formalised and significantly enhanced the work of the existing partnership to create, 'Developing Together: Social Work Teaching Partnership'.

In April 2020, the Partnership was successful in its application for sustainability funding until March 2021 and in April 2021, the Department for Education (DfE) confirmed their intention to fund Social Work Teaching Partnerships (SWTPs) for a further year, until March 2022.

More details about the TP and its members can be found on our [website](#).

This report seeks to identify and explore the achievements of the partnership to date, understand the challenges and enablers of effectiveness and explore added value. The report has included available data evidencing, where possible, the impact of the TP activities, as well as stakeholders' views on both the successes and challenges of the TP.

The South West London and Surrey Teaching Partnership's defined aims are:

- Ensure the highest calibre of Social Work students with the attributes, competencies and passion needed to thrive in the profession are recruited to our academic programmes;
- Develop a curriculum that aligns with local need and is grounded not only in research and the Chief Social Workers' Knowledge and Skills Statements, but also in practice;
- Give students the experience & support they need to ensure they are ready to practice within our region as Newly Qualified Social Workers;
- Ensure practice across our region is consistently informed by theory & research and that academics' teaching is equally informed by practice;
- Create regional progression pathways and Continuing Professional Development opportunities capable of attracting and retaining the best and brightest Social Workers in the UK;
- Better understand our regional labour market to enable us to develop a robust plan to meet our partnership's current and future workforce demands.



2. Key Activities and Impact

The partnership continues to deliver outcomes across a broad range of activities and has diversified its areas of work over the last 18 months. For an overview of the priority areas see [Appendix 2: Logic Model 2020-22](#). You can also view a high resolution version on our website [here](#).

This section of the report outlines the areas that the partnership has identified as core priorities. The information provided on the following pages provides both a qualitative and quantitative narrative of our activities to date and describes any early and/or indicative impacts.

Please note that sections 2.1 Admissions & Curriculum, 2.2. Placements and Practice Education and 2.5 Identity, Brand and Reputation are relevant for all partner agencies. Sections 2.3 Recruitment and 2.4 Retention and Workforce Development are likely to be relevant only to primary partner agencies.¹

2.1 Admissions & Curriculum

Objectives for 2020-22:

- To increase the supply of good quality, well trained social workers in the area who are ready for practice
- To continue to improve the quality of social work education & teaching
- To better prepare students for interviews to enter employment
- To increase the pipeline of social workers into our local organisations

Activities to date:

- 20 Teaching Consultants (TCs) have remained in post after initial recruiting to 34 positions in 2018. Approximately 50% of those who have left the role have done so due to leaving their organisation, although two TCs who left the region have continued in their TC role. Some have withdrawn due to work pressures, often linked to increased or changed responsibilities due to the pandemic. 2 TCs from one organisation reportedly left the role due to being dissatisfied with the requirement to be involved in student admissions, although only one respondent to the annual stakeholder survey reported dissatisfaction with this element;
- The People with Lived Experience (PLE) Group at the HEI remains relatively stable, with 11 PLEs actively involved with HEI activities such as admissions.

¹ Primary partners are: Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Adults, Sutton Adults, Sutton Children, NSPCC, Welcare and Kingston University.

Secondary partners are: Croydon Children, Merton Children, Surrey Children, Richmond & Wandsworth Adults and Wandsworth Children.



There are more members of the group, but they have paused their involvement due to personal circumstances;

- TCs and PLEs have continued to be involved in admissions throughout the pandemic, conducting interviews and assessments online with prospective students. After discussion with partners, to lighten the load on the TCs, we also increased the number of practitioners being called upon to support with interviews. This also allowed more practitioners to gain experience working in a HEI setting and offered them a valuable CPD opportunity. The 3 new practitioners that were welcomed on board report that the academic staff have been 'extremely friendly and supportive', enabling them to feel prepared in advance of each interview, and that they are 'enjoying the process of interviewing' and 'listening to the excitement and passion of future social workers'.
- Last minute cancellations and candidates not turning up to interviews does cause some frustration, so it is recommended that the HEI notify interviewers as far in advance as possible of any cancellations. However it is unclear to what extent this can be mitigated if candidates do not communicate with the HEI in good time about their intention not to attend;
- Entry requirements for the BA in social work course remain at 120 UCAS points (increased from 112 in 2018-19). Evidence can be found on Kingston University's [website](#);
- The new exercises that were introduced in 2018-19 to better identify those with the skills, passion and competencies to thrive in the profession are not currently being used due to the nature of conducting interviews and assessments virtually;
- Practitioners and PLEs continue to play a much more determining role in the assessment of prospective BA and MSW students than they did prior to the TP;
- The annual 'Admissions Processes Review' was still held in summer 2020, virtually. This involved workforce development and academic staff, TCs and PLEs reviewing the processes and agreeing how these would be carried out for the upcoming academic year;
- Managing the involvement of practitioners in the admissions processes was successfully handed back to the HEI in 2020 and Dr Ian Byford takes responsibility for coordinating the PLEs and practitioners involved in each selection event;
- Most partners, with the exception of Achieving for Children, Merton Adults, Sutton Adults and Welcare, have Teaching Consultants;
- In summer 2020 KU started coordinating TCs to ensure sustainability of the model and the role developed by the TP, solidifying relationships between TCs representing partner agencies and the university;
- Aga Buckley, Senior Lecturer and Teaching Consultant Coordinator, said:

"The Teaching Consultant (TC) role is well established and embedded into teaching practices across the majority of KU social work courses...TC's and teaching staff work collaboratively to support students' learning experience, grounding theoretical concepts in direct practice that supports currency for contemporary social work."



- Current TC involvement includes:
 - co-design and co-delivery of teaching in TCs specialist area of practice
 - involvement in innovative projects led by academic staff, including research activities - most recently input in a very successful and moving film [‘Black Men in Social Work’](#) led by Dermot Brady and Kelly Gittens with London Borough of Croydon;
 - co-interviewing applicants wishing to study on the MSW and BA courses. This is a complex process, further challenged by the Covid-19 pandemic and the necessity to coordinate and conduct those processes online. TCs (and other practitioners) have shown a great enthusiasm and flexibility in supporting the admissions team led by Dr Ian Byford and are actively involved in conducting interviews
- Current TC support arrangements and opportunities:
 - All TCs were given the opportunity to complete a post qualifying module, SW7025 Individual Work-Based Learning Project, focusing on reflection on their teaching practice and worth 30 academic credits. 7 completed this module and the results were very good, with most marks being in the A range;
 - Of these, 5 have also successfully been granted [AFHEA](#) status. 2 others still intend to apply but have been delayed due to ongoing work pressures. This consolidates their personal development and emphasises their professional practice in Higher Education;
 - Both the PQ module and the Associate Fellowship were funded by the TP and moving forward it is anticipated that future TCs will be offered similar opportunities, although it may not be possible to fully fund these depending on the funds available;
 - TCs continue working directly with Module Leaders who make joint decisions on the content of the teaching, working together on updating materials and co-recording (where identified) new content to accommodate blended delivery teaching during the pandemic;
 - TC Forum meetings have been established to facilitate regular contact between KU, TP and TCs. These are scheduled online via Microsoft Teams platform and it is hoped that through regular meetings TC support needs and new opportunities for collaborative working, will be identified and shared;
 - In early December we held our annual Teaching Consultant's Celebration event online, led by Sue Lansley (TP Social Work Lead) and Aga M. Buckley (KU TC's Coordinator) to celebrate TC's commitment to the role and their successes;
 - Also in early December, a TP Social Work Awards Ceremony was held, and a number of TCs were recognised for exceptional commitment to the role, receiving a certificate and a voucher.
- At a recent meeting of the Pre-Qualifying Alliance, employers reported that they would like to see opportunities for more practitioners to apply for a TC role and academic staff agreed that there was a need for more TCs,



particularly in certain areas of the curriculum. A new recruitment drive is in planning and this will aim to target specialisms that are not currently represented by the existing TCs. Similar feedback was reflected in the Stakeholder Survey;

- Employability Skills Workshops for MSW and BA students were facilitated by a mixture of TCs and other employer representatives in February and March 2021. The session for MSW students was very well attended by 30 students, with 100% of respondents reporting that the session exceeded their expectations, however the BA session was not very well attended and this has been highlighted to the course leader. The reason for low attendance will need to be explored prior to the sessions in 2022;
- The University's Fast Track Post Graduate Diploma (PgDip) has proved increasingly popular, with a number of spaces on the programme funded by the TP in both 2019 and 2020;
- As part of a Teaching Partnership initiative the HEI's PLE Group have been very active in the 'People with Lived Experience Film Project', deciding on topics for discussion and planning how these are to be made into short films and audio podcasts. This means their experiences of social workers and social care and their expertise as PLEs can be shared and contribute to the learning of social work students and practitioners across the Partnership. Some of the films that have already been made are available to view below:
 - [The Role and Contribution of Kingston University's PLE Group](#)
 - [Adoption Case Study](#)
 - [The Impact of CV-19 on People with Lived Experience](#)
- Other films soon to be made will look at Communication Skills and how it feels to be on the receiving end of an assessment - the production of these has been delayed by CV19;
- There has been limited development in the 'Academics in Practice' initiative, whereby academic staff are supported by the HEI to spend time in practice through protected time in their role. This activity is likely to have been impacted negatively by the pandemic, however it has always been an area that has struggled to gain traction. That being said, there are some excellent examples of one academic's experiences of spending time in practice available on our website:
 - [Blog Post: Some Excellent Men](#)
 - [Blog Post: The HALT Programme in Wandsworth](#)
 - [Blog Post: Shadowing of mini-MARAC in Sutton](#)

"I think there is more to achieve in enabling university staff to support practice in the same way that Teaching Consultants have been able to support university teaching"

Impact includes:

- The admissions process at the HEI has successfully focused on recruiting high quality graduates with 85% of those with tariff-able qualifications having at least 120 UCAS points and the average UCAS points being 139.62 in 2019-20



(for 2020-21 intake);

- This demonstrates a steady improvement over 3 years; in 2017-18, only 52% of those with tariff-able qualifications had at least 120 UCAS points and in 2018-19 this was 76%;
- The average entry tariff has also improved steadily, from 123.1 UCAS points in 2017-18, to 131.8 in 2018-19, to 139.62 in 2019-20.
- The scheduled hours of practitioner teaching prior to the TP (academic year 2017-18) is not known as arrangements were ad-hoc, but during the TP period, prior to the pandemic, there was a 48% increase in the scheduled hours of practitioner teaching between 2018-19 and 2019-20, which supports students' transition from theory into practice and aligns the curriculum with local employer needs;
- During the 2020-21 academic year to date, maintaining a similar level of TC involvement was challenging given the circumstances. Many TCs were and still are facing increased work pressures and the HEI's main priority has been to transition core teaching to online delivery. Nevertheless, TCs are still scheduled to contribute 110 hours of teaching by the end of the 2020-21 academic year as well as supporting student interviews;
- The majority of TP partner employers have TCs and these partners now have more control over which practitioners are representing their organisation. This means that these agencies can be reassured that local need is being reflected in the curriculum;
- This also increases the exposure that students have to these agencies and this familiarity is likely to have a positive effect when these same students are looking for their first social work role at the end of their programme;
- The TP's Strategic Board regularly reaffirm their commitment to sustaining the TC model and TCs from across the Partnership continue to give positive feedback about the role:

"I am a teaching consultant and I have found the experience to be very satisfying for me, I also completed my Associate Fellowship and passed last year"

"I am an 'original' TC and have seen how the role has changed and developed. Being involved in the selection process, delivering both teaching and assessments in modules (both at university and online) has enabled me to develop skills alongside my 'standard' practice as a social worker. This 2-way flow of experience and practice strengthens my own practice, supports student experiences and informs the university and statutory organisation. As always, review and adjustment is helpful, even necessary for the benefit of all concerned."

"The role of the TC has existed long enough for the impact of the role to be seen by the students and the university. It has been positive and beneficial. The TC role can be seen as one of professional development. It sits in parity with the role of PE and OSS. However, the role of TC does need to be



assessed in order to meet with the changing needs of students, the way the university delivers learning and how statutory placements provide practical learning experiences. The role of the TC has the potential to continue to provide links and continuity"

- First time pass rate on the Readiness for Direct Practice module has improved from 71% in 2017-18, to 90% in 2018-19, to 94% (BA) and 100% (MSW) in 2019-20, exceeding our original target of 78%;
- Comprehensive data provided by Achieving for Children (AfC) and LB Sutton has allowed us to monitor the success of Kingston University (KU) graduates at NQSW interview year on year. In 2017-18, an average of only 12% of NQSW positions across AfC and Sutton went to KU graduates - by 2018-19 this had improved to 29% and in 2019-20 this reached an impressive 67%;
- The proportion of students graduating with a 'good' degree has increased significantly on both the BA and MSW programmes and the progression rate of BA students from Level 4 to 5 (from their first to second year) has also improved by 10%. For full details, please see table below:

Measure	2017-18 (Baseline)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
% of students with 120+ UCAS points	52%	76%	85%	Not yet known
Average (mean) UCAS points	123.1	131.8	139.62	Not yet known
First time pass % Readiness for Direct Practice module	71%	90%	94% (BA) 100% (MSW)	Not yet known
% NQSW posts offered to Kingston University graduates (AfC and Sutton average)	12%	29%	67%	Not yet known
% students graduating with 2:1 or a 1st (BA)	44%	78%	59%	Not yet known
% of students graduating with distinction or commendation (MSW)	76%	81%	87%	Not yet known
% of BA students progressing from Level 4 to Level 5	77%	85%	87%	Not yet known



2.2 Placements & Practice Education

Objectives for 2020-22:

- To increase the supply of good quality, well trained social workers in the area who are ready for practice
- To increase the pipeline of social workers into our local organisations
- To increase the number of statutory BA and MSW placements with skilled PEs and OSSs
- To improve placement quality assurance processes

Activities to date:

- The Teaching Partnership Practice Education Team downsized from 3.4FTE in 2019 to 1.8FTE in 2020 and 1.5FTE in 2021. In 2020, the roles were renamed Practice Consultants (formerly Practice Educator Development Workers) to reflect the diversification of their work and evolving nature of the role;
- During 2020-21, the Practice Consultants (PCs) were off site Practice Educators (PE) for 5 x Pg Dip (Fast Track) students, 2 x first and 5 x final placement students. They have also acted as Practice Assessor (PA) on a number of occasions for trainee PEs;
- They also supported 3 x final year students, whose placements were suspended due to the pandemic, to complete 20 days of Assessed Placement Activities (see below) and provided additional learning to 1 x student prior to commencement of Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE);
- The Assessed Placement Activities were developed in response to the pandemic; the MSW students were halfway through their final placements when the 'stay at home' order was given by the government. There were a number of placements that were unable to continue past 50 days due to pressures in the workplace or the Practice Educator (PE) being off sick. It was agreed with the University that the TP would create a range of scenarios and related activities that would enable students to develop their skills and complete their remaining placement days, provided they had a satisfactory midway report. The PCs were assigned to students to both organise and deliver the placement activities and assess student social workers in order to complete the final placement report. This enabled the students to complete their MSW, graduating with their peers, and allowed them to progress into Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW) posts without delay. You can read the full report [here](#) and an associated blog about the experience [here](#);
- 9 workshops were delivered across the year (up from 6 in 2019-20) to develop PE skills and knowledge. 116 experienced/trainee/aspiring PEs, OSSs and PAs have attended workshops to date;
- The Onsite Supervisor (OSS) Programme, developed and delivered by Dale van Graan, Senior Lecturer, in 2019, was revised and reduced in length to



incorporate feedback from the Strategic Board, who supported making this mandatory for new Onsite Supervisors but wanted to be realistic about the time commitment of the training;

- The OSS Programme was revised in late 2020, and has since run once in January 2021 with 9 OSSs in attendance from across the TP. 2 further occurrences have been scheduled for Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022;
- Dale van Graan co facilitates the Programme with Natesha Yanguba, Advanced Social Worker and PE at Croydon ASC, and sees this as a critical component in the programme's effectiveness:

"Co-facilitation with an experienced PE from a Partner agency promotes engagement through existing or developing new relationships and networks, promotes learning through bringing different perspectives and approaches and assists practically in managing the virtual teaching environment."

- For further information on the OSS Programme, please see the [2021 Evaluation Report](#);
- A 'PE Refresher' Course and a 'Becoming a Practice Assessor' training session were also held during 2020, also led by Dale van Graan;
- A PE Conference planned for Spring 2020 was cancelled due to the pandemic, however a 'deconstructed' PE Conference has now been organised and advertised across the TP for May 2021. Previous PE Conferences have had over 100 people in attendance;
- The developing Practice Education Community of Practice worked together over a number of months to produce a comprehensive "Guide to Being a Practice Educator in a 'Blended' Placement". This was a true partnership project, developed in response to the challenges associated with supporting social work students on placement during CV19. It had significant input from a wide range of contributors including Practice Educators, students and People with Lived Experience. For more information and to download the guide, please look on our [website](#);
- Further resources for PEs are available on the website, including the [PCF Toolkit](#) (this page alone averages almost 100 visits per month) and [workshops that have been adapted to webinars](#);
- The TP adheres to the definition of a statutory placement within Social Work England's '[Guidance on practice placements for social work students](#)' draft (May 2019) and despite this definition being quite prescriptive, we have seen huge increases in the proportion of students receiving statutory placements;
- Through its relationship with the National Teaching Partnership Network, chaired by the DfE, the TP was invited to take part in the Professional Experts Group: Statutory Practice Placement Guidance Review (PEG) in March 2021, led by Social Work England. The group was established to address feedback received from the sector in relation to the practice placement guidance and aims to help SWE to better understand where the current guidance on



statutory placements may be unclear and creating uncertainty/difficulties across England. There has been feedback from partners that some really valued voluntary sector partnerships have been lost due to drive for statutory placements and this feedback was echoed by other stakeholders who attended the PEG;

- The strategic approach to placement allocation, agreed in 2019 by members of the TP, continues to be reviewed annually. At the time of writing, the latest review has been conducted by the TP Team and the HEI and an updated Placement Allocation Strategy and Timeline for 2021-22 academic year has just been shared with partners for their feedback;
- The strategy includes regular placement allocation meetings in advance of each placement tranche, principles for communicating key information between all involved parties and a timeline to ensure all stakeholders are aware of key milestones within the placement allocation process, including key dates for PEPS applications;
- All partners are actively engaging in supporting placement allocation and the vast majority are attending the allocation meetings. This promotes a joined up approach to coordinating placements for students and feedback from the stakeholder survey suggests that this process continues to work well;
- During the pandemic, our strengthened cross-partnership working allowed us to reach rapid joint decisions around student placements and practice education, enabling the vast majority of students to complete their placements and trainee PEs to complete their training. The HEI Placement Administrator said:

"I think the biggest success is having so many students successfully complete their Social Work placements during this pandemic. I am very thankful to our partners for providing so many worthwhile placements during these exceptionally challenging times. Moreover, their hard work, help and dedication has been amazing. I am truly grateful to each and every one of them."

- There are still challenges, particularly when it comes to finding placements outside of the usual allocation periods, for example for repeating students whose placements have ended early or for students who were deferred. Most agencies do not have any additional capacity to accommodate these placements. In addition, one particular challenge the HEI faced during 2020-21 was a shortage of placements in adult social work;
- A Student Internship Scheme was launched in Autumn 2020, where students on the MSW Programme could apply to have both their placements with a partner local authority and at the end of their course be guaranteed an interview for an NQSW position, in order to improve the pipeline of Kingston University students into partner agencies and retention rates;
- Following the Placement Quality Assurance Project in the 2018-19 academic year, our findings were published in 2020 and within this a number of areas for improvement were identified. After some initial discussions between the HEI and employer partners, an opportunity was identified to take a partnership



approach to raising the standards of social work practice placements in the region, through a new peer review quality assurance (QA) process. Whilst most employer partners conduct an internal QA process, the need to introduce an external (cross-partnership) element to this process, similar to that of the ASYE portfolio moderation process, has been agreed;

- The peer reviews will provide balanced, considered, constructive and timely feedback to workforce development leads about the quality of reports completed, with the aim to improve a benchmark quality standard for reports across the board;
- The pilot will involve a voluntary panel, meeting up bi-annually to discuss and review an anonymised sample of 10% of placement reports, as well as all fails and borderlines. This will sample Midway reports initially, to include the PLA, with a view to monitoring improvements by reviewing the End of Placement Reports (EPR) for the same individuals;
- This will be a shared responsibility (HEI and employer partners) and lead to both individual and organisational feedback for PEs, OSSs and tutors. It may also influence the PEPS curriculum and the TP's Practice Education Workshops.

Impact/likely impact includes:

- Consistently positive feedback is received from those who attend workshops. Some feedback from recent workshops can be found below:

"The training has really empowered me and given more confidence to support the student virtually."

"Excellent, really useful training session that has helped to ease some anxieties by providing me with ideas regarding managing a placement during Covid-19 times, thank you!"

"I'm not feeling so isolated as I was before when I started this role, as it is a lonely role being in a small Borough. I cannot thank you enough for the support from the Teaching Partnership. You make learning Fun and inclusive."

"This training has been so helpful. I am left feeling empowered and far more capable of meeting my new student on Monday and being an effective PE. Many Thanks"

- Feedback suggests that through the collaborative approach of the partnership, PEs feel better supported in terms of their access to high quality support, guidance and training and value being part of a growing 'Community of Practice';
- A significant proportion of practice education support offered to partners is coordinated by the TP, championing the move away from independent PEs to the partnership, quality assured approach. The popularity of this provision



and feedback evidences that there is a need for the additional support being rolled out;

- The collaborative work around student placements has improved the way that placement allocation works. The majority of respondents to the stakeholder survey feel as though the processes ensure the best possible outcomes for students, employers and the HEI and that the quality of placements has improved since the TP was established:

"More structure and connection with agencies which supports the allocation process."

"everyone is aware at the same time what will be happening regarding placements"

"I think placement allocation process gives a chance to consider the needs of both employers, students and their University to ensure students learning needs are met and the employer is able to offer appropriate learning opportunities"

"the process is now managed in a clear and transparent manner. The allocation meetings between employers and the university have been useful for decision making to occur in a timely manner"

"From what I can gather, Local Authorities have more of an investment into placement, as stakeholders of the TP and want placements to succeed"

- However from a HEI perspective, there are still aspects that could be improved or require further consideration:

"In some ways [things have improved] particularly in relation to allocation. Some agencies however are not always following University processes. For example, there have been instances where planned Midway meetings have been announced as Placement Raising Concern which the tutor and sometimes the student were unaware"

"We have been lucky to have had good quality placements for many years. It is now easier to place students and for all students to have statutory experiences but I have not seen any difference in the quality of placements. I am concerned about the level of work expected of first placement students in statutory teams (which would not previously have hosted first placement students) as there seems to be an emphasis on doing rather than learning"

- Through providing a forum through which key stakeholders can peer review placement reports, it is hoped that this will raise the quality and standard of social work practice placements in the region, offering a better experience for students and more opportunity and guidance for PEs to improve their reports;



- There is currently little collective evaluation of reporting according to organisation. Highlighting examples of good practice could promote the dissemination of those standards within an organisation;
- Individual feedback for PEs, OSSs and tutors will not only improve the quality of PE practice, but will also contribute to the individual's own professional development;
- The Assessed Placement Activities enabled MSW students whose placements were affected by the pandemic to complete their course and progress into their first social worker works, preserving the pipeline of NQSWs from Kingston University;
- A combination of activities relating to Placements and Practice Education, such as the OSS Programme, PE Workshops and Placement Allocation Strategy & Timeline, have increased placement opportunities for students and therefore increased the statutory placement provision within the TP. The number and quality of placements may also have contributed to the improved employability rate of Kingston University graduates. Full details can be found in the table below:

Measure	2017-18 (Baseline)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
% NQSW posts offered to Kingston University graduates (AfC and Sutton average)	12%	29%	67%	Not yet known
% of (statutory) annual placements provided by TP agencies	Unknown	47%	68%	80%*
% of students on BA programme who have 2 'statutory' placements	Unknown	22%	48%	86%
% of students on MSW programme who have 2 'statutory' placements	Unknown	85%	71%	100%*
% of BA students who receive a final statutory placement	Unknown	83%	91%	93%
% of MSW students who receive a final statutory placement	Unknown	90%	87%	100%*



% of independent PEs used annually**	3%	8%	5%	Not yet known
No. of PEs/OSSs attending training/event/workshop/conference	Unknown	120	96	116

*Providing all allocated May placements go ahead as planned

**DfE target = no more than 20% of placements should be with independent PEs. The proportion of 'independent' PEs used in our TP has increased slightly although this is still well above the target set by the DfE. This is due to the increase in statutory placements and the use of the TP's Practice Consultants as PEs, which we categorise as 'independent' due to them being 'offsite'.

2.3 Recruitment

Objectives for 2020-22:

- The pool of local talent is increased
- Strategies for recruiting good social workers are increasingly joined up
- There is a reliable pipeline of NQSWs from KU into partner agencies
- Students and practitioners have a better attachment to local employers

Activities to date:

- Employment routes have diversified considerably in recent years, contributing to a more reliable pipeline of NQSWs from Kingston University into partner agencies:
 - The University's Fast Track Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work has become increasingly popular in recent years. This allows experienced social care professionals to obtain a social work qualification in 18 months and register as a social worker and the TP has funded a number of places in recent years;
 - A subgroup of the TP - AfC, Sutton Children and Kingston University - was successful in its application to the DfE to form a new Regional Partnership (RP) and deliver Cohort 7 of the national Step Up to Social Work Programme. This allows graduates with a good degree and some experience of working with children and families to obtain a social work qualification in 14 months and register as a social worker. Those already working for one of the employers in the RP can apply, as well as external candidates;
 - A Student Internship Scheme was launched in Autumn 2020, where



students on the MSW Programme could apply to have both their placements with a partner local authority and at the end of their course be guaranteed an interview for an NQSW position. Achieving for Children, London Borough of Sutton Children's Services and London Borough of Merton Adults Services took part in the scheme and 3 students were successful. We aim to offer the scheme to second year BA students this Summer, in preparation for their first placement in November;

- The Social Worker (Integrated Degree) Apprenticeship was launched in late 2019, and Kingston University was appointed principal provider to co-produce the programme for London and surrounding regions for use by all programme members. The University recruited 60 to their programme, exceeding their target of 55;
- It is likely that the Employability Skills Workshops, Teaching Consultant involvement and increased statutory placements have also contributed to outcomes in this area, primarily the reliable pipeline of Kingston University students into partner agency NQSW roles through an improved attachment of students to local employers;
- The recently developed Career Pathways & CPD Framework and the Early Professional Development (EPD) Framework may also contribute to an improved attachment of students/practitioners to local employers once launched (more details in 2.4 Retention and Workforce Development);
- Despite this considerable progress in the last 12 months, and impacts illustrated below, this area of work remains the most under developed. To date, there has been no experimentation of joined up strategies for recruitment, aside from the Step Up Programme, and the need for a local talent pool for more experienced roles has not yet been addressed;
- However, in December 2020, the TP procured its own Careers Site, in anticipation of further developments in this area, and potential future objectives were explored in more depth at the TP's annual Visioning Day on 29 April 2021.

Impact/likely impact includes:

- Whilst some impacts are yet to be seen due to the lead time of some initiatives, e.g. the Student Internship Scheme, the pipeline of NQSWs entering employer agencies from Kingston University has already improved dramatically, with a more than fivefold increase in the proportion of NQSW posts going to Kingston University graduates (from 12% in 2017-18 to 67% using an average of AfC and Sutton data);
- It is anticipated that promotion of various workforce development initiatives, such as the EPD Framework, Early Career Managers' Programme and the Career Pathways & CPD Framework, will influence recruitment of social workers, with prospective candidates being attracted to work in the region thanks to the comprehensive learning and development offer (more details in 2.4 Retention and Workforce Development).



Measure	2017-18 (Baseline)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
% NQSW posts offered to Kingston University graduates (AfC and Sutton average)	12%	29%	67%	Not Yet Known

2.4 Retention and Workforce Development

Objectives for 2020-22:

- To improve the retention of social workers locally
- Social workers have a clear career pathway to progress
- Career pathways can be clearly articulated to practitioners
- Social workers receive a greater level of CPD
- The CPD offer is increasingly joined up across the TP
- Those on the ASYE are better supported
- Improved level of support & consolidation of learning in years 2-3
- Increased specialist subject support & development
- Social workers have opportunities for project work
- Social workers have the necessary skills to maintain / look after their wellbeing
- Social workers can access management/leadership opportunities

Activities to date:

- For information about CPD relating to Practice Education, please see 2.2 Placements and Practice Education;
- You can also find information about the specific CPD opportunities afforded to Teaching Consultants in 2.1 Admissions and Curriculum;
- After a significant period of consultation, a new Career Pathways & CPD Framework was developed. This clearly illustrates progression routes to practitioners, not limited to a linear management route, and includes a range of supporting CPD opportunities, offered by the TP, Kingston University and employers. This will be launched in June 2021 alongside the Early



Professional Development (EPD) Framework (see below);

- Also after an in depth consultation period, and taking learnings from the DfE's pilot Early Professional Development programme (2009-2011), a new EPD Framework was created, to support practitioners 2-3 years post qualifying. It aims to aid retention following the DfE longitudinal study, which identified the high dropout rate of social workers following their ASYE, a finding corroborated by our own workforce analysis. The framework will come into effect at the end of the ASYE and will provide EPD social workers with the support and opportunities they need to develop as practitioners in the coming years;
- The Framework covers a host of different initiatives, training and resources, relevant and appropriate to each stage of a social worker's career, identified as vital to help develop resilience, professional curiosity and leadership skills in the second and third years post-qualifying. The training and resources offered as part of the framework include; frequent Action Learning Sets (ALS), Workload Management training, Leadership Skills, Project Skills, Onsite Supervisor training, and the Practice Educator Professional standards stage 1 award, as well as crucial information on where to access a mentor and training on how to become a mentor to your peers (see [Appendix 3: EPD Handbook Contents Page](#) for full list).
- To aid implementation of the framework, an 'Early Professional Development Framework Handbook' has been produced which will be given to social workers as they approach the end of their ASYE Programme. The aim of the handbook is to signpost EPD social workers, and their managers, to all of the available training and resources;
- The framework is being piloted by all primary partner agencies from September 2021: Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Adults, Sutton Adults, Sutton Children, NSPCC and Welcare;
- Partner employers' post-qualifying needs were explored through interviews with Assistant Directors and Principal Social Workers across the TP in order that KU's PQ offer can be developed to meet the needs of employers;
- A new employer led PQ course has been developed in collaboration with Kingston University, Kingston Adults and Merton Adults. This Strengths Based Practice module will be delivered to staff from June 2021;
- The Mentoring, Coaching and Advanced Assessment of Professional Practice 30 credit module delivered by Kingston University continues to be popular with practitioners, with 55 undertaking this to date. [Coaching & Mentoring Principles](#) and associated templates that were agreed in 2019 are still in use;
- However, it is unclear how sustainable the Coaching module is without funding from the TP, given the cost implications for stretched local authority budgets. It is also not known to what extent the qualified coaches and mentors are using their newfound skills within their organisation and further exploration of this is planned for 2021-22;
- A 9 day Early Career Managers' Programme was designed and delivered twice during 2020-21, with 60 managers put forward in total. 100% of respondents would recommend the course to a colleague and employers



are keen to deliver this for a third time during 2021 once demand has been scoped across the TP;

- This programme has also been formally accredited by the CPD Standards Office, providing a recognised certification for those who completed the full course (51);
- Our programme also interested another SWTP covering Cheshire & Merseyside who decided to commission our TP to deliver the programme for them, generating an income for the TP. This course commenced in March 2021 and will complete in June;
- A further course was also accredited by the CPD Standards Office - 'Enabling Reflective Practice' - and 3 more are being submitted for assessment;
- A programme of workshops for ASYE Assessors was launched in 2020 and this has since been relaunched for 2021 as a 2 day training course. 35 different ASYE Assessors accessed the provision during 2020-21 but we have limited information on the total number of ASYE Assessors across the TP. This scoping will be completed in 2021-22;
- Despite the pandemic, over 90 events and training sessions were delivered, commissioned or coordinated by the TP throughout 2020-21, informed by practice and workforce development needs. Topics included; Knowledge & Skills Statement, Writing Reflectively for your CPD, Child to Parent Violence, Trauma Responses in Lockdown, Wellbeing, Culturally Sensitive Assessments & Intervention, Anti-Racism in Social Work, Child Sexual Abuse, Action Learning Set Facilitation, and many more. For full details of the 2020-21 provision, please see our [Annual L&D Report](#). Feedback about the CPD offer from the Stakeholder Survey was excellent without exception:

"There has been a huge range of opportunities offered across all levels of qualification and experience which has been invaluable."

- Some of the provision is offered through the CPD Passport Scheme, however these offers have tended to come from AfC and Sutton, so it would be reassuring to see further sessions opened up across the board;
- Sutton also recently opened up access to their suite of 60 elearning modules covering a broad range of topics across Adults, Mental Health, Children & Families, Wellbeing, Equality & Diversity, and Recruitment and these are proving to be very popular;
- The NSPCC has delivered a significant number of bespoke sessions for TP agencies on Child Sexual Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation and Harmful Sexual Behaviour and are currently developing a training session on Therapeutic Approaches to be delivered in Autumn 2021;
- 31 members of staff have undertaken a 3 day Action Learning Set (ALS) Facilitation course, supporting agencies to offer an increased and better quality level of ALS within their organisations. This will be especially useful when the EPD Framework commences, as an important aspect of the framework is regular ALS for social workers in their second year of practice. It will also allow the TP to sustain the Early Career Managers' Programme, as



one of the most valued elements of this course are the ALS that take place in the afternoon following the morning's training, enabling the managers to embed learning by discussing issues and/or dilemmas in the workplace;

- Following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May 2020, a number of our partner agencies announced the practical actions they would be taking to address the role that they and the social work profession must play in addressing the injustice and racism that led to this tragic event. The TP Team also established Black Lives Matter & The Voice of Social Work Discussion Groups to allow staff from different agencies to come together and discuss a specified topic related to anti-racist practice;
- Initially these were set up and facilitated by the Practice Consultants, however recognising that the TP Team at the time was made up solely of white women, a callout was made for black colleagues across the TP to lead or co facilitate some of these sessions. After a good response, the sessions were relaunched with a dedicated group of facilitators based in various employer partner agencies and the HEI. Topics for the upcoming sessions include:
 - The 'Problem' Woman of Colour, and Trauma;
 - Am I privileged? How can I use privilege to help others?;
 - Working with Dual-heritage families: What is working? What isn't working?
- After a brief presentation from the facilitator/s, participants will have the opportunity to discuss the topic in small groups. They will be invited to share feedback from these small groups, which may highlight learning that could support organisations to continue to develop their anti-racist commitment;
- The TP's focus on supporting practitioner wellbeing and emotional resilience has continued. Despite us being unable to hold our annual Wellbeing Conference in person last year due to the pandemic, we hosted an online day of Wellbeing & Resilience in Social Work workshops in November 2020 with over 120 signups across the 3 sessions. It was especially positive to see a significant number of practitioners attending for the whole day;
- The Wellbeing focus is also a golden thread running through all of the TP's CPD provision. For example, the ASYE Assessor Training has a session dedicated to supporting the wellbeing and resilience of NQSWs and the Early Career Managers' Programme includes a day focusing on managers' own wellbeing and building resilient teams;
- In addition, to amplify the support during the extremely challenging circumstances of 2020, the Social Work Lead opened up weekly slots for Individual or Group Reflective Supervision sessions. These were especially popular with Adults partners, with the group sessions proving particularly valuable;
- The TP's Twitter account continues to send weekly #WellbeingWednesday tweets which are always well received by followers and have played a significant role in increasing our reach on social media (see 4.5 Identity and Brand for more information);
- Five practitioner-led research project proposals were taken forward in 2019 and most have progressed well, although the pandemic did have an effect



on the pace of progress:

- Team Culture and the Impact on Staff Retention
- Practice Educator Motivation
- Using Outcome Measures in Child Protection Work
- Social Workers' Experiences of Working with Self-Neglect
- The Impact of Restorative Group Supervision on Staff Wellbeing and Morale;
- One of the research projects - Using Outcome Measures in Child Protection Work - has recently been published in the [Journal of Child and Family Social Work](#);
- The TP Social Work Lead provided impetus on many of the projects and she has recently moved to a new role as Senior Lecturer at Kingston University (although continues to act as Social Work Lead for 1 day a week) which is likely to further impact the progress of the projects that have been delayed during the pandemic. However it is hoped that the TP's new full time Practice Consultant will be able to provide additional support;
- The University commissioned the TP to run its Restoring Social Work Practice (Return to Social Work) programme for Surrey Children's Services. This was led by the Social Work Lead and the feedback has been fantastic, with another planned delivery of the programme under discussion;
- KU's Department of Social Work and Social Care's Seminar Series, delivering research and best practice guidance, has continued and through TP relationships these are reaching a wider audience. The most recent event was their annual Social Work and Social Care Conference on 17.3.21 – 'New thinking and practice in services for domestic violence and abuse' – and there were 487 in attendance;
- For World Social Work Day, in an event led by Richmond in partnership with Wandsworth, Achieving for Children and the Teaching Partnership, guest speaker Yvonne Aki-Sawyer inspired everyone with her experiences as Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone and managing National Ebola Response Centre during the Ebola epidemic of 2014-15. This event attracted over 1,300 attendees;
- In response to a need identified by partners to boost morale during the first lockdown, the TP began issuing more regular newsletters, focusing on the sharing of good news stories and celebrations of excellent practice;
- In addition, it was decided to host a deconstructed conference - 'Celebration of the TP and Excellent Social Work Practice' - culminating in an Awards Ceremony, to recognise and celebrate the achievements of social workers within the TP and promote the work of those in the social work profession. All nominations were sent to a shortlisting team made up of People with Lived Experience, Workforce Development Leads, Principal Social Workers and University Academics who whittled them down to 25 Winners and Runners Up across 10 categories. These individuals were then presented with their 'award' by members of the Strategic Board at an online ceremony attended by around 75 individuals across the TP. This was followed up with an official certificate and voucher prize. The event and awards ceremony was a huge success and as such will be hosted annually each



Winter;

- In Autumn 2020, the Strategic Board reached an agreement to align the timing and content of each local authority's annual Health Check Survey for easier comparison and addressing of recommendations across the board. However, the Local Government Association (LGA) subsequently launched a new Social Work Health Check on behalf of the social work profession and all primary partner agencies either signed up to this or have confirmed that they will be signing up to future surveys. This removed the need for agencies to align their own surveys, and instead all primary partner agencies have been given the option to share their personalised results report from the LGA with the TP for analysis and insight. To date this has been shared by Sutton Children's Services and Croydon Adults Services;
- In February 2020, a [Labour Market Plan](#) was produced, using information from our Workforce Analysis conducted in 2019. This was shared with the DfE for feedback, who praised the TP for being advanced in workforce planning.

Impact/likely impact includes:

- One of the most powerful elements of the joint offer is bringing professionals together to share experiences and challenge perceptions. For example, feedback from the stakeholder survey:

"Staff appreciate the CPD opportunities and by offering places on these across the partnership they are more financially affordable. I think it is also beneficial to bring staff together from across different LAs in terms of networking."

- As the above feedback indicates, it is also a much more cost effective way of offering certain learning and development opportunities;
- Our 2019 workforce analysis found that 46.3% of leavers in children and family social work leave within two years and the turnover rate of adult social workers with less than three years of experience in role is 23.2%. As such, we hope to improve retention rates of EPD social workers, reducing the number of leavers within three years post qualifying and creating a more stable workforce, however it is recognised that there are many factors and variables that influence a social worker's desire to stay in the profession;
- Clear and supportive management has frequently been cited as a factor influencing a social worker's desire to stay in the profession and whilst many agencies have offered corporate management training programmes or supervision training, until recently there lacked a social work specific management programme for new social work managers. Therefore the programme developed collaboratively across the TP, which included seeking feedback from current managers, aims to give managers the skills they need to support the practitioners in their teams;
- Overall, it is hoped that implementation of various workforce development initiatives, such as the EPD Framework, Early Career Managers' Programme and the Career Pathways & CPD Framework, will influence retention of social



workers;

- Through promoting our work in this area nationally, through Skills for Care, Social Work England and the National Teaching Partnership Network chaired by the DfE, we also hope to see a positive effect on our reputation in the sector, being seen as trailblazers and further solidifying our identity and brand;
- Research projects are linking and involving social workers in practice based research at a local level to develop an evidence based learning culture within organisations and across the region;
- All the work being done under the Wellbeing agenda aims to increase the focus on social worker wellbeing to improve self care and support for social workers, ultimately improving retention. Whilst this is a long-term goal, the positive feedback received from practitioners and senior managers across the TP suggests that the impact of this work is being felt on the ground;
- The Labour Market Plan enables the TP to set priorities that are informed by workforce intelligence and makes explicit the links between TP activities and workforce planning.

2.5 Identity, Brand and Reputation

Objectives for 2020-22:

- Develop/promote a regional identity via social media and other platforms
- Share progression, development and network opportunities and resources

Activities to date:

- Maintained the 'Developing Together' brand, utilising logos and sharing of key documentation both internally and externally;
- Promoted the TP and the Social Work profession through a [video montage](#) with messages from key individuals across the TP;
- Continued to develop the TP [website](#) which is host to resources, guidance, advice, adverts and events. We have also provided consultation to another SWTP who contacted the Project Lead directly to get advice and insight as to how the website was set up, kept up to date and quality assured. Feedback from their Teaching Partnership Manager:

"The website always has up to date news and events that are relevant to me and my colleagues. There's a dearth of useful information on specialist topics.

The Guide to being a Practice Educator in a blended placement was a valuable learning resource and was easily accessed on the website.

It is really easy to find your way around the site. The wellbeing information is one part of the site we have been using during the pandemic for sources of support and advice. We like the people with lived experience section as our partnership is developing its activities and resources in this area. The workshop calendar for practice education is a great way to share ideas and prepare for forthcoming sessions and one we would like to emulate!



It is our first port of call for all social work education partnership topics."

- Released regular newsletters ensuring those within the region stay up to date on the key activities and ways to get involved with the TP and other organisations. We also released additional special editions of the newsletter, such as 'Celebrating Excellent Social Work Practice during CV19' and 'Celebrating Black History Month'. You can find all our newsletters to date on the website [here](#);

"Am motivated to read incoming emails from TP. Used with other organisations to keep up with information and developments."

"I have personally experienced great communication from the partnership in terms of what is happening , the achievements and opportunities to work and collaborate with colleagues across the partnership for the mutual benefit of our organisations and workforce"

"My interactions with the TP have always been excellent."

"It's a joy to work with the Teaching Partnership"

"All comms are very professional and frequent. I think the recent awards were a good way to share success. I would like to see more in the communications about future priorities so these can be followed by the wider public."

- We maintained a strong presence at external events and with national networks, attending the DfE's National Teaching Partnership Network meetings without fail, and sitting on a Social Work England Professional Experts Group. In the future, the TP hopes to contribute to the Social Work England Programme for Social Work Week;
- Shared information with key professional and regulatory bodies and networks to promote our achievements - in the past this was mainly through the National Teaching Partnership Network but more recently we have started proactively sharing information directly with Skills for Care, Social Work England and Social Work Now. This sharing of information led to the TP being commissioned to deliver our Early Career Managers' Programme to another SWTP;
- Shared performance data directly with stakeholders who have a vested interest in a specific area of the TP's work. For example, communicating with Teaching Consultants and the HEI about the academic results and employment rates of students and how these have improved over the last 3 years. This is always very well received and motivates those involved with the TP to continue engaging and contributing to its success;
- Maintained a strong and active social media presence on Twitter connecting the TP and promoting social work practice, research and development at a local and national level;



- The TP was selected by the DfE to establish, manage and quality assure a new National Teaching Partnership document library, which has been set up on Sharepoint. This generated an income from the TP and positions us as a reliable and trusted body;
- The TP has used its existing infrastructure and professional relationships to successfully bid for new work, for example the Step Up to Social Work Programme;
- One of the TP research projects - Using Outcome Measures in Child Protection Work - has recently been published in the [Journal of Child and Family Social Work](#);
- A deconstructed conference was held in December 2020 - 'Celebration of the TP and Excellent Social Work Practice' - culminating in an Awards Ceremony, to recognise and celebrate the achievements of social workers within the Partnership and promote the work of those in the social work profession. We were inundated with positive feedback after the event and due to popular demand will be making this an annual occurrence;
- Worked with Skills for Care to complete their [independent evaluation of the Teaching Partnership](#), published in 2020, to explore the impact of the programme;
- Contributed a significant number of case studies to the DfE commissioned [Evaluation of the Teaching Partnership Programme](#), conducted by Interface. We received fantastic feedback from the SWTP Programme Lead at the DfE:

"Great case studies- I really enjoyed reading them. They've given me a real feel for the partnership. Please do invite me to visit an event or to sit in with a Teaching Consultant delivering a workshop, shadowing the practice education team, a social worker from a team that has benefitted from the self-care kits...I could go on! Just really inspired by your partnership!"

Impact includes:

- Through promoting our work nationally, through Skills for Care, Social Work England and the National Teaching Partnership Network chaired by the DfE, we hope to see a positive effect on our reputation in the sector, being seen as trailblazers and further solidifying our identity and brand. Social Work England advised in May 2021 that they were not aware of any other examples of such detailed frameworks being developed in the sector, like the ones we have produced for Career Pathways & CPD and Early Professional Development;
- We know from website analytics that PEs are regularly using the TP branded resources and tools which are shared at the workshops and available through the website, e.g. the [PCF Toolkit](#), with this page alone averaging almost 100 visits per month. This evidences that the resources are in demand and useful to staff;
- Website analytics also tell us that the website as a whole is an extremely rich source of information and resources for those in the sector, with over 21,000



visits in the last year, and this figure is increasing each month;

- Prospective students and employees can see the joined up approach across the region and may factor this into their decision when choosing which academic institution to study at or which region to work in;
- The number of followers and supporters on our Twitter account increases steadily each month. Since the last annual progress report, the [Twitter](#) following has doubled, going from 337 to 668 followers. We also have some high-profile supporters through the relationships we have developed. Please see a table below demonstrating the reach of our Twitter account in comparison to other SWTPs. We aim to reach 1000 followers by the end of this year:

SWTP	Joined Twitter	Followers
Developing Together	Jun 2018	667
Yorkshire Urban and Rural	Jun 2017	925
Suffolk & Norfolk	Oct 2017	808
South East London	Jul 2015	725
Leeds and Wakefield	Jun 2017	675
Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	Oct 2017	603
North London	Jul 2017	577
Hertfordshire	Nov 2018	382
North East London	Sept 2018	337
Greater Cambs	Jan 2019	297
West Midlands	Jan 2018	227
Cheshire and Merseyside	Apr 2019	183
Greater Lancashire	May 2019	81



3. Summary of the Covid-19 Response

The TP's ongoing response to the pandemic has been weaved throughout the report, but in summary, the key areas where the TP added value were:

- Assessed Placement Activities
- Celebration of Practice special edition newsletters
- Facilitating weekly full Partnership meetings for placement decision making
- Issuing weekly Comms around placement decisions and changes
- Increasing resources and content on the website
- Individual and Group Reflective Supervision offer
- Wellbeing Event
- Celebration Event and Awards Ceremony
- Adapted training offer to deliver online and more than trebled the number of learning and development opportunities
- Facilitated the development of a "Guide to being a Practice Educator in a 'Blended' Placement"
- Virtual Working module
- Additional programme of learning and support specifically for students and NQSWs
- Developed and delivered additional workshops for PEs and ASYE Assessors focused on working virtually
- Facilitated vital information sharing across the TP and beyond

4. Future Ambitions

Whilst the Visioning Day in January 2020 provided a clear direction for the TP for 2020-22, the Strategic Board expressed a preference to host a similar event each year, in order to refresh priorities as needed. The 2021 Visioning Day was held at the end of April, and the existing Logic Model will be updated in due course to reflect relevant changes. As expected, some changes or additions are targeted at addressing repercussions from the pandemic and developments in the area of anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice and there will remain a significant focus on retention. Some new areas of focus for the coming year/s include:



- Revisiting the academics in practice initiative, to determine how we can make this a success;
- Exploring a strategy for research in practice and supporting partners to become 'learning organisations';
- Developing a new provision for more experienced managers;
- Understanding the extent of the coaching culture across the TP, after 55 practitioners qualified as coaches, and how this might look long term;
- Expanding the CPD offer, to include more provision for Adults, a greater CPD Passport offer from partners, and some areas of practice that haven't yet been touched upon, such as:
 - Adoption and Fostering
 - Children with Disabilities
 - Learning Difficulties
 - Multi-Disciplinary Working
 - Transitions
- Developing a suite of elearning modules, to add to and complement what is already being offered by partners;
- Launching and embedding the Career Pathways & CPD Framework and Early Professional Development Framework with eligible staff;
- Completing the People with Lived Experience Film project, allowing PLE experiences of social workers and social care, and their expertise as PLEs, to be shared and contribute to the learning of social work students and practitioners across the Partnership;
- Recruiting, training and supporting more Teaching Consultants to experience this opportunity;
- Increasing our engagement at a national level to showcase the work of the TP and position the TP as a well-renowned and trusted body;
- Improving the level of student engagement and involvement as interaction with students has been limited to date;
- Finding out more about the workforce, including who are our Practice Educators, ASYE Assessors and NQSWs, and why staff choose to leave an organisation;
- Continuing to facilitate collaborative working focused on improving the quality of placements and placement reports;
- Defining and progressing plans for joined up recruitment strategies and introducing a better approach to sharing progression opportunities, enabling staff to progress more easily between organisations and develop their career whilst retaining them within the partnership as a whole;
- Designing new Careers Fairs/Open Evenings to support with employers with recruitment;
- Seeking out further opportunities for generating an income, including continuing to sell places on courses or whole training programmes and bidding for funding from the DfE for small improvement projects;
- Exploring a possible research opportunity post delivery of the new Strengths Based Practice module - looking at the impact of this approach;
- Working more closely with people with lived experience across the whole TP and ensuring the PLE voice is represented throughout our training offer;
- Following closely the implementation of the Workforce Race Equality



- Standard (WRES) for social care and taking a role where necessary;
- Overseeing the delivery of the Step Up to Social Work Programme for the new Regional Partnership.

5. Added Value of the Teaching Partnership

- The Teaching Partnership has enhanced collaborative working between all member agencies. Feedback from the Stakeholder Survey suggests that there is a common understanding of the purpose of the partnership and how improved relationships, appreciation of roles and collaborative working can enhance the development of the social work profession;
- The Teaching Partnership approach and stretch criteria have brought a new focus and stimulated a new way of working in comparison to previous working arrangements which were less effective in agreeing, sharing and achieving improvements. The culture of the partnership has progressed and most stakeholders are convinced by the value of a new way of partnership working;
- The Teaching Partnership Team posts have supported the programme with a range of activities including planning, driving, monitoring, communication, clarifying expectations and setting up specific groups. The roles have been critical to facilitating pace, communication, stakeholder engagement and accountability. The national evaluation of TPs noted having a central function as one of their key transferable lessons.

6. Challenges and risks

- There are challenges to the impact and sustainability of the Teaching Partnership at both a national and local level. At a national level, there remains a policy and economic context that could restrict the positive effect of the TP or divert its attention - e.g continued poor financial climate, negative national media around social work, conflicting national policy and the introduction of new regulations and frameworks;
- At a partnership level restructures of services can quickly change the context and key staff involved in the partnership which affects the continuity and tests the depth of commitment to the whole partnership;
- There is a risk that a lack of performance or clear impact data may affect the ability to make a case for continuing to fund SWTPs, however the likelihood of this has reduced dramatically since the last report was produced, with the DfE committing to funding SWTPs twice more since 2019 and the primary partners making a financial contribution to the TP in 2020 and 2021. The Visioning Day in April 2021 also saw primary partners commit to funding the TP in 2022;
- Effectiveness was initially impacted by the number of partners, 14 in total, signed up to the Partnership which can prolong decision making and the progress of activities, especially if engagement is inconsistent. However, the TP is affected to a much lesser extent by inconsistent levels of engagement since



the move to a two-tier membership structure in early 2020. All partners were able to choose their level of involvement and the governance structure was adapted accordingly, resulting in faster and better informed decision making.

7. Recommendations

This report has generated the following recommendations:

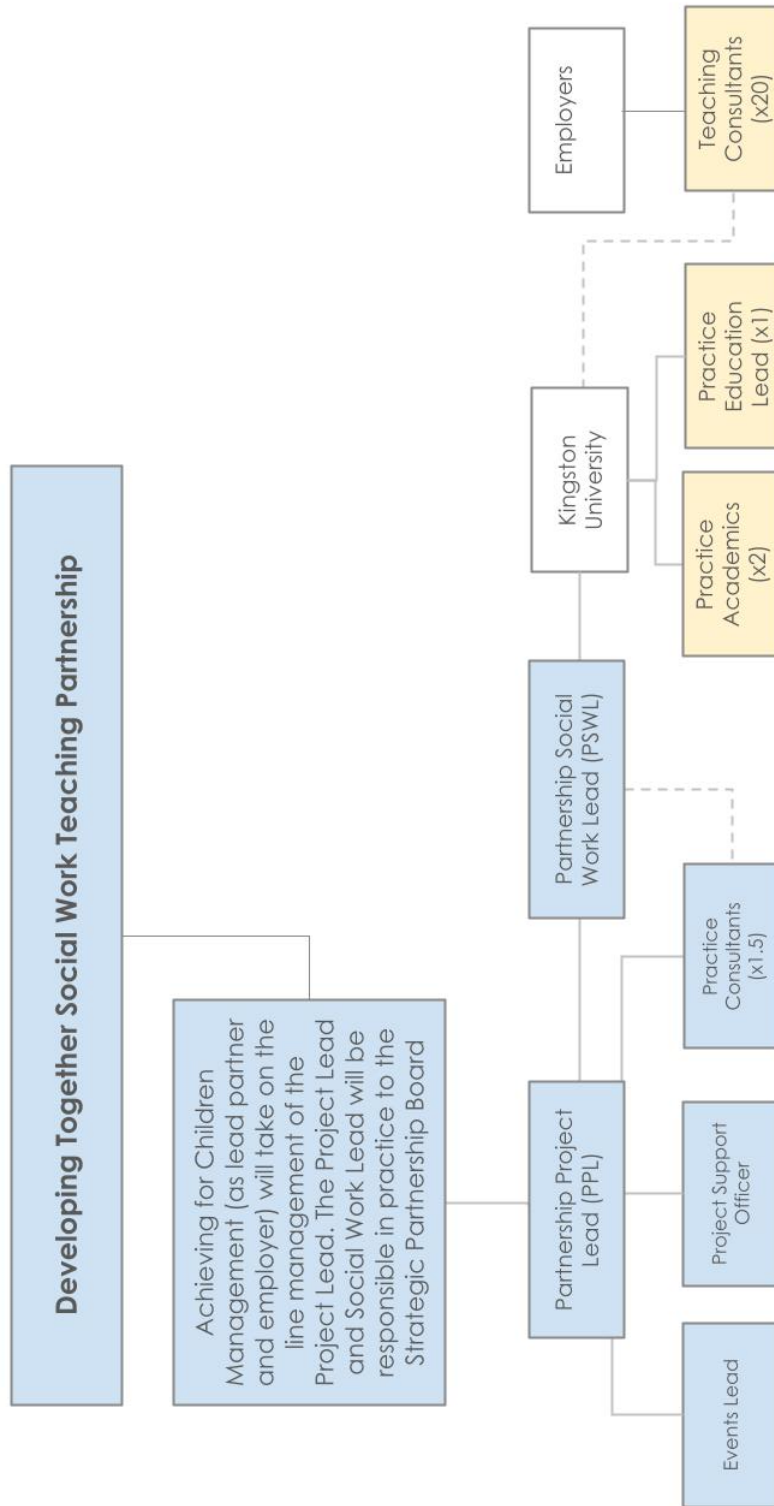
- The membership of the Teaching Partnership (TP) and governance structure should remain consistent. There are many moving parts to the programme and numerous activities in flight at any one time and the current arrangements are proving to work well in terms of communication, understanding and engagement;
- In light of the recent confirmation that the DfE will provide further funding for the National SWTP Programme, those agencies who pay an annual membership fee should use this report as a basis for reviewing their return on investment. Even with the DfE funding and the independent income that the TP has begun to generate, it would not be possible to sustain the TP beyond March 2022 in its current form without this vital contribution;
- All primary partner agencies (Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Adults, Sutton Children, Sutton Adults, NSPCC, Welcare and Kingston University) should attend the annual Visioning Day, where future priorities are agreed. It is also essential for a consistent senior leader from within each agency to attend the quarterly Strategic Board;
- The TP should take advantage of how accustomed those across the TP have become to working virtually, moving the majority of governance meetings online to enable maximum attendance and reduce the administrative burden on partners. This should also be extended to the CPD offer, taking a blended approach to learning, with a mixture of online and face to face provision;
- The TP should further build on engaging with and sharing information with key professional and regulatory bodies and networks to promote its achievements and communicate future priorities within the sector.



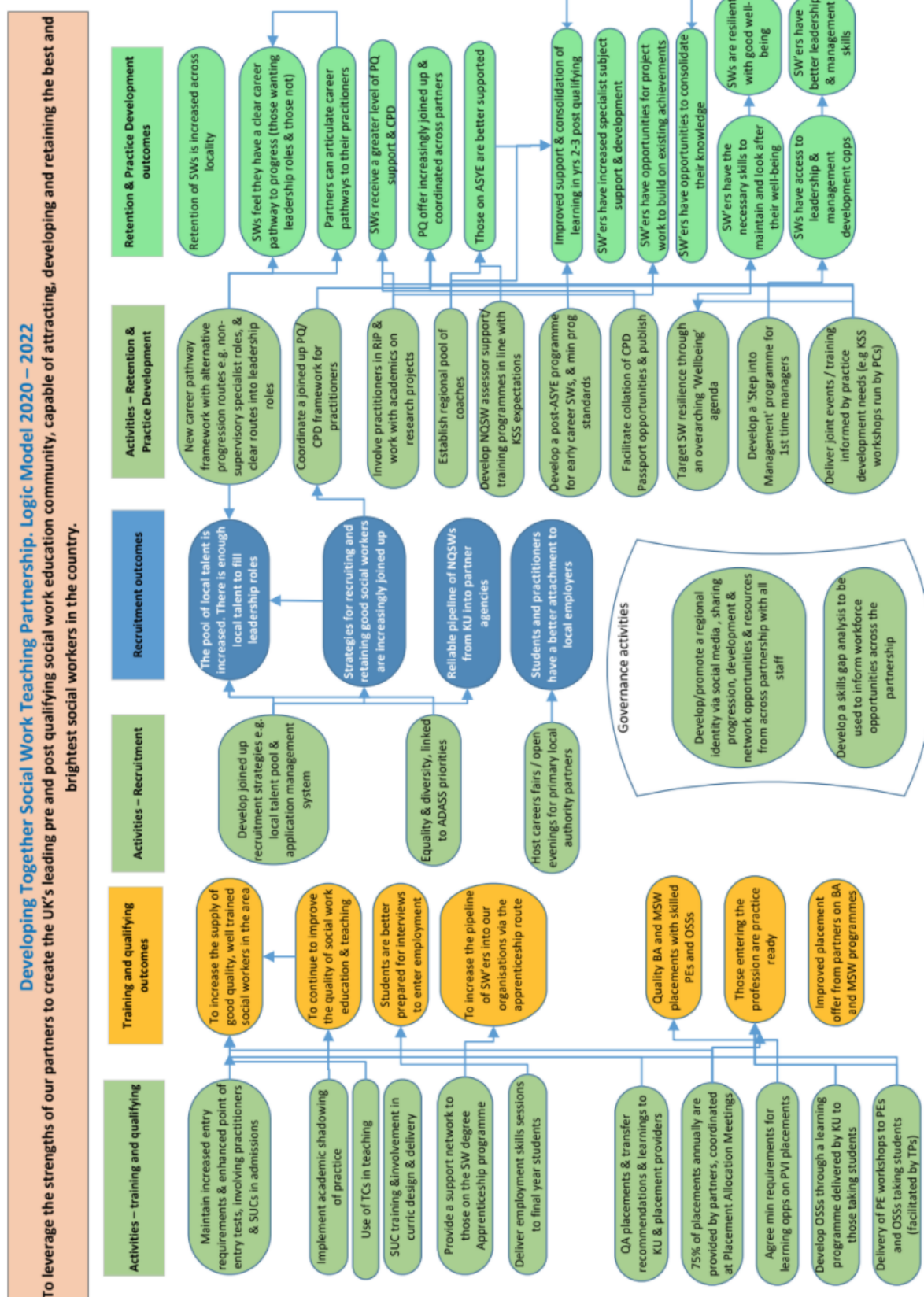
Appendix 1: Organisational Structure



Organisational Structure



Appendix 2: Logic Model 2020-22





Appendix 3: EPD Handbook Contents Page



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