



DEVELOPING TOGETHER
SOCIAL WORK
TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

2022-23 Progress Report: Evaluating Our Success

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Welcome

Since October 2018, the South West London and Surrey Teaching Partnership has successfully worked on a broad range of activities to champion the training, learning and development of social workers. It is one of a growing network of 27 such partnerships in England, which bring together local authorities, universities and voluntary sector organisations providing social work services.

Our initial grant funding from the Department for Education was for two years; however, the success of the partnership's work has seen us receive sustainability funding every year since then, as well as smaller grants to deliver seven continuous improvement initiatives over the last two years based on identified local needs. This is testament to the fast and effective progress our social work teaching partnership has made in training and developing social workers at a significantly challenging time for the profession. The culture of collaborative working we have developed across our teaching partnership is truly inspiring and impactful.

The ongoing success of our social work teaching partnership requires the continued active engagement of all our partners at a time when there are competing priorities and financial pressures for our member local authorities, Kingston University and our voluntary sector partners at the NSPCC and Welcare. It is heartening to see that engagement has not diminished across south west London and Surrey and we remain committed to working together so that our children, young people and vulnerable adults benefit from the best possible social work practice.

As we begin the sixth year of our programme, I encourage all partners to continue investing their time and expertise in the social work teaching partnership. It is important that we build on our success so that we can continue to benefit from the economies and shared creativity 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 and innovation in the training, practice learning, career development and wellbeing 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 2022 and March 2023 (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 remains strong in the following key areas:

- The improved academic attainment and progression through the social work programmes of Kingston University students;
- The ongoing development of Practice Educator, Onsite Supervisor and ASYE Assessor skills;
- 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 ongoing rollout of Trauma Informed Practice training level 1, utilising upskilled practitioners and social work academics to facilitate sessions, who have been trained through a Train the Trainer model;
- The beginnings of an improved culture of embedding research in practice through the ongoing monthly Research Hubs;
- The strength, value and appreciation of the Teaching Consultant role, including the continuing professional development opportunity and 'job' satisfaction it provides to those carrying out this role;
- The provision of wellbeing, social work celebration, 'Think Family' and 'BLM' events;
- 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 2022-24 that were identified at the Visioning Day in May 2022 have progressed exceptionally well and are either embedded, or making good progress towards being embedded. Some previously improved outcomes, such as statutory placement provision, have faced some setbacks this year. However, additional areas of work have also developed, in most cases due to



additional government funding, which allowed us to implement targeted short term improvement projects. These included the rollout of Independent Clinical Supervision to our year 2 and 3 Early Professional Development Social workers, the development and rollout of Autism Training, as well as an associated 'toolkit' and holding a National Practice Education Consultation Event.

The value of the TP programme has become easier to evidence as the medium to longer 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.

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 2020, 2021 and 2022 the Partnership was successful in its application for sustainability funding, and now has resource to continue until March 2024. The Partnership also received funding to address challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and further funding in 2021 and 2022 to target a total of 7 specific Continuous Improvement Projects. At the time of writing, the DfE has not yet released sustainability funding criteria for Teaching Partnerships for 2023 and so if this is released and we are successful, it will significantly enhance our financial position.

The TP comprises 14 partners and operates a two-tier membership structure to reflect the extent to which partners are involved in the programme of work. 13 partners are 'primary partners' and one is a 'secondary partner'. 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/Post Qualifying Standards 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 considerably over the last 3 years, significantly expanding the scope of the original 2 year implementation plan developed in 2018. For an overview of the priority areas for 2023-25 see [Appendix 2: Logic Model 2023-25](#). 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, indicative and certain impacts.

Please note that sections [2.1 Admissions & Curriculum](#), [2.2 Placements and Practice Education](#) and [2.6 Identity, Brand and Reputation](#) are relevant for all partner agencies. Sections [2.3 Recruitment](#), [2.4 Retention & Workforce Development](#) and [2.5 Income Generation](#) are more relevant for primary partner agencies who are involved in these areas of work.¹

2.1 Admissions & Curriculum

Objectives for 2022-24:

- Reliable supply of good quality, well trained social workers in the area who are ready for practice
- Increase the pipeline of social workers into our local organisations
- Continue to improve the quality of social work education & teaching

¹ Primary partners are: Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Croydon Children, Kingston Adults, Merton Adults, Merton Children, Sutton Adults, Sutton Children, Wandsworth Children, NSPCC, Welcare, Kingston University and Richmond & Wandsworth Adults.
Secondary partners are: Surrey Children



- Better prepare students for interviews to enter employment

Activities to date:

- 23 Teaching Consultants (TCs) are in post and active. This includes 15 from the initial recruitment to 34 positions in 2018-19, 5 recruited in 2021 and 5 recruited in 2022. The vast majority of those from the original establishment who have left the role have done so due to leaving their organisation, although two TCs who left the region altogether have continued in their TC role;
- In 2022, 5 TCs were appointed as part of a now well embedded annual recruitment process. Feedback from new and existing TCs continues to be positive, with colleagues valuing the chance to do something different alongside their main role, stating that it reinvigorates their passion for Social Work. However, there has still been feedback from TCs that they have not been asked to take part in as many direct teaching sessions as they would have liked. This has been discussed at the quarterly TC Forum and suggestions have been made that lecturers need to have better awareness of the expertise available, and that TCs should be more proactive in getting in touch with lecturers to offer support. In addition, future recruitment will be done in a more targeted manner to address the gaps in knowledge among existing TCs, without diluting the opportunities for them to be involved in teaching. Clive Simmons, Senior Lecturer and Teaching Consultant Coordinator, said;

"Teaching Consultants continue to provide an incredibly enriching contribution to teaching sessions and interviews across social work modules. This involves a wide range of specialisms and professionals demonstrating considerable application and enthusiasm. The responses of students and module leaders to Teaching Consultant participation is very positive, as up to date and innovative experience, knowledge and skills are shared. There continues to be feedback from some Teaching Consultants that they would like to be used more and there is a current initiative to further engage the current consultants and lecturers in expanded involvement in sessions being planned for the new academic year, alongside a scrutiny of gaps to inform further recruitment."

- Croydon Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Children, Sutton Children, Wandsworth Children, Richmond & Wandsworth Adults, and NSPCC all have TCs;
- Achieving for Children, Merton Adults, Sutton Adults, Surrey Children, and Welcare, do not. This has been relatively consistent since the role was introduced, although Achieving for Children and Surrey Children did have TCs when the role was first introduced. This is something that was explored with the agencies that were unrepresented prior to the



last recruitment cycle, however this picture did not change. The agencies who did respond to the TP's enquiries regarding this, cited workload and capacity as the likely reasons for lack of interest in the role;

- All new TCs took part in Training and Induction over the Summer before the new academic year began in September 2022;
- All new TCs (and existing TCs who had not yet taken up the opportunity) were invited to complete a 30 credit Level 7 module, Individual Work Based Learning Project, in January 2023 along with an offer of support to complete an application to the Higher Education Academy for Associate Fellowship (AFHEA). In 2020-21, a cohort of 7 TCs were sponsored by the TP to complete this module and the AFHEA. This time around, KU has waived their fee for the module, and the TP will pay for the AFHEA applications. 8 Teaching Consultants have decided to pursue this;
- Since 2020, KU has been responsible for 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. Clive Simmons, Senior Lecturer and Teaching Consultant Coordinator, said of the role:

"As year lead for the final year BA Social Work students, it is my privilege to work closely with teaching consultants in the classroom and in so many other ways. There is such an incredible willingness to support students on their journey into social work. The highest praise comes from students who provide regular, positive feedback on the warmth, passion, knowledge and skills shown by teaching consultants. Module leaders also value the learning from practice, as Teaching Consultants provide an important bridge into professional social work practice"

- Current TC involvement includes:
 - co-design and co-delivery of teaching in TCs specialist areas of practice, working alongside Module Leaders, including recording new content to accommodate blended delivery teaching during the pandemic
 - consultation on assessment strategies for modules
 - co-interviewing applicants for the qualifying programmes online alongside academic staff, other practitioners and PLEs
 - experienced TCs mentoring new TCs
 - existing TCs interviewing prospective TCs
- 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 in 2022-23. 8 have enrolled so far;



- All those who previously completed the module have now also been granted AFHEA status which consolidates their personal development and emphasises their professional practice in Higher Education. The new TCs undertaking the module will also be supported to make a similar application;
- TC Forum meetings that were established in 2021 continue and have very good attendance. These are intended to facilitate regular contact between KU, the TP and TCs. These are held 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.
- The People with Lived Experience (PLE) Group at the HEI remains relatively stable, with 10 PLEs actively involved with HEI activities such as admissions. There are more members of the group, but they have paused their involvement due to personal circumstances. Two new films from the PLE Film Project are now available on the TP [website](#);
- TCs and PLEs have continued to play a much more determining role in the assessment of prospective BA and MSW students than they did prior to the TP. After discussion with partners, to lighten the load on the TCs, we widened participation in admissions in 2020, inviting other practitioners to get involved. This also allowed more practitioners to gain experience in a HEI setting and offered them a valuable CPD opportunity. Since 2020, 19 practitioners have taken up this opportunity, including 7 practitioners on the EPD Framework in 2022. Despite not having any active TCs, Achieving for Children, Sutton Adults and Surrey Children all have practitioners taking part in this initiative which is positive. It is also worth noting that many practitioners who have taken up this opportunity have gone on to become Teaching Consultants;
- 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 roleplay and group exercises that were introduced as part of the admissions process in 2018-19 were halted during the pandemic, given the nature of conducting interviews and assessments virtually. This has recently been reviewed by the university and a decision made to continue the admissions process without these elements for a number of reasons;
 - The Admissions/Recruitment approach at Kingston University Social Work Department relies primarily upon the proven collaborative online co-interviewing of shortlisted applicants using a standardised multi-question format. This is further supported by written tests that have been modified to take into account recent AI developments, along with a suitability process for candidates with self-declared issues;
 - Whilst Social Work England recommends (but does not



mandate) group-based and role-play exercises for inclusion in candidate selection, there is a lack of rigorous published empirical evidence to support the efficacy of these resource-intensive approaches in achieving their intended outcomes. Prior experience at Kingston University has demonstrated that these do not in practice materially impact upon final outcomes for the selection process. This is partly because of the need to ensure that students are not discriminated against due to factors inherent within group work. Group Work theory and research has demonstrated that multiple factors may impact upon the effective participation of individuals including the mix of gender, age, experience and cultural factors. These cannot be effectively controlled for within ad hoc interviewing groups;

- Given the limitations of these approaches, Kingston University has therefore made a strategic decision to not include these exercises within recruitment processes (with the exception of Step Up to Social Work, where this is mandated by the DfE). Course Leaders have however ensured that professional group work and team-based skills development are embedded throughout the curriculum in order to ensure that Kingston University graduates are appropriately skilled practitioners;
- Managing the involvement of practitioners in the admissions processes was successfully handed back to the HEI in 2020 and Josie Newton, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, takes responsibility for coordinating the PLEs and practitioners involved in each selection event;
- Partner involvement in student suitability issues was agreed through the development of a new, more transparent [Student Suitability Process](#), after a consultation with placement providers. All partners now feel able to offer an opinion about applicants with prior convictions in response to a single question from the HEI about the likelihood of the student being accepted for a placement within their organisation. The responses are coordinated anonymously by a single nominated individual, currently Sharon Evans, Lead Partnership Practice Consultant, and a collective view is then shared with the HEI. A clear timeframe for providing a response and/or requesting further information was agreed and individual responses are not tracked and are not used to obligate partners to later offer the student a placement. Factors such as these, although unfounded, had made some partners apprehensive about providing their opinion previously, and so these clarifications and a clear process document resolved any previous misunderstandings. Partner representatives for this are checked quarterly at the TP Pre-Qualifying Alliance meetings and Sharon Evans will regularly meet with any new partner representatives to explain the process;
- Employability Skills Workshops for MSW and BA students were



facilitated by a mixture of TCs and other employer representatives in February and March 2023. The session for MSW students was attended by 21 students, a similar number to last year, and the BA session was attended by around 35 students. The feedback from the previous year was incorporated when planning the sessions, and this time, 91% of attendants responded that the session was helpful or extremely helpful. Feedback from this year's sessions indicated that they would like more information on individual agencies and their vacancies. Students were also informed and encouraged to attend the Careers Fair in April 2023, where they had the opportunity to speak with individual agency representatives;

- The 'Academics in Practice' initiative, where academic staff are supported by the HEI to spend time in practice, was impacted negatively by the pandemic. However it has also been recognised since then, that a better method for organising and evidencing these contributions to practice is required, since many good examples are going unreported and some academics would benefit from more support in making the necessary links with partner agencies. All 25 academics have updated their areas of specialism and interest sheets, in order to help with assigning them to relevant work shadowing opportunities. Conversations have also been had between academics and Teaching Consultants to coordinate shadowing opportunities and the Teaching Consultants have expressed their commitment to supporting the module leaders with which they work to conduct visits in their respective organisations. This will be a key area of improvement for 2023-24 and will be welcomed by partners, as evidenced in this stakeholder survey response;

"It would be good to increase theory and practice in the post qualifying years of social work through initiative such as these to link academics and frontline practice"

- There are already multiple 'goodwill' examples of social work academics contributing to the learning and development of practitioners across the TP, for example two lecturers deliver a day each on the TP's Early Career Social Work Manager programme and another two lecturers deliver a Leadership Skills in Social Work Practice day and a Project Skills & Development day for social workers on the Early Professional Development Framework, as well as various academics contributing to the TP Research Hub and supporting with evaluations of Teaching Partnership projects. Other examples include seminars on findings from research, e.g. Self Neglect & Hoarding, and regular briefings on the latest updates to the Liberty Protection Safeguards.



Impact includes:

- The admissions process at the HEI has successfully focused on recruiting high quality graduates with 77% of those with tariff-able qualifications now having at least 120 UCAS points. This demonstrates an overall improvement; in 2017-18, only 52% of those with tariff-able qualifications had at least 120 UCAS points. However, this is a decrease on the figure for last year, which was 89%;
- The average entry tariff has also improved overall, from 123.1 UCAS points in 2017-18 to 131 in 2021-22. This is a decrease on the figure for last year however, which was 139.95;
- The scheduled hours of practitioner teaching prior to the TP (academic year 2017-18) is not known as arrangements were ad-hoc and the Teaching Consultant role didn't exist, but 11 TCs have completed approximately 154 hours of teaching in the current academic year (to date), which supports students' transition from theory into practice and aligns the curriculum with local employer needs. This is a marked increase from the 2021-22 academic year, where TCs contributed 110 hours of teaching. Responses to our 2023 Stakeholder survey demonstrate that partners really value the role of TCs:

"I believe that this initiative provides valuable opportunities for practicing social workers to share their experiences and really bring alive theory and practice in the classroom for social work students"

"Teaching Consultants have provided a richness to teaching students on the SW courses. All the TC's I have worked with have been professional, knowledgeable and highly passionate about their role and social work. Students respond positively to TC being in the classroom and bringing SW theory and approaches and legislation to life. From my discussions with TC's they greatly enjoy their role as a TC and it brings an extra element to their work life and has developed their skills in teaching. Some TC's have been frustrated that they have not been involved in as much teaching as they would like and therefore Academics do need to be looking at where TC's can be involved in modules and sessions"

- 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;



- First time pass rate on the Readiness for Direct Practice module had improved year on year from 2017-18 to 2019-20; from 71% in 2017-18, to 94% (BA) and 100% (MSW) in 2019-20, exceeding our original target of 78%. The first time pass rate reverted to 71% on the BA in 2020-21, potentially as a result of the pandemic and in 2021-22 the most recent year for which we have data), this decreased again to 63%. The MSW course also saw a reduction in pass rate in 2020-21, to 89%, however last year this increased to 90% which is above target;
- The proportion of students graduating with a 'good' degree has increased considerably on both the BA and MSW programmes, with 72% of BA students achieving a 1st or 2:1 last year, and 93% of MSW students graduating with distinction or commendation.

| Measure | 2017-18 (Baseline) | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 |
|---|-----------------------|---------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| % of students with 120+ UCAS points | 52% | 76% | 85% | 89% | 77% |
| Average (mean) UCAS points | 123.1 | 131.8 | 139.62 | 139.95 | 131 |
| First time pass % Readiness for Direct Practice module | 71% | 90% | 94% (BA) 100% (MSW) | 71% (BA) 89% (MSW) | 63% (BA) 90% MSW |
| % students graduating with 2:1 or a 1st (BA) | 44% | 78% | 59% | 62% | 72% |
| % of students graduating with distinction or commendation (MSW) | 76% | 81% | 87% | 91% | 93% |
| % of BA students progressing from Level 4 to Level 5 | 77% | 85% | 87% | 88% | 73% |

2.2 Placements & Practice Education

Objectives for 2022-24:

- Reliable supply of good quality, well trained social workers in the area who are ready for practice



- Continue to improve the quality of social work education & teaching
- Increase the pipeline of social workers into our local organisations
- Students have high quality placements with skilled Practice Educators (PEs) and Onsite Supervisors (OSSs)
- 75% of placements are provided by TP agencies
- All students have at least 1 statutory placement, preferably 2

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 2022-23, the TP Practice Consultants were off-site PEs for 8 students across the masters, BA and PGDip programmes;
- An adapted programme of 10 PE workshops were delivered across the year (amended from 11 in 2021-22) to develop PE skills and knowledge. 115 experienced/trainee/aspiring PEs, OSSs and PAs have attended workshops to date;
- We have evaluated the TP Practice Education programme for 2022-23 and have now modified how it is going to be delivered for 2023-24. These workshops will now target a wider audience and include all of those who have a role in enabling the learning of others, these will now be called 'Enabling and Assessing Social Work Learners'. Part of this revised approach will also include going out directly to organisations to deliver the sessions in house, in recognition of the pressure that agencies are currently under. It is hoped this will better support attendance and ensure learning is delivered more widely across all organisations;
- The Onsite Supervisor (OSS) Programme was originally developed and delivered by Dale van Graan, Senior Lecturer, in 2019 and reduced in length in 2020 to incorporate feedback about the time commitment of the training. Josie Newton, Senior Lecturer, co-facilitates the 3 ½ day training programme alongside Natesha Yanguba, Advanced Social Worker and PE at Croydon ASC. The OSS programme has run 2 times in 2022-23 in October 2022 and February 2023. Further occurrences are planned for September 2023 and February 2024 due to demand from aspiring OSS;
- Feedback from OSS who attend the training is extremely positive;

"Very informative about the role and helped me see that I want to train as a practice educator in the future, now I know about the role of the Onsite Supervisor"



"I attended this training as I am interested in eventually doing the PE course. The course helped me gain a better understanding of the expectations around supervising students, in addition to being able to think/reflect on my own knowledge and skills that I can support the student with"

- A 'PE Refresher' course was held in November 2022 and 'Becoming a Practice Assessor' training sessions were also held in October 2022, December 2022 and again in February 2023.
- A virtual PE conference was held in May 2022, with a full programme of events running across the week. A full day, face to face conference is planned for 5th July 2023 at Kingston University;
- Further resources for PEs are available on the website, including the PCF Toolkit (this page alone averaged 319 visits per month over the year) 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' (last updated August 2020) and despite this definition being quite prescriptive, we have seen increases in the proportion of students receiving statutory placements since the inception of the TP;
- The strategic approach to placement allocation, agreed in 2019 by members of the TP, continues to be reviewed annually. The Placement Allocation 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.
- The Placement Allocation Strategy was last reviewed in Spring'21 and at the time of writing, is in the process of being updated again by the university to reflect recommendations by Social Work England that individual placements should be audited by the university, prior to placement allocation.
- An updated Placement Allocation and PEPS Timeline for 2023-24 academic year was updated by the TP and the university and shared with all partners after the last Pre-Qualifying Alliance meeting in May 2023;
- The Pre-Placement Meeting Guidance was also updated in March 2023 and shared with partners at the last Pre-Pre-Qualifying Alliance meeting in May 2023 for agreement. A prompt was added regarding full time working for students whilst on placement, as it was reported by one partner that a placement had broken down due to a student working full time. A prompt was also added to include any conflicts of interest the student might have within the placement Local Authority, as well as whether they would like to



disclose any medical conditions, or personal circumstances that may affect their placement experience. This guidance was originally developed for PEs in response to feedback from Kingston University, that students had on occasion, reported that they felt as though the format of the pre-placement meeting could at times feel very formal and slightly intimidating;

- Taking on feedback from partners at the PQ development day in April 2022, one cohort of PEPs 1 and 2 will now have occurrences starting in September instead of May, to better align with LA appraisal cycles. It is hoped that this will better support practitioners to complete the PEPS course as part of their ongoing development and also enhance their local authority offer of placements;
- On the whole, 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. Partners are reminded that non-attendance at these meetings, even if just one agency, does make them considerably less effective;
- In Autumn 2020, the student internship scheme was introduced, where students apply to have both placements with the same local authority at the start of their course and are guaranteed an NQSW interview once they have completed their studies. This initiative continues to be strengthened. More details about this initiative can be found in [2.3 Recruitment](#);
- The TP continues to facilitate the Peer QA Panel, alongside Kingston University, which seeks to review and quality assure PE student placement reports. This was initially in pilot stages, however the pilot has now concluded, and we have agreed the final version of the moderation review form and the annual schedule for panels (roughly November, February/March, June. Representatives from most partner agencies now take part in these panels;
- The Peer QA panel members discuss and review an anonymised sample of 10% of both Midway and End of Placement Reports (EPR), as well as all fails and borderlines. The peer reviews provide balanced, considered, constructive and timely feedback to workforce development (WFD) leads about the quality of reports completed, with the aim to improve a benchmark quality standard for reports across the board. Feedback is also shared by WFD Leads directly with individual PEs/OSS and a summary report is shared partnership wide in the newsletter and on the TP website. Learnings are also incorporated into university Practice Learning workshops, PEPS courses and Teaching Partnership Practice Education workshops.

Impact/likely impact includes:



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

"Thank you for the workshop. The facilitator was brilliant as she took her time to explain things. Her voice was worth listening to and it was delivered well. Breaking into rooms and discussing questions was helpful as i got to know about other people's experiences"

"It was a really useful and interesting session and by discussing practice and looking at the alternative approaches helps to ensure that the practice is systematic yet reflects the needs of students and the strengths of PE's"

"I now have a clearer plan as to how to use PCFs, KSS and SWE standards throughout the student assessment (in supervision etc) and report writing"

"This training was extremely helpful to me as I need to complete my direct observation and midway report imminently and was feeling very nervous. This workshop has helped to calm the anxieties a bit"

- Feedback from the stakeholder survey also suggests that through the collaborative approach of the partnership, PEs feel better supported in terms of their access to high quality support:

"I am just completing my PEPS 2 course and can see how valuable the sessions that are being delivered by the TP to support PE's and support learning and development in this area."

- 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:

"The strategy has worked well, and there is a positive environment in which difficulties and can discussed and resolutions found"

"There is a strong working placement allocation process that provides a good experiences for all those involved."

- However, there are, on occasion, challenges in finding placements for students, which highlights that there is still more work to be done in terms of stabilising the number of available placements. This is not a challenge that is unique to our TP; the majority of other TPs across the



country face very similar challenges (as was addressed at the National PE Consultation & Strategy Roundtable event hosted by the TP, [\(see 2.5 income generation for more information\)](#)). To address this, we have been exploring the feasibility of a 'Fair Share' placement allocation model, which is already being successfully used in other health and social care courses. The premise of this model is that placements are provided proportionately, based on the size of the placement local authority. There are clear advantages of this model, as it ensures placement provision is shared 'fairly' across the Partnership, gives the university and placement providers a clear view of the year ahead, allowing for more efficient placement planning, as well as allowing placement providers to benchmark their provision of practice learning (and supporting the future workforce) relative to workforce capacity. There are limitations however, as this model fails to account for LAs prior placement commitments with other HEIs, or for the reality of the number of actual trained PEs in placement provider agency;

- In depth discussions have been had regarding this 'Fair Share' model at each board meeting across the partnership and general feedback to date is that, whilst it is helpful to have an 'indicative' number of placements that should be supplied by organisation as a target to aim for, the model does not take into account the various other limitations at play, such as lack of available and willing PEs, as well as other commitments that compete for placements. We will continue to share the 'fair share' number when seeking placement provider placement projections for each academic year and it is hoped that this will still be a useful 'target' number for partners and will support the university to foresee where there will be a shortfall;
- In the 2023 Stakeholder Survey, partners were asked what more could be done to support/enable them to offer more placements. This elicited various responses; 40% of respondents cited more access to offsite PEs, 55% cited a reduction in workload for frontline staff and 22% stated that more OSS would support them to offer placements, alongside an Offsite PE. This information is incredibly valuable, as it demonstrates what more can be done to help improve placement capacity and clarifies that the work that is already being done is definitely serving to support partners with offering placements, namely the continuation of the offer of the TP Practice Consultants to act as Offsite PE (where capacity allows) alongside university Offsite PE's, as well as the continuation and ongoing promotion of the OSS programme run by the university;
- The aim of the Placements Peer QA is to provide a forum through which key stakeholders can peer review placement reports, which will lead to both individual and organisational feedback for PEs, OSSs and tutors. Following the panel meetings, feedback is shared directly with PEs, OSSs and organisations, as well as an overall 'learnings summary' document produced following each panel,



which is then circulated across the partnership. Example summary of learnings can be found [here](#). These learnings are also used to influence the PEPS curriculum, the university Practice Learning Workshops, as well as the TP's Practice Education Workshops. It is hoped that a combination of these elements 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 and contribute to their own professional development. Highlighting examples of good practice could also promote the dissemination of those standards within an organisation;

- The Quality Assurance of Practice Learning report from 2021/22 found that 93% of students were satisfied with the allocation process and overall, most students felt their placements were satisfactory to excellent with only a minority (7%) rating it as 'less than satisfactory' or 'poor / not very good. 97% students reported their learning needs were mostly or fully met, with only a minority (3%) reporting learning needs met were satisfactory, with none reporting learning as not met. Despite the challenges of Covid-19 and the post pandemic working environment, students predominantly rated their learning opportunities on placement highly (94%) and felt that their placements had included opportunities to develop their social work skills, knowledge and values and had assisted them to integrate theory and practice. There was a minority (6%) where students wanted more support in developing resilience and self-care, reflection and integrating theory to practice;
- A combination of activities relating to Placements and Practice Education, such as the OSS Programme, PE Workshops and Placement Allocation Strategy & Timeline, have improved the quality of placements for students and therefore increased the statutory placement provision within the TP over time.

| Measure | 2017-18 (Baseline) | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| % of (statutory) annual placements provided by TP agencies | Unknown | 47% | 68% | 80% | 73% | 69% |
| % of students on BA programme who have 2 'statutory' placements | Unknown | 22% | 48% | 86% | 69% | 60% |
| % of students on MSW | Unknown | 85% | 71% | 100% | 92% | 54% |



| | | | | | | |
|--|---------|-----|-----|------|------|-----|
| programme who have 2 'statutory' placements | n | | | | | |
| % of BA students who receive a final statutory placement | Unknown | 83% | 91% | 93% | 79% | 79% |
| % of MSW students who receive a final statutory placement | Unknown | 90% | 87% | 100% | 92% | 79% |
| % of independent PEs used annually** | 3% | 8% | 5% | 4% | 7.8% | 13% |
| No. of PEs/OSSs attending training/event/workshop/conference | Unknown | 120 | 96 | 116 | 158 | 115 |

*Providing current 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, although this is still well above the target set by the DfE. This is partly due to the increased use of OSS and use of the TP's Practice Consultants as PEs, which we categorise as 'independent' due to them being 'offsite'.

2.3 Recruitment

Objectives for 2022-24:

- Sufficient local talent to fill experienced/leadership roles within the TP
- Strategies for recruiting good social workers are increasingly joined up
- A reliable pipeline of NQSWs from KU into partner agencies
- Students and practitioners have a better attachment to local employers
- The region is a desirable place to work for NQSWs/experienced social workers
- The region 'role models' equality, diversity, inclusion, trauma informed practice and wellbeing

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:

- In 2021, a subgroup of the TP - AfC, Sutton Children and Kingston University - was successful in its application to the DfE to form a new Regional Step Up to Social Work Partnership (RP) and deliver Cohort 7 of the national programme. This allows graduates with a good undergraduate 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 in an unqualified role can apply, as well as external candidates. We successfully recruited 9 individuals to complete the Step Up programme, who commenced their study at Kingston University on 4th January 2022 and completed x2 contrasting placements at their local authority of choice; London Borough of Sutton, or Achieving for Children Richmond & Kingston, or Windsor & Maidenhead. The programme for cohort 7 completed in March 2023, with all 8 students graduating and receiving NQSW posts on ASYE programmes at their chosen local authority;
- In December 2022, we submitted a successful application to deliver Cohort 8 of Step Up to Social Work. 4 additional Teaching Partnership local authority partners have now joined the Step Up Regional Partnership, who were previously within another Regional partnership, with a different HEI provider. The Step Up to Social Work Programme for Cohort 8 will consist of 6 partner agencies - AFC, Sutton Children, Merton Children, Croydon Children, Wandsworth Children and Surrey Children. This inclusion of additional local authorities has greatly increased the capacity of available student spaces on the course, from 12 in Cohort 7, to 40 for Cohort 8. Work has already completed on sifting of the candidate applications, with 47 candidates being taken through to the assessment centre dates in June 2023. Assessments will take place face to face at Kingston University, with some elements being held online. Successful applicants will begin the course in January 2024;
- 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 the first two years of the scheme, 5 MSW students have been successful at acquiring internship positions. The scheme was also offered to BA students in 2021 however did not prove as popular. Feedback from these students was taken on



board (timing of the scheme and additional information required) for 2022 and the scheme was offered to MSW students again in Autumn 2022 with additional sessions being organised with representatives from agencies offering spaces, in order to provide more information to students. The agencies offering spaces were Achieving for Children, Sutton Children, Kingston Adults, Merton Children and Wandsworth Children. 8 applications were received, of which, 7 were successful across Achieving for Children, Kingston Adults and Wandsworth Children. The scheme has also been offered to BA students, with an initial presentation delivered to students in March 2023, and spaces being offered by Achieving for Children, Kingston Adults and Wandsworth Children. The applications open in May 2023 and will close in June 2023;

- The Social Work (Integrated Degree) Apprenticeship was launched in 2020 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 has since recruited 60 to their programme in 2020 and 25 in 2021 from 18 local authorities (LAs) in London. In 2022, the programme recruited 46 and the aim for 2023/24 is 60. In 2022, the programme was inspected by Ofsted and the university received verbal feedback that this particular programme met the 'outstanding' criteria. In this inspection, only two apprenticeship programmes at Kingston University were singled out as performing very well and rated as 'outstanding'.
- We have started to gather more intelligence on employment within our TP by entry route, to ascertain where NQSWs are coming from prior to starting their ASYE programmes at partner organisations. Based on received data from 7 agencies, 38.9% of NQSWs in 2020-21 came from Kingston University. We expect this figure to increase now that we have delivered the Step Up to Social Work programme for the first time for Cohort 7 and will be again delivering it in 2024, with a total of 4 additional TP local authority partners on board, who previously were with another Step Up regional partnership and HEI;
- A new Careers Fair, planned collaboratively with the BA and MSW course leaders to maximise student attendance, was held in April 2022. All but two of the primary partner local authorities sent representatives, who each had a stall and provided details of upcoming NQSW vacancies to students as well as information about working for their respective local authorities, including CPD offers. The TP had its own stall, promoting the benefits of working within our region for a primary partner agency and providing all final year students with a goody bag



and an information pack to support their preparation for NQSW interview. This was again held in April 2023 and will be made an annual occurrence. Based on discussions with the BA and MSW course leads, the Careers Fair will be timetabled in further ahead of time going forward, in order to gain maximum attendance from final year students;

- It is likely that the Employability Skills Workshops, Teaching Consultant involvement and increased statutory placements have 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 Career Pathways & CPD Framework and the Early Professional Development (EPD) Framework developed and launched in 2021 may also contribute to an improved attachment of students/practitioners to local employers (more details in [2.4 Retention and Workforce Development](#));
- Despite progress made to date, and impacts illustrated in the above narrative and summary table 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 potential need for a local talent pool for more experienced roles has not yet been explored. A review of partner agency recruitment adverts demonstrates an inconsistency in approach, with only two agencies (Merton Adults and AfC) referencing membership of the TP and what benefits that brings for prospective social work employees;
- However, we have been able to progress a key piece of work - development to the TP website that enabled us to display live vacancies from our primary partner agencies. This relied on XML feeds from partner agencies being supplied, in order for this not to be a manual process, and the vast majority of agencies were able to provide this;
- We have also worked with London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) on their pan-London microsite for Children's social workers, including writing the landing page for the Social Work Teaching Partnership section. This microsite aims to raise the profile of Children's social work in London and make it even easier for graduates and social workers to apply for jobs;
- We have also begun scoping plans for a TP initiative to increase the pipeline of local Sixth Form and College students into Kingston University Social Work qualifying programmes. This will likely involve 'roadshows' to local Sixth Form and College students whereby local authority partners and the HEI provide information on what it is like to train and work as a social worker within our partnership;



Impact/likely impact includes:

- All of the pilot MSW interns were successful in their NQSW interviews with the local authorities that provided their internship. The following cohort of MSW interns are in the process of interview, and the newest cohort beginning placements in May '23. Ongoing retention will be tracked over the coming years;
- All 8 individuals who completed the Step Up to Social Work programme for Cohort 7 in March 2023, completed an interview at the end of their 14 month programme and were each successful in their applications to ASYE programmes within either AfC or LBS. We are hopeful that this will also be reflected in student outcomes for Cohort 8 of the programme, who will graduate in March 2025. This initiative seeks to improve retention within partner agencies, given that the candidates on the programme already work and live in the region and will have completed both placements within their chosen local authority, and will therefore be less likely to relocate or seek alternative employment; This programme also supports our partnership objectives to improve the pipeline of social work graduates from Kingston University into partner organisations.
- It is anticipated that ongoing 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](#)). However, this is dependent on partner agencies actively promoting these initiatives as reasons to work for them in their recruitment adverts;
- It is also hoped that better general promotion of job vacancies, through avenues such as the TP website and the pan-London microsite for Children's social workers, will enhance recruitment efforts across the board;
- It is hoped that the initiative of 'roadshows' to visit local Sixth Forms and colleges, will increase the pipeline of local students into Kingston University Social Work qualifying programmes and ultimately, into partner organisations.

2.4 Retention and Workforce Development

Objectives for 2022-24:



- Improve the retention of social workers within partner agencies
- Social workers have a clear career pathway to progress with the appropriate CPD opportunities to support their progression and these can be articulated to practitioners by WFD and/or line managers
- Social workers receive an increased volume and improved quality of CPD opportunities, including specialist subject support and opportunities to consolidate their knowledge and skills
- The CPD offer is increasingly joined up and coordinated across partners
- Those on the ASYE are better supported
- Improved level of support & consolidation of learning in years 2-3 post qualifying
- Social workers have opportunities for project work to build on existing achievements and encourage a culture of organisational learning
- Social workers have the necessary skills to maintain / look after their wellbeing
- Social workers have access to leadership and management development opportunities
- The region is a desirable place to work for NQSWs/experienced social workers
- The region 'role models' equality, diversity, inclusion, trauma informed practice and wellbeing

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 offered to Teaching Consultants in [2.1 Admissions and Curriculum](#);
- [The Early Professional Development \(EPD\) Framework](#), launched in June 2021, dovetails the overarching Career Pathways and CPD framework and is now in its second year of running. The framework was created in collaboration with all primary partner agencies and took into account learnings from the [DfE's pilot Early Professional Development programme \(2009-2011\)](#), as well as the [DfE longitudinal study](#), which identified a high dropout rate of social workers within 2-3 years post qualifying, a finding which was corroborated by our own workforce analysis. The EPD framework comes into effect at the end of the ASYE and aims to support practitioners in these crucial early years of their career, alleviating the metaphorical 'cliff edge' post ASYE that is often referred to within the sector. The framework provides EPD social workers with the support and opportunities they need to develop as practitioners in the coming years and 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. Examples of 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. For a list of the full training provision, see Appendix 3. The full 'Early Professional Development Framework Handbook' can also be viewed. This was produced and circulated to all those identified as managers of EPD social workers, as well as the EPD social workers, as they approached the end of their ASYE programme in Summer 2022;

- Associated challenges with the framework have continued to be around poor attendance of EPD social workers on the core training provision. On occasion, sessions have had extremely high no-show rates, with less than 40% of those who are scheduled to attend actually attending the training, which impacts the experience of those attending and ends up being less cost effective for sessions that are paid for. This will be highlighted to partner representatives and actions agreed to mitigate the attendance issues for the 2023-24 cycle. Despite the issues relating to attendance, feedback from those who have attended the EPD sessions so far has been overwhelmingly positive;

"I will utilise the resources that have been shared to allow me to complete good direct work with young people and prepare them well for the transition to adulthood. It has also helped me think about the variety of transitional periods children go through from birth to adulthood and to adapt the knowledge we gained in this training to use in those instances too."

"I always work with children and families in a strength-based way. Following this training my awareness to understand culture and identity is expanded to improve my way of working."

"It has helped me break down how I might approach building and implementing a project on a smaller team scale or organisation wide."

- A Kingston University 'PQ Development Day' took place at the end of April 2022, to assess partner employers' post-qualifying needs and offer them the opportunity to contribute to the restructure of KU's post qualifying offer for social work, ensuring that the revised offer



would meet the needs of employers. Since then, new additional PQ modules that were popular suggestions have been progressed and information shared with partners. These include; Safeguarding across the life course, Trauma Informed Practice across the life course and Strengths-based approaches across the life course. All three modules will follow the format discussed at the PQ Development Day, with 5 days of teaching and a blended approach to learning, with all students attending Days 1, 2 and 5 on campus. Days 3 and 4 will be delivered online, and students will be able to take the option to explore a child or adult-specific topic, then return to the wider group on day 5 to share their learning and present ideas for formative feedback on assignment plans. This fosters multi-disciplinary learning and helps to build positive relationships, reflecting the recommendations from Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Safeguarding Practice Reviews for Children. Once appetite has been confirmed for these modules, the University will begin the development of these, ready for the next academic year. An outline of these modules can be found [here](#);

- Given the latest government announcement that the new AMCP role will no longer be going ahead, the university will also be delivering BIA refresher courses, as well as running the [BIA module](#) again;
- A fourth cohort of our popular, formally CPD accredited Early Career Managers' Programme was planned in January 2023 and is currently being delivered, to a further 25 practitioners from across the partnership. To date, 72 managers with 0-18 month experience in the role have been trained since the creation of the programme. Feedback continues to be excellent, with 100% of those attending stating that they would recommend the programme. A fifth cohort will likely be planned for 2023-24, given that we had two new primary partners onboard in 2022 (Merton Children and Wandsworth Children) and a further two new partners onboard from April 2023, who were not all able to send practitioners on the fourth cohort due to timings. Taking on board anecdotal feedback from the current cohort regarding long days online and Zoom fatigue, it is likely that more of the sessions will be planned as in person sessions;
- This programme previously interested another SWTP covering Cheshire & Merseyside who decided to commission our TP to deliver the programme for them in March 2021, generating an income for the TP. We are currently in discussion with some other external local authorities about running the programme for them in 2023-24;
- The TP has continued to maintain course accreditation with the CPD Standards Office for four courses in total: the 'Strengths Based Approach' programme, the 2-day 'Knowledge and Skills for ASYE Assessor', the Early Career Managers programme and 'Enabling



Reflective Practice';

- The programme of workshops developed for ASYE Assessors in 2019-20 was adapted into a 2 day training course in 2020-21 (in response to feedback from partners), and covers topics such as; supervision skills, direct observation, wellbeing and the KSS. With bookings and attendance for this session being very low (only 4 practitioners attending), and the collaborative session for Croydon Adults ASYE Assessors in March 2022 being very successful in person, it was decided that future occurrences will be available upon request only to minimise any inefficiencies. In addition, these would be better to be delivered in person in conjunction with the agencies' ASYE Leads, to ensure that their individual processes are also covered;
- A Partnership ASYE working group was established in April 2022, partly due to the ASYE changes and refresh imposed by Skills For Care, which meant that all local authorities in both children's and adults services would need to be aligned in their ASYE framework, including using the same Skills For Care paperwork and assessment tools. It was therefore agreed that all partners would send across their ASYE handbooks, as well as any guidance that they currently had in place for NQSWs and ASYE assessors, in an attempt to better align the ASYE programmes of all partners, ensuring that we are delivering a more consistent experience for all NQSWs within each organisation across the TP and adhering to the Skills For Care guidance. A TP working group was therefore established, with representatives from each organisation attending to partake in discussions on the possibility of aligning organisation's NQSW handbooks and guidance for ASYE assessors into a uniform, TP wide resource. The result of these meetings was that an ASYE handbook for ASYE assessors and a guide for NQSW was produced. The guide for assessors is intended to be used as a full guide, whereas the guidance for NQSW was intended to be slotted into existing NQSW handbooks, taking on feedback that the NQSW handbooks would need to be different by agency, in order to account for various other organisational policies that would need to be incorporated, and that these would vary greatly by partner. These guides were both reviewed and approved by Skills For Care and then distributed across the partnership for wider use within each organisation going forward;
- Over 80 events and training sessions were delivered, commissioned or coordinated by the TP throughout 2022-23, informed by practice and workforce development needs. Topics included; CPD Peer Reflection Sessions, ASYE Assessor Training, Courtroom Skills - Court of Protection and Coroners Court, Trauma Informed Practice and Wellbeing: Self Care is Vital. For full details of the 2022-23 provision, please see our Annual L&D Report;



- The Teaching Partnership continues to be actively committed to developing a trauma-informed workforce across our Teaching Partnership. In 2021/22, we secured additional government funding, with the objective being to set up the infrastructure to enable us to roll out core Trauma Informed Practice training at Level 1, 'Trauma Aware' to all qualified social workers within our Teaching Partnership through a train the trainer model. This successful 2021 Continuous Improvement Project enabled us to initially upskill 15 Trainers to roll out Trauma Informed Practice Training across the Teaching Partnership, and we continue to organise the ongoing delivery and rollout of this training, including delivering a second and third train the trainer programme in May 2022 and again in February 2023, to upskill more facilitators to deliver to more social workers across the partnership. To date, nearly 300 practitioners have completed this training and a further 6 facilitators have been upskilled to deliver the training. We have 13 further cohorts planned to deliver this training to 260 practitioners in the next 7 months. We are currently evaluating the programme to date and will be planning some sessions face to face for 2024, taking on board feedback from some participants and facilitators that they would value these sessions in person;
- Some of the CPD provision is offered through the joint CPD Passport Scheme. For the most part, these offers have come from two partner agencies, AfC and Sutton. However, since coming on board as primary partners, Wandsworth Children have offered spaces on a number of sessions on an ad hoc basis, though they plan to do so more in advance for the 23-34 CPD Cycle;
- London Borough of Sutton continued to offer 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. Due to an error in categorisation, it was not possible to identify just TP completion of these sessions. However, this has been addressed for the 23-24 CPD Cycle;
- A skills gap analysis was conducted in January 2023 in response to requests from partners to better understand more about the learning and development needs of practitioners across the TP and to support the commissioning of the TP CPD provision. A survey was shared across all individuals across the partnership who had consented to be contacted about CPD, and was also disseminated by partner representatives. Unfortunately, responses were limited (only 21), though there were some topics raised that were not already part of the TP offer that informed the CPD offer for 2023-24. For example: Court of Protection, provision for more experienced managers and working with Learning Disabilities/Autism. These were discussed with CPD/Workforce leads from partner agencies for their agreement before including in the offer;



- An annual CPD meeting was held in January 2023 with primary partner Learning and Development representatives/ Workforce leads ahead of the planning for the 2023-24 TP CPD cycle. We will continue to hold this each year and it is hoped that this will be helpful in streamlining the TP offer, as well as addressing shared gaps in provision more effectively;
- The TP team attended partner ASYE inductions throughout 2022, whereby we presented information about the TP and the CPD & support available to them in their ASYE and onwards. These included an interactive reflective session facilitated by our TP Practice Consultant;
- The Black Lives Matter & The Voice of Social Work Discussion Groups continued to take place, though at a more frequent interval of every 6 weeks compared to every other month previously. The aim was to allow more opportunities for staff from different agencies to come together and discuss a specific topic related to anti-racist practice. These have continued to prove popular amongst practitioners, offering black colleagues across the TP the opportunity to lead and co-facilitate some of these sessions. We now have a dedicated group of facilitators based in various employer partner agencies. Attendance at these sessions unfortunately declined over the year, so the frequency will return to every other month and measures will be taken to facilitate easier attendance at these groups. Based on feedback from the co-facilitators' group, the name of the group will be changed to 'The Black Voice of Social Work Discussion Group' to hopefully make it more appealing to colleagues to attend, and also indicating that this group is more than a response to the murder of George Floyd, and that the work on anti-racism should continue and be embedded. Additionally, communications will be adapted to ensure that colleagues from all backgrounds are encouraged to attend. Examples of topics covered in sessions to date include:
 - Adultification of Black Children;
 - On Being Dual Heritage and Being 'Cared' For
 - Is it Mental Health or Cultural?
- The TP Team has continued to host 'Celebrating Black Voices' in May and October 2022. The timings have been kept to commemorate the anniversary of George Floyd's murder, and also to honour Black History Month. These events aim to be a space for the celebration of black voices. The May '22 event aimed to focus on local black voices in the community and celebrate their achievements, and featured a presentation from Mana from the Kingston People with Lived Experience (PLE) Group around her personal and professional experiences of being Black in care.



Attendees reflected on the importance of representation and understanding and appreciating identity. The October '22 event showcased some of the work that colleagues within the partnership have been doing to be more inclusive. In addition to hearing presentations from speakers, these events have been a reflective space, where colleagues could come and listen, or actively participate by sharing their thoughts and experiences. This was supported by a rolling slideshow montage of powerful quotes and videos from prominent black voices. Both events were very well attended and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. To read the full write ups of the two events and access the montages and other resources shared, please click [here](#) (May '22) and [here](#) (Oct '22);

- The TP circulated and created a new 'PE data capture form' to record the location and statuses of PEs across the partnership and included space to capture the diversity of practice educators within this. This was partly down to a DfE KPI to better report on the location and status of PEs within the partnership, and partly to ensure that there is a diverse representation of Practice Educators across Teaching Partnership organisations. Whilst initial requests for this data produced very minimal responses, at the time of writing the form has received significantly more responses (93) thanks to a further request in May 2023, and so this can now be analysed for 2023-24. If there is seen to be a clear lack of diverse representation, we would like to explore further what the barriers are for some to becoming PEs and if there are any contributing factors, e.g. inequity of CPD/sponsorship opportunities;
- Taking on board feedback from the May 2022 TP Visioning day that more could be done to collectively join up and strengthen EDI efforts across the partnership, a Cross-TP Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group was established, made up of leads from respective agencies' EDI/WREN groups. 2 meetings have been held to date and Terms of Reference for this group can be viewed [here](#). The aim for 2023-24 is to increase the number of representatives, aiming for one from each partner agency, in order to work as collaboratively as possible on EDI initiatives;
- The TP also finalised data collection on the diversity of the final year cohort from Kingston University in Academic year 2021-22 which evidenced an improvement from Academic year 2020-21. 46.5% of the final year student cohort were from a minority ethnic group and 16% of the final year student cohort were male, 82% were female and 2% other. This demonstrates a 4.74% increase from AY 2020-21 in the proportion of students who were from a minority ethnic group and a 1.71% increase in the proportion who were male;
- The TP's focus on supporting practitioner wellbeing and emotional resilience has continued. In November 2022, we hosted our annual 'Emotional Resilience & Wellbeing in Social Work Conference'. This



event was well attended, with over 40 social workers in attendance. This half day event was for all social workers across the partnership and included interactive workshops and speakers, as well as providing 'goody' bags provided for all attendees. The conference was opened with a keynote from Inside Out Well-being on 'Bringing Your Whole (Authentic) Self to Work'. Colleagues then had the opportunity to attend workshops on 'The Importance of Humour in Social Work' led by TP Lead Practice Consultant, Sharon Evans; Guided Meditation, led by Sarah Jane Dennis, Crystal Healer, Reiki Healer, and Teacher; and Compassion Fatigue (and how to avoid it) led by Sue Connell, ASYE Manager, Senior Lecturer, Teaching Consultant & Sub Regional Assessor within Wandsworth Children. Following these workshops, colleagues came back together for a creative activity, led by Sue Lansley, Senior Lecturer at Kingston University to create some appreciation or gratitude cards for themselves or to give to others. The feedback from the event was very positive, with attendees agreeing it had been a much-needed event to remind themselves of prioritising wellbeing, and how to be their authentic selves;

- Wellbeing is an essential element, integrated throughout the TP's CPD provision. For example, the ASYE Assessor Training has a session dedicated to supporting the wellbeing and resilience of NQSWs, the elearning modules created for NQSWs as part of last year's Social Worker Wellbeing bid, and the Early Career Managers' Programme includes a day focusing on managers' own wellbeing and building resilient teams;
- 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 [2.6 Identity and Brand](#) for more information;
- In September 2021 Sharon Evans, TP Practice Consultant, established the [Monthly Research Hub](#), with the aim of helping social workers from across the partnership to become more confident in critiquing, applying and getting involved in research. These hubs have continued to be popular throughout 2022. In the future, there's potential for practitioners to be inspired to undertake a piece of their own research, and the Research Strategy Group will consider how best the TP/Employers/KU can support practitioners wishing to do this. Sharon has successfully applied to share a Poster Presentation at the BASW Conference in June 2023, with the title "How The Developing Together Social Work Teaching Partnership Grew the Research Hub across the Partnership";
- As part of Social Work Week, the TP hosted its second 'Think Family' Conference in March 2023, which was published as part of Social Work England's [programme of events](#). The focus was on Trauma Throughout the Life Course and being trauma informed in practice.



The event opened with a keynote by Kati Taunt on making sense of behaviour as survival adaptations, and included discussion activities around the impact of Trauma Informed Practice on People with Lived Experience, an afternoon keynote on 'Cultural competency? A reflective look at how social care intervention can either be traumatic or enhance families' futures' and, ended with a creative poster activity. The event was well attended by 42 practitioners from both across the partnership and outside of the partnership;

- The TP held its third annual social work Celebration Event and Awards Ceremony in December 2022. The event celebrated the achievements of qualified social workers and social work students from across the Partnership, and promoted the brilliant work of those in the social work profession. We first listened to inspirational social work stories from social workers across the partnership, watched an uplifting montage, before finishing with an awards ceremony that recognised achievements and the dedication and hard work of social workers from across the breadth of the partnership. All award nominations were sent to a shortlisting team in advance, made up of People with Lived Experience, Workforce Development Leads, Principal Social Workers and University Academics who whittled them down to 9 Winners, 6 shortlisted and 6 special mentions across 10 categories. These individuals were then presented with their 'award' by members of the Strategic Board and this was then followed up with an official certificate and voucher prize after the event. The event was well attended by both practitioners and students and we were inundated with positive feedback after the event. We will again be running a similar event in December 2023 and if resources allow, will consider running this in person for the first time.
- In March 2023, the TP submitted a partnership bid application (Children's Primary Partner's only) to become Early Adopters of the DfE Pilot Early Career Framework, and in May 2023, we were informed that we were successful in this application. Work is currently underway, securing partner representation at the various initial information workshops planned by the DfE across June-September 2023. This initiative will secure significant income across the Teaching Partnership, with up to £50,000 of grant funding awarded for each Early Adopter LA in the first year, in line with the engagement requirements of the programme. More information about the pilot can be read [here](#).

Impact/likely impact includes:

- Feedback about the CPD offer and the general efforts coordinated by the TP central team from the Stakeholder Survey was extremely positive:



"Overall the TP is a fantastic asset to the University and all our partner agencies. The central team is able to coordinate timely and measured responses to the needs of our social work workforce and as such the strengths of our TP has been recognised by the DfE. Good partnership working comes from strong relationships and good communication and this has developed as the Partnership has grown and continues to grow. Going forward it is imperative that as many of our social work workforce and students are aware of the TP and the benefits it can bring to their professional development. This can only be done by people sharing and communicating about the TP on all platforms and is the responsibility of all that are involved."

- Practitioners also continue to value the benefit of our training with individuals from other organisations, evidenced in the stakeholder survey:

"Thank you for the workshop. The facilitator was brilliant as she took her time to explain things. Her voice was worth listening to and it was delivered well. Breaking into rooms and discussing questions were helpful as I got to know about other people's experiences"

- In January 2023, the TP designed and circulated a post-training online impact evaluation to those who had attended previous, earlier cohorts of the Trauma Informed Practice training, to ascertain how they had been using the knowledge they had gained from attending the training, and how they felt it had benefited them, and those they work with and support. Responses were very positive. When asked 'Do you agree that attending the training has had a positive impact on your everyday social work practice?', 95% of respondents reported 'yes'. When asked, 'How has attending this training impacted on your colleagues / team / service?' Responses included examples such as:

"I shared with the team what I had learnt. I reflected on it during my re-registration with SWE using it to reflect on a case that was discussed as a team and how applying trauma informed principles had helped me appreciate the complexity of the issues that we identified in that particular case"

"I provided feedback to my team manager on how I experience the application of it in a safeguarding meeting that we conducted together where she was the chair and I was the enquiry officer"

"I am a Service Manager so it has changed how I respond to my team, the language I use and what next steps I take"



"The training is discussed when I supervise my colleagues and I encourage them to attend the training to develop their skills"

- Ongoing feedback from the Trauma Informed Practice sessions continues to be very positive, with responses in the stakeholder survey also addressing the benefits of the provision:

" I attended a training by the TP on trauma informed practice, this was a really helpful training, and fantastic opportunity to bring people together to share practice, and to learn"

- 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;
- The EPD Framework focus groups with both year 2 and 3 EPD social workers in June 2022 were not well attended, with only a couple of social workers attending. However, their comments were overwhelmingly positive, saying that all of the sessions they attended were helpful and supported their development in the early stages of their careers. In the longer term, the full benefit and impact of the EPD framework will be made apparent through improvement in the retention of those social workers who have completed the full 2 year programme of the framework. Ultimately, we hope to improve retention rates of EPD social workers, reducing the number of leavers within two-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;
- Effective supervision 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 Early Career Manager's programme developed collaboratively across the TP, aims to give managers the skills they need to support the practitioners in their teams;
- Linked to the retention of NQSW is the development of the ASYE Assessors who are supporting and evaluating them, to ensure that they are able to fulfil the requirements of the role. Ensuring that ASYE Assessors have received appropriate training and guidance, will be paramount to the successes of the ASYE programme, as well as the retention of NQSWs. It is therefore hoped that ongoing use of the ASYE training provision, now delivered in house to partner



organisations upon request, as well as the use of the ASYE assessor guide and NQSW handbook developed by the TP, will support this;

- The feedback from the Emotional Resilience and Wellbeing Conference was very positive, with 88% of attendees saying that it 'fully' or 'exceeded' expectations, and attendees agreeing it had been a much-needed event to remind themselves of prioritising wellbeing, and how to be their authentic selves. When asked in the evaluation, 'what key learning have you taken away from the conference today?' Respondents said: *'How positive being my authentic self is and how others see me is how I see myself. Compassion fatigue is real. I will bring laughter yoga to my away day'* and *'Having a mission statement for my life - The power of humour in the helping profession'*.
- It is anticipated that ultimately, all efforts that have been made to support social worker wellbeing and highlight the importance of self care will contribute to staff retention in the longer term. It is however recognised that there are many contributing and deeper organisational factors that contribute to social worker wellbeing and their desire to stay in the profession, which are difficult to influence.
- Feedback from the Think Family Conference, 'Trauma Throughout the Lifecourse' was very positive, with 85% of those who completed the evaluations saying their expectations had been 'fully' met or 'exceeded'. Some comments from attendees include:

"Absolutely wonderful experience. Thank you! There is a lot of TiP resources 'out there' but this has been the most helpful + engaging for me!"

"We connect to survive, we co-regulate each other, trauma is like a bruise, it doesn't hurt until it is banged. Helped me so much to think about I must be aware of myself, where I come from when working with families. Make sense of behaviour rather than just trying to stop it"

- The development of the research hub is a positive outlet for social workers to network with colleagues from other organisations, whilst giving them the opportunity to challenge their professional curiosity and develop their skill sets. Feedback from the hubs so far has demonstrated that social workers value this opportunity and all who completed the evaluation stated that they felt more confident in critiquing research after attending the hub;
- Social work as a profession is scarcely praised and often overlooked for commendations in favour of other frontline service roles. The annual Social Work awards ceremony is therefore an opportunity to celebrate the many achievements of practitioners from across the partnership and the impact of this on those who attended was apparent, as feedback demonstrated;

"This event has made me feel that all I have achieved alongside



colleagues has been needed, and I will continue to attempt to help make lives better"

2.5 Income Generation

Objectives from 2020-24 Business Plan:

- Seek out further opportunities for generating an income, through;
 - Responding to invitations to tender (ITTs) released within the sector
 - External consultancy work for the DfE, other Teaching Partnerships and external organisations
 - Internal consultancy work for partner agencies
 - Selling courses and events externally

Activities to date:

Continuous Improvement Fund Projects

- In August 2022, the TP again received an offer from the DfE to submit bids for their annual Continuous Improvement Fund. The total fund was open to all Teaching Partnerships in the national network (27 in total). The criteria was that any TP could submit multiple bids, with a maximum value of £50k per bid. The DfE received 100 bids from Teaching Partnerships in total and approved 40 of these. The total value that was awarded was just over £1 million and the DTSWTP were awarded £100,642 of this across 3 successful bids, equivalent to around 10% of the total fund available;
- There was a very tight turnaround, from the point of application criteria being released by the DfE (6th June 2022) and the deadline for applications to be submitted (20th July 2022) however, the TP was able to submit x6 bids; Training for Social Workers in Autism, Practice Education Consultation and Strategy, Independent Clinical Supervision, Think Family Work Experience, Return To Social Work and People of Lived Experience Ambassador Group. The TP was successful in three out of six of these bids; Training for Social Workers in Autism, Practice Education Consultation and Strategy and Independent Clinical Supervision. Further information and current progress on each successful project can be found below;

Independent Clinical Supervision

- This project sought to improve the retention issue of social workers



who are 2-3 years post-qualifying, by seeking to address the factors relating to stress and burnout that might cause a social worker to consider leaving their role. The challenges around retention across the social worker workforce are significant but are particularly pronounced in those within 2-3 years of qualifying. The number of social workers leaving children's posts in English councils or trusts had spiked to its highest point in at least five years, according to Department for Education figures (2021). The picture is similar within Adult social work, with turnover rates increasing year on year from 2012 to 2016, before falling and then plateauing between 2018 and 2020. We were also aware from drilling down locally into the workforce data that exists for children and families and adult social workers, (DfE and Skills for Care respectively) that the challenges outlined above are even more pronounced in our region. Anecdotal feedback from senior leaders also highlighted concern at the number of social workers leaving shortly after they complete their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE). In an attempt to address the retention challenge 2-3 years post qualifying, we had already developed our comprehensive Early Professional Development Framework, which supports practitioners after they have completed their ASYE by providing developmental opportunities and means of enhancing their professional portfolio with a view to career progression. This Independent Clinical Supervision provision was intended to be an 'add on' to the current offer, targeting the same group of EPD practitioners with the offer of 1-2-1 and group clinical supervision with an independent clinical psychologist. A similar project had already been very successful in Walsall Children's Services;

- Utilising the DfE funding, we commissioned the Child Psychology Service for the delivery of these clinical supervision sessions (who had successfully delivered a similar project to Walsall Children's services) with a team of 4 clinical psychologists delivering both the group and 1 2 1 sessions. Supervision dates and times were sent out to social workers on a monthly basis, whilst group sessions were sent ahead of time in bulk. 121 sessions typically got booked within a week or so, highlighting their popularity and the clear demand for them amongst the workforce. In total, we received 56 EoI responses out of a possible 101 (55%) EPD social workers. Of these, 20 took part in group clinical supervision sessions (split into 2 groups) and 36 expressed an interest to take part in 1 2 1 sessions. Some social workers took part in both the group and 1 2 1 sessions;
- As a condition of our DfE grant funding, we were required to complete a quarterly return after 3 months and a final return after 6 months, which needed to include a full evaluation of the project. All participants were sent an anonymous pre-session questionnaire in advance of their first clinical supervision session to explore their



current perception of their work-life balance, impact of stress on their ability to do their job, access to safe spaces at work, desire to stay with their employer, whether they saw social work as a long term career, and their existing wellbeing support from their employer. This information served as a baseline. All participants were also sent an anonymous post-session questionnaire follow up in March, after the social workers had the opportunity to access these clinical supervision sessions for some months, to determine if their initial responses had changed and if the sessions had any early perceived positive impact on desire to stay in profession and/or on the ability for social workers to manage stress or anxiety whilst at work etc. We also wanted to assess how valuable the social workers had found these sessions. The responses to this were overwhelmingly positive, with a summary below;

- 64% stated that only *occasionally* the 'stress or anxiety I experience at work has an impact on my ability to do my job' This was an improvement from 42% in the pre-session survey.
 - 36% stated that they *always* 'had safe places and people at work to enable me to share any struggles I am experiencing' This is up from 13.8% in the pre-session survey and is indicative that these sessions provide the safe space that social workers are calling out for.
 - 71% stated that they *usually* 'have the desire to stay with their employer'. This is up from 48% compared to the pre-session survey, again indicating that these sessions have contributed to the social workers desire to stay with their employer, perhaps due to feeling more supported and invested in.
 - 42% stated that *usually* social work as a profession is 'something I can see myself doing for the long term'. This is up from 34% in comparison to the pre-session questionnaire.
- We also sought additional, more detailed feedback from practitioners in the post-session questionnaire about how they valued the provision and found the following:
- 85.7% stated that 'I feel the supervision I received had a positive impact on my emotional wellbeing either 'quite a lot' or 'definitely helped a great deal'
 - 78.5% stated that 'I found that the supervision I received helped me to manage some of the emotional burden of working with complex people and/or families' either 'quite a lot' or 'definitely helped a great deal'
 - 78.5% stated that 'I feel the provision of external, confidential clinical supervision has a positive impact for myself and my colleagues'



- 71.4% stated that 'the provision of external, confidential clinical supervision increases the likelihood of me remaining with my employer'
 - When asked, Is there anything you found unhelpful or would like to be different? 100% of respondents stated 'no'.
- After each session, the Child Psychology Clinicians also sent an optional feedback form to the social workers to complete. This included questions such as, 'Did you feel listened to?', 'Did you talk about what you wanted to talk about?' And 'Did you feel the meeting gave you ideas for what to do?' The feedback was overwhelmingly positive across the board. Responses to the 'instant' feedback form sent by clinicians to practitioners following a session were very positive overall, with the vast majority recording a 5/5 on every question using a rating scale of 1-5 (with 1 being 'not at all' and 5 being 'totally').
- When given the opportunity to comment further on the provision, practitioners provided a range of positive comments, such as:

"I felt understood and supported and listened to. I felt lighter afterwards and less stressed and anxious. It was also constructive and I came away with good ideas I could implement into my practice. It is a shame that some social workers are so busy, they struggle to prioritise this as it is of huge benefit and has definitely helped me. I wish it could be offered to all social workers on a monthly basis"

"The skilled therapist was really good at helping me identify what might be happening with my emotions. I really had such helpful conversations about managing my anxiety and where it comes from that it made an enormous difference to my ability to reduce stress and work more effectively"

'An independent space to vent or reflect, I believe is invaluable for social workers to reset to promote emotional resilience to deal with the negativities that we deal with in our caseloads - you cannot play in the mud and not expect to be smeared in mud'

- We also received a detailed statement from a practitioner with extensive feedback about the provision and the perceived impact on managing stress, providing a reflective space, staying in the profession, and navigating the transition out of the ASYE:

"I sincerely hope this is something that can be offered longer term as I have found it invaluable in supporting me to transition from my ASYE. I think it gives a vital space to reflect on areas I am developing in and to highlight things I would like to develop further. Retention in social work is a huge challenge and I have seen many of my ASYE



colleagues leave shortly after completing the ASYE. I think there comes a point post-ASYE where things can become very stressful as caseloads escalate in terms of numbers and complexities and many feel overwhelmed and look to a different area of social work. I strongly believe the support of my managers and the time taken to use these external supervision sessions has helped me navigate that difficult period and identify coping strategies and lifestyle adjustments to give me a better work-life balance. I am now feeling more able to deal with those challenging periods in the future and remain in my current role as I have been able to use these sessions to identify and evaluate what is working for me. I act as a "buddy" for new ASYE's in my team and, if these sessions are extended, I will be strongly recommending they utilise them to navigate their transition from ASYE, as I think they are excellent!"

- We were also asked by the Strategic Board to gather and present sufficient evidence, in order for them to make a decision as to whether to 'match fund' the DfE's initial grant and continue offering the provision beyond the life of the grant period. This was discussed in length at the May 2023 Visioning Day, following which various options were presented for consideration. Further, more refined options will be discussed at the next Strategic Board meeting in June 2023, upon which a firmer decision will be made regarding the ongoing rollout and whether to end the provision, extend the offer to EPD social workers every year, or open it up to all social work practitioners.

Training for Social Workers in Autism

- The National Strategy for autistic children, young people and adults:2021 to 2026 was published in July 2021. This report addressed the need for an improved understanding of autism within society and social care settings, as well as the need for better support for those with autism across both children and adults services. For the first time, this national strategy extended the scope of the strategy to children and young people, in recognition of the importance of ensuring that they are diagnosed and receive the right support as early as possible and across their lifetime. The chief social workers' study also recommended that the refreshed autism strategy acknowledge the value of social workers' knowledge and skills in working with autistic people. However, this national strategy does not directly account for providing specific training for social workers, despite addressing the fact that social workers "play an important role in identifying the support autistic people need throughout their lives";
- Many children's social workers, who are not in specialist learning disability teams, do not have a consistent level of knowledge, which



can lead to some people of lived experience not receiving a consistent service of support that is appropriately tailored to their needs;

- In July 2022, the Health and Care Act 2022 introduced a requirement that regulated CQC service providers ensure their staff receive training on autism and learning disabilities, appropriate to the person's role. The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism is the standardised training that was developed for this purpose and is the government's preferred and recommended training for health and social care staff to undertake. The expectation however, is that whilst children's social workers can sign up to access, only adult social workers will need to complete this Oliver McGowan training or similar to fulfil the mandatory requirement for adult social workers to complete training on autism and learning disabilities. The training is currently accessible as a 2-hour elearning module, but later developments will include some more interactive and in depth training. This additional element will likely be limited to CQC regulated services only. Therefore, given that the Oliver McGowan training is still in pilot stages and was not anticipated to cover the entirety of the children's social work workforce, this Continuous Improvement project involved the development of in depth, full day, autism awareness training tailored to children's social workers and developed by a team of experts in this field, as we were unable to locate training that met our desired specification;
- As part of this project, we developed this specialist training alongside a team of experts with substantial experience in this field; The National Autistic Society, Angela Firth, a specialist learning disabilities social worker with 40 years experience including managing a children with disabilities service, as well as our Lead Partnership Practice Consultant, Sharon Evans, who has over 21 years experience in children and families social work, including 10 years working with children with disabilities. We also further consulted with senior managers from across the partnership, who could explain the difficulties the social workers in their teams were experiencing because of their lack of knowledge in this area and what needed to be included in this training. In addition, we developed and designed an associated resource pack to complement the training and that can be used as an ongoing helpful toolkit;
- Two full day pilot training sessions were developed and delivered to 30 practitioners in total as a result of this successful bid. One of these sessions was held virtually, online on 15th February 2023 and the other session was held face to face at Kingston university on 19th January 2023. This was in order for us to evaluate the effectiveness of the two different methods of delivery to help inform the future rollout of this training after the pilot period. It became apparent that face to face



delivery was much more fruitful for encouraging conversation and interaction between trainers and trainees and amongst participants in general. We also identified two people of lived experience who were part of the development and delivery of the two pilot sessions. One was a parent of children with autism who had ample experience in working with children's social workers. The other person of lived experience was an adult with autism, who now earns their living being part of training sessions to support understanding for people who are working with children and adults with autism;

- An online evaluation survey was developed and issued to the social workers upon completion of the training. The development of the evaluation of this training was supported by senior lecturer from Kingston University, David Nilsson who has an interest in research and evaluating effectiveness of different models of working. This evaluation was sent to both cohort groups upon completion of the training. 21 out of a possible 30 completed the survey and the responses were overwhelmingly positive. The evaluation identified that all social workers who attended increased their knowledge in relation to understanding autism and they further agreed that this would have a positive impact on their practice in the future and subsequently have a positive impact on people of lived experience. The full survey that was issued can be viewed [here](#) and some feedback is highlighted below:

"I have learnt about the ways of working with & supporting families with autistic children. I learnt about the ways Autism can present in children. Lived experiences were very good."

"Was a really great day. I enjoyed the format of facts/presentation and then it being brought to life in afternoon by people with lived experience"

- All delegates who took part in the training were also asked to take part in a focus group to gain a deeper and more detailed evaluation of their experience of the training. Three focus groups were held to further evaluate the training and inform the future ongoing delivery and development of this training. All who attended agreed that the training had supported their developing knowledge in this area. They particularly appreciated the information shared by people of lived experience and agreed that their practice had changed as a result of attending the training. Those who attended the training online also stated that the training would be more meaningful if it was delivered in person. Both trainers agreed with this, as a result of their different



experiences in both training environments. Some feedback is highlighted below;

"Most of us went into knowing a certain amount about it but it was brilliant the level of knowledge that was shared by the training, especially the people of lived experience"

"Having the training face to face was really good, online training is not as useful, - the discussion in person helps retention"

- We also wanted to provide an associated resource pack to complement the training and so we commissioned the National Autistic Society, to support us with developing a bespoke standalone toolkit for social workers receiving the autism training to further their understanding and ability to effectively support autistic individuals and their family members. This was co- developed by social workers with specialist experience in working with children with autism, as well as people with lived experience. The complete toolkit/resource pack can be viewed [here](#). Overall, this project was a resounding success and it is clear to see from the evaluations that all delegates learned a lot from the training and have made an improvement to their practice in relation to working with families where a child has autism or possible autism that is undiagnosed/ in the process of diagnosis. We feel as though the success of the training is largely linked to the people of lived experience being involved with both the design of the training and being part of delivery;

Following the completion of this pilot pilot Autism training project and the development of the training and associated toolkit, we now have the resources and framework to deliver this training more widely across the partnership and to embed this in our CPD offer, with 4 further training sessions already planned across the next 6 months.

Practice Education Consultation and Strategy

- In the 2021 funding round for Continuous Improvement projects, a consortium of Teaching Partnerships, including DTSWTP took part in a cross-Partnership Action Learning Set (ALS) project. Each ALS group was given a topic to focus on, and one of these was Placements & Practice Education. The outputs of this project included a recommendation to hold a 'round table' event with all key players, including regulatory and



professional bodies, to discuss the many challenges facing practice education in social work and agree a way forward;

- To advance this recommendation, a consortium of 5 Teaching Partnerships (Developing Together, Cheshire and Merseyside, West Midlands, Suffolk and Norfolk and the South Yorkshire Teaching Partnership) submitted a successful Continuous Improvement Fund Bid in the 2022 funding round, to take responsibility for organising a number of national events, to bring key stakeholders together from across the breadth of the Teaching Partnership network to develop a Practice Education mandate, that could then be agreed by senior leaders in social work across the country. With this buy-in and support from the sector, it was hoped that the regulator would engage with this call for action and pursue this as a key area of priority. Failing this, the endorsement of a mandate outlining a clear practice education strategy, from Teaching Partnership organisation's senior leaders would still go a long way in contributing to improved outcomes in this area. At the very least it was felt it would be fruitful to shine light on the issue and push forward the agenda across the Teaching Partnership network;
- Alongside a consortium of other Teaching Partnerships, we therefore identified two dates and two locations for these national Practice Education events to be held to progress with these discussions, one in the North of the country and one in the South, recognising the geographical spread of the 27 Teaching Partnerships. These two round table Practice Education events were held at Sheffield Hallam University and Kingston University on 16th and 20th January 2023;
- The events comprised:
 - Presentation by Dr Jo Finch to set the context for the events
 - Facilitated table discussions to generate ideas and proposals for change (these were based on [a set of questions](#) which had been shared prior to the events).
 - Interactive [voting and feedback on proposals](#) (This was a way of enabling individuals to express personal views to gather a snapshot of levels of consensus across proposals). The proposals were developed from the table discussions and so varied at each event.
- Representatives from all 27 Teaching Partnerships (HEIs/LAs and PVLs) were invited alongside representatives from DfE, BASW and SWE, with



over 100 attending in total. The overall messages from participants are summarised below:

- There is an urgent need to address recruitment and retention challenges within social work practice education.
- The practice educator (PE) role requires a higher status and greater value within the profession because it is fundamental to social work recruitment and retention and placement sufficiency.
- In order to value, recruit and retain quality practice educators, the role must be better rewarded, supported and be embedded in a specialist career pathway. Employers should be required to provide financial reward, study days, protected time, supervision and clearer expectations regarding continuing professional development (CPD).
- There is significant support for developing well thought through KPIs and considering the role of regulatory frameworks to prioritise practice education within the local leadership agenda. Employers should be held to account for provision of PEs and sufficiency of placements.
- Annotation of the PE role on the SWE register should be considered as a means of establishing practice education as a core and valued role within the profession.
- Stakeholders are working tirelessly to recruit, retain and train practice educators in order to provide sufficient placements but this will not transform practice education by itself - and they cannot be expected to achieve this in isolation. Practice education needs national leadership and drive to ensure it is prioritised in the local leadership agenda.
- It is unclear which body has overall accountability for practice education. There is currently no clear mechanism at a national level to bring the necessary leadership, coherence, consistency and value to practice education.
- The majority of participants at the events support the development of a national practice education strategy. There was a strong feeling that a strategy needs to be led nationally by key accountable agencies working closely together (DfE, DHSC, SWE, BASW) in partnership with Teaching Partnerships and other key organisations (ADASS, ACDS, Ofsted, CQC, Skills for Care).



- HEI/employer partnerships are considered key to providing and sustaining regional and operational improvements to practice education. There are opportunities for DfE to strengthen this approach through further recognition and support of Teaching Partnerships.
 - The sector needs an effective process for sharing innovation and effective practice nationally, in terms of (a) development and support of practice education and (b) placement models
- It became clear at the events that there is already ongoing work to progress this agenda at a national level and participants at the events expressed frustration at the lack of national join up. Work of note at the time included:
 - SWE commissioning research (Feb/March 2023) to create a stronger evidence base around barriers and enablers of high quality PE and to explore models of good practice. This may help to support the final point above in key messages.
 - BASW is working with NOPT to publish guidance on how to look after practice educators and there is the BASW Code of Ethics. The PEPS Values and Domains provide a steer for new practice educators. The BASW 9-Staged QAPL document also offers a helpful steer for practice educators through the placement process and their central role within this. Feedback gained refers to the particular benefit this has for new practice educators
- The events made it clear that urgent action is required at a national level, but that there is no clear lead body for a national strategy. Therefore, the five Teaching Partnerships leading the events drafted a 'Call to Action' letter which was sent to the key national bodies (DfE, SWE, BASW, DSHC) in March 2023, calling on them to take action to:
 - set up a mechanism/body to bring accountability and coherent strategic decision making to social work practice education
 - address the core messages that emerged from the events.
- Extract from the letter is below and the full letter can be viewed [here](#).

The key message from the two 'Call to Action' events is that at a national level there must be a mechanism to bring accountability and coherent strategic decision making to social work practice education. The core representation of such a body must include SWE, BASW, DfE, DSHC and representation from a number of



Teaching Partnerships. Wider membership could include ADASS, ADCS, Ofsted, CQC and Skills for Care.

This body should:

- *Clarify which agencies are responsible and accountable for which parts of the practice education system.*
- *Consider the role of KPIs and regulatory frameworks to prioritise practice education within the local agenda and to hold employers to account for quality and sufficiency of placement provision.*
- *Take action to promote and value practice education:*
 - *consider annotation of the practice educator role on the SWE register*
 - *develop a clear career progression pathway for practice educators including specialist roles*
 - *define CPD requirements*
 - *define requirements of employers to reward and protect time for practice education.*

The current practice education system survives on the goodwill and commitment of dedicated practitioners who passionately believe in the intrinsic value of their role as practice educators. Teaching Partnerships have the energy, expertise and commitment to transform practice education into a thriving part of social work. However, practice educators and Teaching Partnerships cannot be expected to achieve this in isolation. If the current crisis is to be averted, a national response is urgently required.

Therefore, we require an individual response to our proposal in writing by March 31st which we can share across the Teaching Partnership network.

- Following the issue of the letter, we received responses from DfE, BASW and SWE. These responses have been collated and can be viewed [here](#). A meeting has since been held with Sarah Blackmore, Executive Director, Professional Practice and External Engagement at Social Work England to discuss the recommendations that were produced as a result of the event and to see how the consortium of TP's involved in the project can support the developments within Social Work England in relation to Practice Education. The meeting with Sarah Blackmore was exceptionally productive and she is very keen for the Teaching Partnerships involved in this project to play a pivotal role in helping to



shape and support the future of Practice Education. In the meeting, Sarah invited our opinion on who we felt needed to be invited to a future workforce round table event and would like us to help with preparing the agenda for the session. All agreed that it was necessary that regulatory bodies from across the breadth of adults and children and families social work were invited and thus the attendee list would include; SWE, BASW, DfE, DSHC, representation from Teaching Partnerships, ADASS, ADCS, Ofsted, CQC and Skills for Care. This workforce round table event will be held online on 26th June 2023 and it was discussed that this event would be the next step before another face to face event was held, with a much more focused and smaller attendee list. All agreed that it was really important that this was the next step in moving forward with the recommendations produced from the event and therefore Sarah would also like the consortium of TPs to present the findings from this project as a background to the meeting, before discussions commence. As a TP, we will continue to support this work, to ensure our objectives are realised for implementing a national strategy, or more cohesion and accountability is taken by the regulatory bodies.

Selling CPD Provision Externally

- In September 2021 the Strategic Board agreed that places on the TP CPD provision could be sold to external organisations, as a means of income generation. It was agreed that on average, this would be capped at around 20% of the total available provision on each course, to ensure that primary partners were not disadvantaged. However, on occasions where there was low uptake from partner agencies, this could be increased. It was therefore agreed that there would be an element of flexibility on the percentage of places sold;
- A selection of courses were identified and a separate flyer for external agencies was produced and uploaded to the National TP Network Sharepoint Site. This peaked the interest of a newly formed Teaching Partnership, Central Bedfordshire who had yet to establish their own CPD provision and were impressed by the breadth of available opportunities in our offer. To date, the Central Bedfordshire TP has bulk purchased almost £10,000 worth of CPD training opportunities for their social work staff and it is hoped that they will continue to invest across 2023-24;
- A number of enquiries were made by external agencies throughout 2022-23, to commission training from the TP, resulting in a successful cohort of Trauma Informed Practice training delivered to around 40



Social Workers from The Mercers company, delivered jointly to Welcare practitioners. This generated just over £5,000 in income, with the potential of more training sessions to be scheduled for them in 2023-24.

Step Up To Social Work

- Alongside Kingston University, London Borough of Sutton and Achieving For Children, the TP Team successfully bid for cohort 7 of the Step Up to Social Work Programme in 2021, securing funding of £48,000 for the administration and coordination of the programme which was provided by the TP Team in order to retain this funding and reinvest into the TP. We have again been successful for our application to run cohort 8 in 2023 securing an additional £48,000 funding to run the programme with 6 partners in 2024-25;

Other Income Avenues

- In 2021, 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 were again asked to manage this for 2022 securing an additional £3,000, however DfE are yet to confirm their intention to fund this initiative for a further year in 2023-24;
- In February 2022, the TP responded to an invitation to tender and jointly bid for a Social Work England research project, on 'the Supervision And Assessment Of Practice Learning: Models Of Practice Education And The Role Of The Practice Educator'. Whilst we were unsuccessful in this bid, it was a good learning experience. We sought feedback from Social Work England but have not received this to date;
- In March 2023, the TP submitted a partnership bid application to become Early Adopters of the DfE Pilot Early Career Framework (Primary Children's partners only). In May 2023, we were informed that we were successful in this application and work is underway on securing partner representation at the various initial information workshops planned by the DfE across June-September 2023. This initiative will secure significant income across the Teaching Partnership, with up to £50,000 of initial grant funding awarded for each Early Adopter LA in line with the engagement requirements of the programme. More information about the pilot can be read [here](#);
- Continuing to find avenues of income is key in supporting the TP's sustainability and income generation objectives, and more planning is required to generate new opportunities for this going forward.



Impact/likely impact includes:

- The impact of the Independent Clinical Supervision provision has already been clearly felt by those who have accessed the provision, evidenced by the evaluation and feedback from participants cited above. All social workers who have accessed the provision have remained within their organisation and currently express a desire to stay in the organisation and the profession. The feedback comments highlight the impact these sessions have had on their desire to stay in the profession:

“Please continue the provision. I think if I can access such good supervision I will stay longer in the profession”.

- Retention at 2-3 years was a key initiative and reason for this project. In the longer term, we may be able to further evidence the benefits of clinical supervision if the social workers who have accessed have continued to remain with their employers for the next 12 months too, and overall retention at this crucial 2-3 year point improves across our partner agencies. This will largely depend upon whether employers will financially contribute to offering this provision and possibly extending it across the wider qualified social worker workforce in the coming months. The evaluation and findings from the project have already been shared with the Strategic Board, along with some options for further rollout of this provision at the recent TP Visioning Day held in May 2023. More refined options will be discussed at the next Strategic Board meeting in June 2023, upon which a firmer decision will hopefully be made regarding the ongoing rollout which will potentially benefit significantly more social workers if the decision is made to extend the offer to EPD social workers every year, or to open it up to all social work practitioners;
- It is expected that social workers who have accessed the autism training have been able to improve their knowledge, understanding of working with individuals with autism and improve multidisciplinary working and outcomes for people of lived experience. This is corroborated by feedback from the training;

“I will now feel more confident talking about autism in general, being able to challenge other professionals and more confident approaching assessments and challenging time scales - needing more sessions etc”

- To date, 30 individuals have completed the pilot autism training and taking on board the feedback from the evaluation surveys and the focus groups, we have now scheduled in 4 more sessions for face to face delivery of this training across the partnership across the next 8



months, utilising our Lead TP Practice Consultant, Sharon Evans in partnership with an external experienced social worker, Angela Firth as co-facilitator. The toolkit/resource booklet that has been developed is now Teaching Partnership intellectual property and will be used to complement the ongoing rollout of this training and can also be widely shared and disseminated across the partnership to all of our social workers. We have also been able to utilise the people of lived experience's expertise by recording them and incorporating their words into the training slide deck. Going forward, we could also offer a Train the Trainer option for practitioners who are particularly passionate in this subject area, to offer them a further developmental opportunity and allow us to roll the training out to more practitioners more quickly. We will also continue to report to the Strategic Board about the development and evaluation results of the project. The Lead Partnership Practice Consultant, Sharon Evans has also been consulting with an academic at Kingston University Dr. David Nilsson, who supported the development of the focus group questionnaires and David will support Sharon to write up this project to be offered for publication in the journal Community Care and Journal of Social Work Practice;

- The Practice Education National Consultation Event and Strategy project was a huge success overall. The original issue still persists in the sense that there are still issues facing the national landscape of Practice Education, which we did not expect to be able to fix in the lifetime of this project. There will be an element of a need for a shift in cultural change (e.g. enforced CPD requirements) or require financial buy-in from organisations (e.g. remuneration for PEs), and this will naturally take longer to implement and embed. However, our primary goal was to shine a light on these issues through creating a forum to bring together stakeholders across England to outline the key challenges and ultimately, bring them forward to the Social Work regulator and other key regulatory bodies for comment and action. We feel as though this has been achieved. This event has been a springboard to open up the dialogue with key players within Social Work England and BASW and has led to the co-creation of a future event, with Social Work England, due to be held on 26th June 2023;
- To date, we have generated over £35,000 in income since March 2021 by selling our CPD provision externally and aim to improve this throughout 2023-24 by continuing to promote our offer to external agencies. The most lucrative course is the popular Early Career Manager's programme which generates a significant income for the TP and there is currently interest from a couple of external local authorities in commissioning this in 2023;
- The Step Up to Social Work programme will generate significant income for the TP, as well as for the HEI and local authority partners;
- Management of the Sharepoint site both generates income for the



TP and positions us as a reliable and trusted body across the national TP Network and DfE, who appointed us to manage this;

- The successful DfE bid to become Early Adopters of the Early Careers Framework will provide significant revenue for the TP and Children's Primary Partner Organisations;
- It is important that we continue to seek avenues for additional income, as part of our long term strategy, linked to our Business / Sustainability Plan to become more self-sufficient should DfE funding become unavailable. The primary partner agencies are committed to investing an annual membership fee to sustain the TP, and we do rely on this funding to deliver the current level of output, however this alone is not sufficient to resource the TP and so we proactively seek to identify other means of income generation and / or cost savings.

2.6 Identity, Brand and Reputation

Objectives for 2022-24:

- Share progression, development and network opportunities, and resources
- Develop/promote a regional identity via social media and other platforms
- Promote achievements both internally and to key regulatory and professional bodies e.g. SWE, BASW
- Be innovative, creative and ambitious, positioning the TP as a 'trailblazer'

Activities to date:

- Maintained the 'Developing Together' brand, utilising logos and sharing of key documentation both internally and externally;
- Continued to develop the TP website which is host to resources, guidance, advice, adverts and events
- 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. You can find all our newsletters to date on the website here;
- 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;
- Maintained a strong presence at external events and with national networks, attending the DfE's National Teaching Partnership Network meetings without fail and coordinating/chairing the Pan-London Network for London TP's to collaborate and share on specific initiatives relevant to the region, with three meetings held to date;



- We also worked with London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) on their pan-London microsite for Children's social workers, including writing the landing page for the Social Work Teaching Partnership section. This microsite aims to raise the profile of Children's social work in London and make it even easier for graduates and social workers to apply for jobs;
- We contributed to Social Work England's Programme of Events as part of Social Work Week, delivering an in-person conference on 'Trauma Throughout the Lifecourse', with key experts in the field delivering sessions to over 40 practitioners;
- In 2021, 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 were again asked to manage this for 2022, however DfE are yet to confirm their intention to fund this initiative for a further year in 2023-24;
- Held our annual social work celebration event and awards ceremony. The event was well attended, celebrating the achievements of qualified social workers and social work students from across the Partnership, and promoted the brilliant work of those in the social work profession. We were inundated with positive feedback after the event and will again be running this celebration event in December 2023;
- The Practice Education Consultation and Strategy round table national events held in January 2023, were part of a successful joint DfE Continuous Improvement Fund bid with 4 other Teaching Partnerships. These events were national and attended by over 100 participants from across the breadth of the national Teaching Partnership network. These included attendance from DfE, BASW, Social Work England, as well as stakeholders from across the 27 Teaching Partnerships. These events have resulted in a further meeting with Sarah Blackmore, Executive Director, Professional practice and External engagement at Social Work England and the planning of a further national Practice Education roundtable event, with key players from the industry invited, including other representatives from Social Work England, NOPT, DfE and DHSC to progress these ideas and a national, joined up strategy for Practice Education.
- 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 for Cohort 7 and again for Cohort 8, which will be running in 2024, as well as being successful in our application to become early adopters of the DfE's Early Careers Framework;
- Our Partnership Practice Lead, Sharon Evans, has successfully applied to share a Poster Presentation at the BASW Conference in



June 2023, with the title "How The Developing Together Social Work Teaching Partnership Grew the Research Hub across the Partnership".

Impact includes:

- 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 receiving 3,828 visits in the last year, up 191% on the year previous. The most popular pages on the website are almost entirely resources for the PCF or Practice Education Resources. 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 27,000 visits in the last year, with monthly figures showing a overall increase throughout the year;
- 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;
- Our partnership has taken the lead on national PE Consultation and strategy project to date, and, alongside the consortium of 4 other TP's, will be seen as the leading force behind these further events and will position us as trailblazers for any subsequent changes made at a national level, as a result of these events;
- The number of followers and supporters on our Twitter account increases steadily each month. Since the last annual progress report, the Twitter following has increased by 3.5%, going from 860 to 890 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:

| SWTP | Joined Twitter | Followers |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Developing Together | Jun 2018 | 890 |
| West Midlands | Jan 2018 | 2,644 |
| Yorkshire Urban and Rural | Jun 2017 | 1,030 |
| Suffolk & Norfolk | Oct 2017 | 1,030 |



| | | |
|--|-----------|-----|
| South East London | Jul 2015 | 752 |
| Leeds and Wakefield | Jun 2017 | 691 |
| Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) | Oct 2017 | 588 |
| North London | Jul 2017 | 570 |
| North East London | Sept 2018 | 544 |
| Hertfordshire | Nov 2018 | 410 |
| Greater Cambs | Jan 2019 | 335 |
| Cheshire and Merseyside | Apr 2019 | 228 |
| Greater Lancashire | May 2019 | 227 |

4. Future Ambitions

The first Visioning Day in January 2020 provided a clear direction for the TP for 2020-22, and the Strategic Board has since attended a similar event each year to date, in order to refresh priorities as needed and respond to emerging themes/challenges within the sector. The last visioning day was held in May 2023 and the Logic Model has been updated to reflect any changes. The key focus for the day was to establish future priorities and establish potential further projects that could be delivered, either with the support of the DfE Continuous Improvement Fund, or in the event this is not made available, the TP can explore ways to embed these ideas in a sustainable and cost-effective way. Some new areas of focus for the coming year/s, based on discussions had are likely to be (not an exhaustive list):

- Developing our aspiring and experienced managers;
- Enhancing our Think Family approach, through the ongoing offer of Think Family conferences, with a particular focus on sharing policies/learnings from serious case reviews and generally improving the knowledge base across Children & Families and Adults social workers;
- Developing and further embedding PLE involvement across all areas of TP work, potentially via a cross-TP PLE Steering Group;
- Enhancing joined up efforts for CPD commissioning, to ensure that resources across partnership organisations are maximised.



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 has brought a new focus and stimulated a new way of working in comparison to previous working arrangements (pre-2018) which were less effective in agreeing, sharing and achieving improvements. The culture of the partnership has significantly progressed and most stakeholders are convinced by the value of a new way of partnership working;
- The Teaching Partnership Team central posts have supported the programme with a range of activities, including but not limited to; planning and delivering training, data collection, bid writing and applications, planning events and activities, driving forward ad hoc projects, updating processes, monitoring data and progress on key metrics, communication, evaluations, 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 and lack of resourcing can impact on 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 the DfE's commitment to continuing to fund SWTPs might wane, as well as potential reprioritisation of government resources leading to lack of funding available for SWTPs. At the time



of writing, the DfE is yet to confirm funding for SWTPs for 2023-24. However since the inception of our TP in 2018, the DfE has committed to funding SWTPs three further times with sustainability funding and invited applications to access additional funding on three separate occasions, and thus we are hopeful that at the very least the DfE will release funding to TPs for Continuous Improvement Fund applications in June 2023;

- Whilst continued funding from the DfE is paramount, the ongoing financial commitment of primary partners is also key in achieving long term sustainability and ultimately ensuring less reliance on the funding from DfE, should this become unavailable in the future. To date, primary partners have made financial contributions to the TP in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023, and the number of primary partners has increased from 11 to 13 in 2023;
- 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 now affected to a much lesser extent by inconsistent levels of engagement since the move to a two-tier membership structure in early 2020, it is likely that this governance structure, along with the partner investment helps to solidify and incentivise engagement from partners.

7. Recommendations

This report has generated the following recommendations:

- The two-tier membership structure should continue, although taking into account that all TP partners are primary bar one (Surrey Children), we now further recommend the continuation of the annual membership fees, as this strengthens our financial position as a partnership, as well as improving engagement across partners. 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, engagement and decision making;
- In light of this, those agencies who pay an annual membership fee should use this report as a basis for reviewing their return on investment and identifying their own savings that have resulted from the TP. Even if we do receive the DfE funding and taking into account the independent income that the TP generates, it would not be possible to sustain the TP beyond March 2024 in its current form without this contribution from partners;
- All primary partner agencies (Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults,



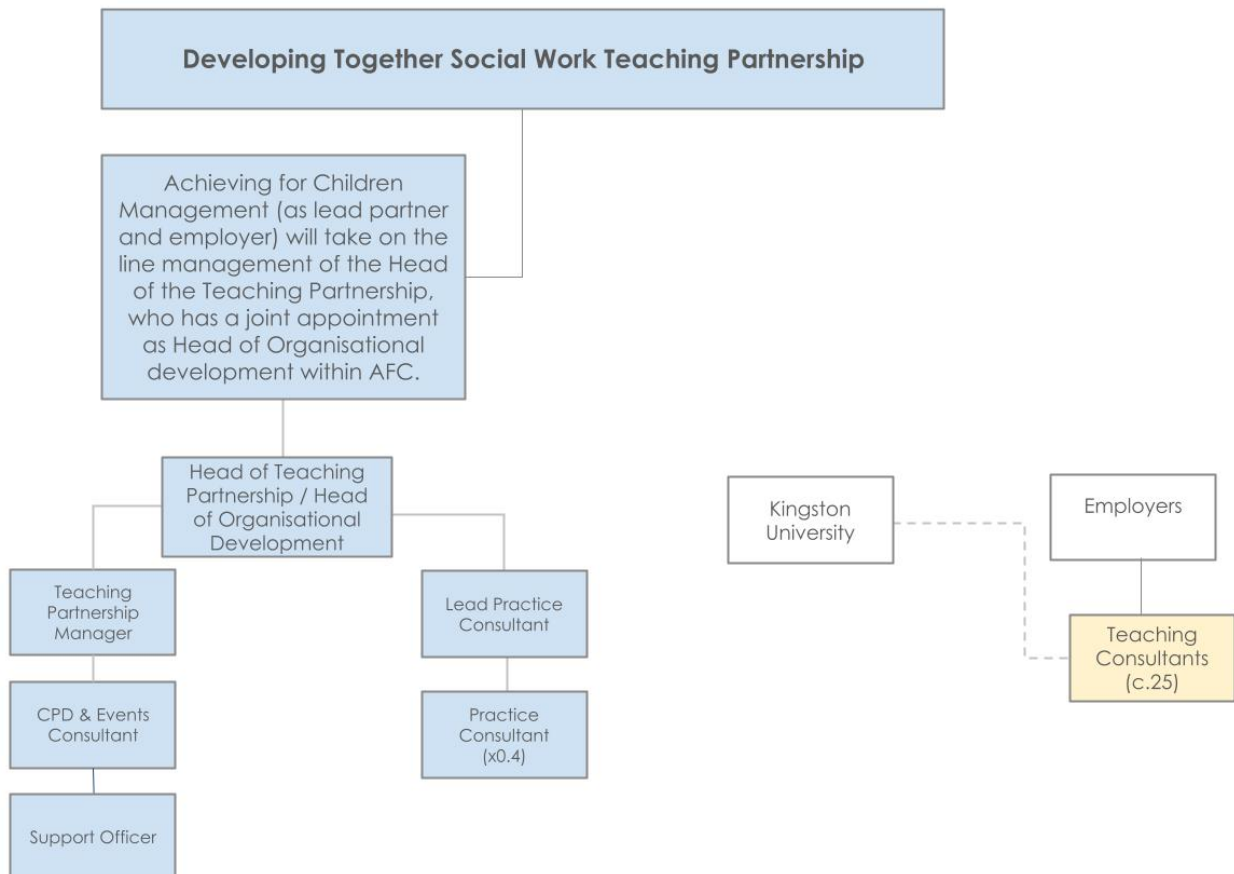
Croydon Children, Kingston Adults, Merton Children, Merton Adults, Sutton Children, Sutton Adults, Wandsworth Children, Richmond and Wandsworth Adults, NSPCC, Welcare and Kingston University) should attend the annual Visioning Day, where future priorities are agreed. It is also essential for a consistent senior leader from within each agency to attend the quarterly Strategic Board;

- The TP will continue to take advantage of how accustomed those across the TP have become to working virtually, continuing the majority of governance meetings online to enable maximum attendance and reduce the administrative burden on partners. However, given recent feedback regarding the TP CPD provision, more training should be delivered in person, taking a blended approach to learning, with a mixture of online and face to face provision on offer going forward;
- Taking learnings from the May 2023 Visioning Day, TP should look to enhance plans for a CPD offer that responds to workforce needs, including looking at joint-commissioning of more CPD opportunities to improve resources utilised by organisations and increase attendance across the partnership;
- The TP will work on an offer to develop aspiring and experienced managers across the partnership;
- The TP should continue and enhance the Think Family approach, through the ongoing offer of Think Family conferences, potentially with a focus on sharing policies/learnings from serious case reviews and generally improving the knowledge base across Children & Families and Adults social workers;
- The TP should develop and further embed PLE involvement across all areas of TP work, potentially via a cross-TP PLE Steering Group;
- 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;
- The TP will continue to work with Social Work England, supporting them with the development of a further national Practice Education Round table event, to progress solutions to the national PE challenges faced within the sector;
- The TP should continue to actively seek out opportunities that will provide additional income, to ensure the sustainability of the partnership and less reliance on the DfE funding should this cease to be available for 2023-24 and beyond;



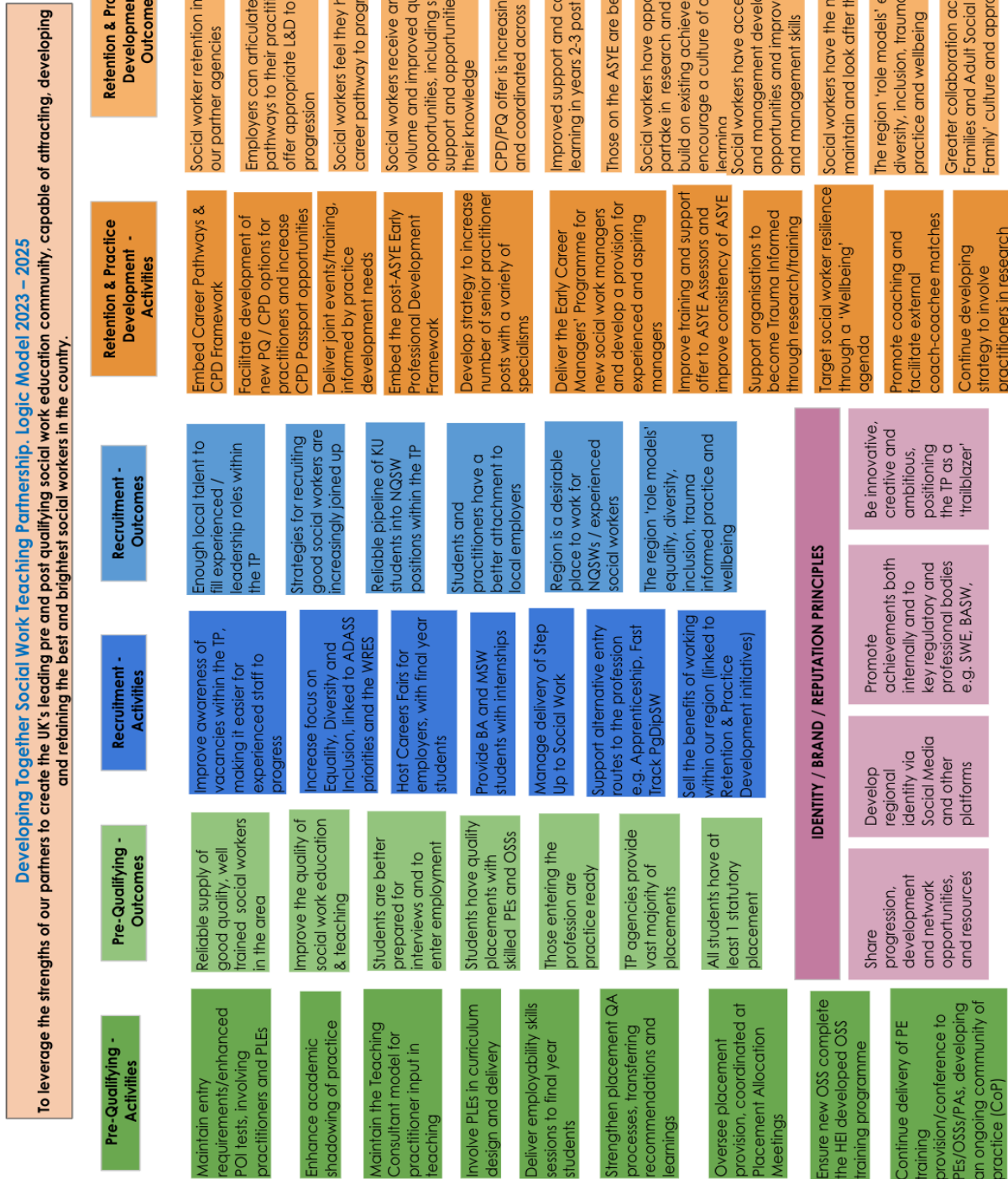
Appendix 1: Organisational Structure

Organisational Structure





Appendix 2: Logic Model 2023-25





Appendix 3: EPD Handbook Contents

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Appendix 4: Annual Learning & Development Report

Below is an overview of bookings and attendance both overall and by partner. The previous changes to the Eventbrite signup form has resulted in data that is much more accurate for partners, with only one or two attendees' information being unknown. Please note that this table covers sessions that took bookings via Eventbrite, and not those that were cohorts or by invitation only.

To view the full Annual Learning & Development report, please visit our [website](#).

| | Total no. of Bookings | Total attendance | Total non-attendance | % attendance | % non-attendance | % cancelled | % no shows |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|------------|
| Overall | | | | | | | |
| | 911 | 483 | 428 | 53.02% | 46.98% | 7.35% | 27.22% |
| By Partner | | | | | | | |
| Achieving for Children | 75 | 49 | 26 | 65.33% | 34.67% | 4.00% | 20.00% |
| Croydon Adults | 180 | 88 | 92 | 48.89% | 51.11% | 6.67% | 31.11% |
| Croydon Children's | 27 | 10 | 17 | 37.04% | 62.96% | 18.52% | 29.63% |
| Central Bedfordshire TP | 90 | 39 | 51 | 43.33% | 56.67% | 8.89% | 41.11% |
| Kingston Adults | 43 | 28 | 15 | 65.12% | 34.88% | 16.28% | 16.28% |
| Kingston University | 65 | 40 | 25 | 61.54% | 38.46% | 4.62% | 18.46% |
| Merton Adults | 28 | 8 | 20 | 28.57% | 71.43% | 7.14% | 57.14% |
| Merton Children's | 40 | 24 | 16 | 60.00% | 40.00% | 2.50% | 25.00% |
| NSPCC | 32 | 20 | 12 | 62.50% | 37.50% | 6.25% | 25.00% |
| Richmond & Wandsworth Council | 18 | 11 | 7 | 61.11% | 38.89% | 5.56% | 16.67% |
| Surrey County Council | 61 | 22 | 39 | 36.07% | 63.93% | 13.11% | 27.87% |
| Sutton Children's | 83 | 45 | 38 | 54.22% | 45.78% | 6.02% | 22.89% |
| Sutton Adults | 37 | 20 | 17 | 54.05% | 45.95% | 10.81% | 24.32% |
| Sutton (unknown) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 100.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Welcare | 21 | 14 | 7 | 66.67% | 33.33% | 4.76% | 23.81% |
| Teaching Partnership | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Other | 58 | 33 | 25 | 56.90% | 43.10% | 3.45% | 27.59% |
| Unknown | 1 | 1 | 0 | 100.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

Table 1 - bookings and attendance by partner