

Report/Policy paper	Overview
<p>Children's Social Care Reform: A Vision for Change</p> <p>Department for Education</p> <p>Published in January 2016</p> <p>Full report available here</p>	<p>This policy paper outlines the Government's vision across three central pillars of reform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>People and Leadership</i>– bringing the best people into the profession, and giving them the right knowledge and skills for the incredibly challenging but hugely rewarding work we expect them to do, and developing leaders equipped to nurture practice excellence. • <i>Practice and Systems</i> - creating the right environment for excellent practice and innovation to flourish • <i>Governance and Accountability</i> - making sure that what we are doing is working, using data to show us strengths and weaknesses in the system, and developing innovative new organisational models with the potential to radically improve services <p><i>Vision for 2020:</i> By 2020, we need to ensure that every local children's social care service across this country has a workforce – on the front line, in leadership positions and in between – with the knowledge and skill to do this highly challenging work. This needs to be verified through robust assessment and accreditation. The social work qualification must have credibility and mean professionals are equipped to work with the highest levels of social complexity, dealing with the highest levels of risk, and striving for the highest standards of practice excellence</p>
<p>House of Commons Education Committee inquiry report</p> <p>Published in July 2016</p> <p>Full report available here</p>	<p>The report sets out a number of recommendations for changes and improvements, and calls on the government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a single national reform implementation plan, with clear expectations for local authorities, employers and educators of what needs to be introduced along with achievable timescales. • Introduce a single Chief Social Worker, sitting outside Government departmental structures, in order to help unify the profession and encourage joined-up thinking. • Keep qualifying training generic and introduce specialisms at the post-qualifying level, and to therefore increase the generic elements in both Frontline and Step Up to Social Work curricula • Undertake an evaluation of outcomes from Frontline

	<p>in comparison to University routes in order to inform future decisions in relation to fast-track qualifying training, and to ensure that any future Frontline contracts are delivered in collaboration with a university partner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a robust, national framework for post-qualifying education and continuing professional development, which includes a process of endorsement. • Introduce a requirement for social workers to undertake endorsed CPD activities as a condition of their re-registration. • Bring forward the consultation on assessment and accreditation, and to develop clear proposals on what will happen if social workers fail the process, and how social workers can continue to move between different statutory and non-statutory settings • Develop a national QA system for the ASYE • Develop clear strategies for the retention of existing social workers, and create improved working conditions for social workers • Develop a public awareness campaign to raise the profile of social work and celebrate its successes • Develop a new professional body for social work, in partnership with BASW. This should be prioritised over the introduction of another new regulatory body. • Commission research on the role of principal social workers to establish best practice and produce guidance based on this evidence. • Ensure that new innovation/projects are fully evaluated before being rolled out nationally • Provide further details about the What Works Centre, and expand the focus of the Centre to all aspects of children and families social work, not just child protection. • Assess the effectiveness of the existing independent Children's Services trusts before expanding the model any further, and to allow local authorities greater timescales in which to evidence improvements before their children's services are taken over.
<p>Putting Children First Department for Education</p>	<p>This policy paper sets out the Government's strategies for achieving the vision outlined in '<i>Children's Social Care Reform: A Vision for Change</i>'.</p> <p><i>People and Leadership</i></p>

Published in July 2016

Full policy paper available [here](#)

To achieve our vision we will:

- have an accredited practice leader in place in every local authority by 2020
- establish a new programme to develop our most talented social workers into the practice leaders of the future
- launch a programme for the development of new practice supervisors
- continue to invest in existing teaching partnerships and support new ones, to raise standards of entry into social work
- roll out a new system of assessment and accreditation for all child and family social workers, practice supervisors and practice leaders by 2020
- establish a new specialist regulator for social workers in England
- led by the new regulator, set new professional standards for social workers; new standards for qualifying education and training; and new specific standards for the continuous professional development of social workers

Practice and systems

To achieve our vision we will:

- expand the Innovation Programme through the £200 million additional investment announced in April
- work with our eight leading local authorities as Partners in Practice to: understand how authorities get to good and what it takes to move from good to excellent; interrogate the most important practice questions facing children's social care; and develop additional sector-led, peer to peer improvement
- seek to use a new Power to Innovate to test where legislation, regulations and guidance might be getting in the way of excellent practice
- launch a new What Works Centre for children's social care
- establish a new national framework for inquiries into cases of serious harm to children
- develop effective responses to new and emerging threats
- move from a system of data collection to data-driven practice, and improve the quality and collection of data

Governance and Accountability

To achieve our vision we will:

- encourage bids for Innovation Programme funding from areas interested in testing out a new delivery

	<p>model for all or part of a children’s social care service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake a review of the role of the local authority in relation to children, including children’s social care • introduce new, more robust, flexible and proportionate inspection arrangements • introduce a stronger statutory framework for multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, creating greater accountability for the three key agencies of health, police and the local authority • intervene decisively in cases of failure, removing service control from any local authority which has persistently or systemically failed and does not have the immediate capacity to improve
<p>Government’s response to House of Commons Education Committee inquiry report</p> <p>Published in October 2016</p> <p>Full report available here</p>	<p>The Government welcomed the Committee's report, and provided the following responses to the individual recommendations included within the Committee's report:</p> <p>Since the Committee's report, the Government has published 'Putting Children First', which outlines how they will deliver their vision for reform with clear, measurable goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the success of the reform agenda is a priority, and we are putting in place arrangements to track the impact of reforms • Child and adults services have different issues and priorities, and this is reflected in the current model of having two Chief Social Workers • We anticipate that by 2018 around 30% of new child and family social workers will come from fast-track routes, and up to 40% by 2020 • We plan to commission a research study that looks into the long-term retention and progression of Frontline and Step Up participants • Any future procurement of fast track provision for social workers would be subject to competitive tender, open to partnerships other than Frontline, including those from, or in partnership with, universities • Teaching Partnerships continue to be part of the Government’s broader strategy to strengthen the quality of practice learning, not only among students but also among practising social workers. Expansion of teaching partnerships will support improving more widely the quantity and quality of practice placements, CPD for practitioners and good quality

	<p>supervision for students and qualified staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We intend to establish new development programmes to support child and family social workers at two key points in their careers: those making the transition from frontline practice into practice supervision, and those who will be the practice leaders of the future.• We are developing post-qualification practice focused career pathways. These include ambitious plans to assess and accredit child and family social workers, support those making permanence decisions and continuing to build specialist areas of practice such as in best interest assessments and mental health social work practice.• We agree that the development of a strong professional body for social work is important. What is clear, however, is that the success of such a body will hinge on it being a sustainable, member-led organisation that represents professional interests across the social work workforce. We would recognise and support such a body but believe the most effective body would be one established by the social work profession.• Government believes that the current regulatory arrangements for social workers in England require urgent reform. We need to set credible standards which address evidence of failings in practice and set clear expectations of the profession.
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