

Children Social Care Workforce Development

Tracy Ryan – Programme Lead





Need for Change

- Volatile workforce – lots of leavers due to:
 - Pay
 - Caseloads
 - Work life balance
 - Limited Supervision & Support
 - Limited Flexible Working
 - Pandemic

- Vacancy levels rising
- Increasing reliance on high spend on Agency Staff
- Difficult to progress sustainable workforce improvements
- Ofsted and Department for Education require significant improvement



Review for current issues

- Staff Engagement Sessions & Surveys
- Recruitment activity and effectiveness
- HR Diagnostic of efficiency of processes
- Benchmarking data across the NW
 - Vacancy
 - Agency
 - Pay
 - Innovation & Developments



Initial Findings

- Limited Recruitment / Advertising – only on St Helens Website
- Adverts needed a refresh
- HR processes slow and IT systems in need of modernisation
- Too long to hire – HR Checks
- Exit interview process and associated learning limited
- One of lowest paying LAs in North West
- ‘Grow your own’ / Apprenticeships activity reduced
- Not enough support for ASYE’s
- Limited Induction activity
- Social Worker training offer is good
- Manager / Team support is good



Annual Staff Survey

Social Worker Health Check



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A bi-annual health check survey is conducted with all staff in children's social care.

This is what our staff told us...



93%

have a sense
of personal
& professional
fulfilment



91%

feel valued



90%

feel the work they
do is meaningful



88%

are satisfied with
the learning and
development
opportunities offered



82%

felt their manager
responded to
concerns about
their wellbeing



83%

feel supported by
their manager with
their physical and
emotional wellbeing



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Actions taken

Workforce Strategy and action plan developed and being implemented from June 2022



Actions Taken

- New pay deal agreed
- Reviewed and modernised Job Descriptions
- Introduction of Assistant Team Manager role
- Simplified, faster HR process for new applicants
- Supporting Corporate HR improvement programme
- New modern recruitment campaign
 - slogan, microsite and videos, immediate EOI
- Refreshed advertising information
- Increased Advertising Platforms



**BE the
social worker
they NEED.**



♥ Keeping a child safe, watching them fulfil their true potential and knowing that you're making a difference to their life. Being able to do that is why I love my job. ♥

Lee Cooper, Social Worker
St Helens Borough Council

socialcarerecruitment.sthelens.gov.uk

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<https://socialcarerecruitment.sthelens.gov.uk/why-join-us/current-vacancies/>

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♥ Manageable caseloads mean I can spend more time with children and families, supporting them to meet their needs and improving their outcomes. ♥

Lee Cooper
Social Worker
St Helens Borough Council

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they NEED.**



♥ Making a difference to the lives of children in St Helens Borough is what keeps me motivated. Every day is rewarding, and I would encourage others to join our transformation journey. ♥

Jo Henry
Team Manager, St Helens Borough Council

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Actions Ongoing

- Development of Social Care Academy
 - New apprenticeship scheme
 - Improved support for ASYE
 - Review and enhancement of progression/succession programmes
- New staff Induction programme
- Skills Audit and needs led training offer
- Enhanced 'rewards' package
- Campaign to convert agency to permanent staff
- International Recruitment from 2023



Staff Engagement

- Culture Champions
- Practitioner forum
- Regular Staff Engagement session
- Leaders 'walk the floor'
- 'You said, we did'
- Improved 'exit interview' system
- Improving the HR data for monitoring and reporting



Early Improvement signs

- Workforce is stable – very limited movement for last 2 months
- Significant increase in 'reach' for advertised posts
12,000 views, 987 viewing the microsite and 96 accessing the Job site in a 2 week period
- Applications have increased - 27 in June
- Increase in shortlisted positions and interviews taking place on 5 roles (multiple positions) within the service
- Staff feedback is positive



Comments, questions, suggestions

