

Who is this document for?

This plan sets out some principles and initial methods which will inform our engagement with those who work in children's social care.

This includes all the paid and unpaid workforce who work, or have worked, with children and families such as social workers, early intervention teams, personal advisors, independent visitors, youth workers, health practitioners (including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services workers), those who work in education, adult mental health workers, substance misuse services, domestic abuse services, the police, probation services, and those who work in youth justice.

Our plans for workforce engagement

Up to now, the review has mainly prioritised hearing from those with lived experience of children's social care. This reflects our ambition to create recommendations which are developed and built from the perspective of children and families, and the time it can take to create safe and trusted spaces for people to share their views. The focus on hearing from those with lived experience will continue throughout the review.

We know that many of you working in these professions have lived experience of children's social care too, that this experience has motivated you, and will mean you have unique and valuable insights. We will also build upon the existing surveys and reports where you, and other professionals, have shared your views previously.

Review Phases

Since the review launched, we have met with social workers, teachers and other professionals who work with children and families, as well as organisations that employ or represent them. This engagement has included roundtables and conferences with Local Authority social work and family welfare teams, visits to children's homes, surveys, and one-to-one conversations with social workers and managers. We also received more than 200 submissions from children's social care workers in response to our Call for Advice. These views, alongside the views of many people with lived experience of children's social care, will help inform our 'case for change' which will summarise how we have interpreted the issues and challenges we have heard about, and draw upon the best available evidence.

As we begin to look forward and test our understanding of the challenges that children and families face and build upon those to generate new ideas and form recommendations, we now also need to bring in the voices of all of you who work with children and families in a meaningful way.

How will we hear your views?

We would like to work with Local Authorities, providers of homes for children and the many existing groups and networks that support and employ those of you who work with children and families. These include organisations many of you will be familiar with and connected to such as The British Association of Social Workers (BASW), the Principal Children and Families Social Worker (PCFSW) Network, the National association of Independent Reviewing Officer (NAIRO), the National Association of Virtual School Heads (NAVSH) and UNISON, to name just a few.

Some of you will not be part of an organisation, may wish to share your views confidentially, or in a different way. If so, the review will also create online and face to face opportunities for you to share your views. It is vital that the review hears from people who work with children and families, so we can understand how children's social care currently works and your ideas for making things better for the children and families you work with and support.

We understand that no single format will work for everyone, and that in order for the review to deliver meaningful change, we need to offer a variety of methods to reach out and hear your views. These will include:

- **Co-led events:** If you work for an organisation that represents people who work or volunteer to support children and families – we would like to hear from you. The review team would like to partner with organisations, charities and Local Authorities with existing networks and relationships with the children's social care workforce. If you work for an organisation or network that represents people who work or volunteer to support children and families – we would like to hear from you. We can attend existing meetings, such as whole-staff events in Local Authorities, to hear the views of your group, or work with you to arrange bespoke opportunities which enable that. **If your organisation or network is interested in contributing to the review and would be interested in the review team engaging with your groups and networks, please get in touch with us by completing the survey hosted on our website.**
- **Online Surveys and polls:** As busy professionals, we know that some of you will prefer to share your thoughts in writing, anonymously, or at a time that suits you. We will work with existing organisations, networks and Local Authorities to distribute these. In addition, we have also partnered with the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care – which will also be running six polls over the coming months for social workers to feed in their thoughts to the review. If you are a registered social worker and would like to sign up to all of the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care polls, please click [here](#).
- **Focus groups:** Starting in June, we will hold smaller sessions to test and debate specific issues and to start developing some recommendations. These will be advertised on the events page of our review website and will be shared in the review's update emails.

Whilst we have prioritised offering you these three broad methods of engagement, it does not mean that we will not offer other ways to engage– and if there are alternative ways you would like to contribute you can tell us. Across all of our engagement activity throughout the review, including



with people that have lived experience of children's social care and those that work or volunteer to support children and families, wherever possible we want to 'bring the review to you'. During the next few months this will include some focussed work in various local areas.

We hope this update provides some clarity and allows you effective ways to contribute throughout the course of the review. We plan to have all the above methods up and running during June 2021.

Let us know what you think?

If you are reading this and know of groups and networks that we should be meeting and hearing from to ensure we hear from a diverse range of children's social care workforce - or have views on our plans for engagement – please let us know by contacting us at review.childrensocialcare@education.gov.uk

