



## **Briefing note – 2020 Children and Young People’s Workforce Strategy**

The Children’s Plan sets out the Government’s ambition for this country to be the best country for children and young people to grow up in. Those who work or volunteer with children and young people are critical to achieving this.

April 2008 saw the DSCF publication of ‘Building Brighter Futures: next steps for the children’s workforce’. This established what was in place and an Expert Group to take matters forward. This comprised professionals, experts and representatives from across the workforce. The 2020 strategy is the result of that work. The vision is that all who work with children and young people should be:

- **Ambitious** for every child and young person
- **Excellent** in their practice
- **Committed** to partnership and integrated working
- **Respected** and valued as professionals

The strategy describes the support needed to deliver on this vision and the reforms required to help drive it forward. It is built on substantial evidence drawn from The Expert Reference Group and has been built in collaboration across Government Departments.

A number of challenges have been identified; both at the frontline of practice and in leadership and management. The Government will now work with partners to secure the identified improvements which are listed below>

- **Leadership & management** – a more integrated approach to the development of leaders/managers with the National college of School Leadership to develop a programme for current and aspiring Directors of Children’s Services.
- **Recruitment** – raising the profile and extent of job opportunities and tackling how to encourage the best new entrants
- **Partnership with children, young people, parents/carers and each other** – developing skills and behaviours to promote this and secure better outcomes
- **Qualifications, training and progression routes** – ensuring these are accessible, of high quality and help in not only skills development but also career progression
- **Supporting those children who are most vulnerable** – ensuring the workforce are skilled up to support this group, including those looked after, disabled and with mental health needs
- **Developing a knowledge bank** – for the workforce to ensure that practice, training, and development is firmly based on evidence about what makes the most positive difference

## **Workforce areas:**

- 1. Social work** – a Taskforce has been established to examine frontline practice and advise on improvements to training, recruitment and leadership to help address issues of quality, recruitment, retention and clarity of purpose. Support functions will also be addressed (e.g. social work assistants, foster carers, residential care workers etc) to help drive up the quality of service provision.
- 2. Youth support workforce** – ‘Aiming High for Young People’ laid out commitments for leadership and management training, supporting development in the third sector, the establishment of a skills and knowledge framework, including a youth professional status along with a fast track graduate recruitment programme. This 2020 strategy will develop a longer term comprehensive plan to add to support and improvement and this will be done in parallel with The Youth Justice Board Strategy; where goals and priorities are laid out.
- 3. Childcare and early years** – future work will build on the 10 year childcare strategy and centres on ensuring the recruitment, retention and development of a quality workforce who can make a real difference for children in their earliest years. Consideration will be given to requiring all full day care settings to be graduate led by 2015. More detail will be provided in the forthcoming update on the 10 year childcare strategy.
- 4. Schools** – work will build on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools consultation document (December 2008); focussing on attracting high quality applicants, particularly in shortage subject areas and continue with workforce remodelling. Consideration is to be given to an entitlement for CPD (continuous professional development) for every teacher and to make a reality of the ambition for teaching to be a Masters-level profession. Action will be taken to support schools in retaining an effective workforce to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Greater partnership working within the school system and a new accountability framework around the Report card will form part of future developments.
- 5. Further Education, health, sport & culture, crime and justice** – there is clear acknowledgement of strong commitment to the adult population in these workforces. This strategy explains how these groups will be helped to improve their capacity to respond to the needs of children and young people specifically. Integrated working will be at the centre of this along with the development of leaders and managers.

## **Delivery of the strategy:**

Steps will be taken to strengthen partnership working arrangements and delivery of services at local and national levels. Children’s Trusts will be at the heart of this and they will have to publish a local workforce strategy, setting out how they will lead the development of the children and young people’s workforce in their area. There will also be the establishment of a National Partnership for the children and young people’s workforce, bringing together different professions and backgrounds from organisations to advise on the implementation of the strategy. There will also be a review of those with sector responsibilities for workforce development to rationalise contributions and ensure appropriate support in the delivery of the strategy.

## **Consultation:**

The workforce, children, young people and their families/carers can get involved in this implementation by telling government what they think about the vision and key proposals online at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations)