

The children and young  
people's workforce



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# The common core of skills and knowledge

At the heart of what you do



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“Having the common core ensures there’s a consistent quality, so whoever a young person chooses to approach will know how to talk to them, how to recognise if things are wrong and how to bring in other services if they’re needed.”

Joanna Nichols, Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Co-ordinator

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## Introduction

**This is the common core of skills and knowledge for everyone working with children and young people.**

The common core describes the skills and knowledge that everyone who works with children and young people is expected to have. The six areas of expertise in the common core offer a single framework to underpin multi-agency and integrated working, professional standards, training and qualifications across the children and young people's workforce. This includes those who work with children and young people all the time as well as those who work with children and young people as only part of their job role. It includes both paid staff and volunteers. An overview of the children and young people's workforce is provided in figure 1 (page 4).

The common core reflects a set of common values for practitioners that promote equality, respect diversity and challenge stereotypes. It helps to improve life chances for all children and young people, including those who have disabilities and those who are most vulnerable. It provides more effective and integrated services.

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It is understood that the use of the common core will vary by sector and role, and that different organisations will find the most appropriate ways of giving expression to all the six areas of expertise. Those who work with children and young people all the time will use the common core in different contexts and to different levels of depth from those who come into contact with children and young people as only part of their job. Similarly, some roles will place greater emphasis on one or more of the common core's six headings: not all practitioners will be regularly involved in supporting transitions, for instance; but all will need to understand at least the most important aspects of each of the six areas of expertise in a way that is relevant to the context in which they work. However the six areas of expertise in the common core work as a whole – many of the skills described under one heading are also relevant to other headings – so it will be important for individuals and organisations to consider the common core in the round.

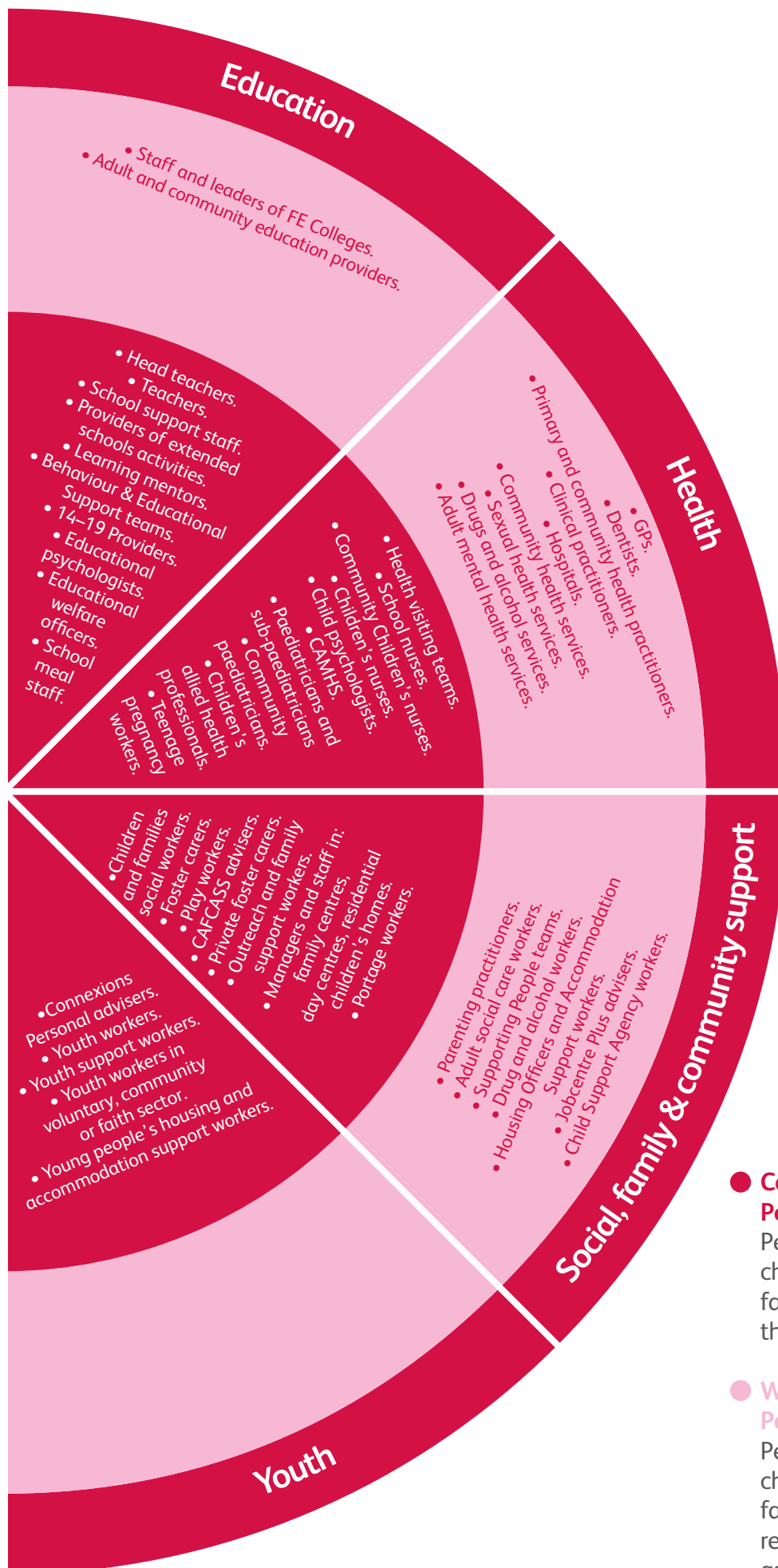
The common core acknowledges the rights of children and young people. It also recognises the role parents, carers and families play.

Families are organised in different ways, so whenever the common core refers to parents or carers, it includes all of the following people: biological mothers and fathers, adoptive parents, step parents, same sex parents, foster carers, legal guardians, grandparents, extended family members and other adults who provide care for children.



**Figure 1: The children and young people's workforce**





● **Core Children and Young People's Workforce:**

People who work or volunteer with children, young people and their families, or are responsible for their outcomes all the time.

● **Wider Children and Young People's Workforce:**

People who work or volunteer with children, young people and/or their families part of the time, or are responsible for their outcomes as part of their jobs.

## Effective communication and engagement with children, young people and families

1.1 Good communication is central to working with children, young people, families and carers. It helps build trust, and encourages them to seek advice and use services. It is key to establishing and maintaining relationships, and is an active process that involves listening, questioning, understanding and responding. You should always communicate with them appropriately to match the stage of development, personal circumstances, and needs of the person you're talking to.

1.2 It is important to be able to communicate both on a one-on-one basis and in a group. Communication is not just about the words you use, but also about the way you're speaking and your body language. You need to feel and show empathy and sincerity, and above all, listen. You need to take account of culture and context. For example, you need to be aware and communicate appropriately if English is an additional language, or the child is disabled or at risk of under-achievement or other poor outcomes.

1.3 Effective communication extends to involving children, young people, their parents and carers in the design and delivery of services and decisions that affect them. It is important to consult the people affected and consider opinions and perspectives from the outset. Another crucial element of effective communication is developing trust between the workforce and children, young people, parents and carers – as well as within different sectors of the workforce itself.

1.4 To build a rapport with children, young people, their parents and carers, it is important to be respectful, understanding and honest. People become engaged when relationships are continuous, and their lives improve as a result.

1.5 The skills and knowledge highlighted here and throughout the common core provide a basic description of areas that may need development through training, learning or experience in order to work effectively.

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**“The team have come down to Sinead’s level but still treated her like an adult... I don’t know what we would have done without them.”**

**Mrs Hughes,  
mother and grandmother**



## Skills

### Listening and building empathy

1.6 Establish a rapport and build respectful, trusting, honest and supportive relationships with children, young people, their families and carers, which make them feel valued as partners.

1.7 Use clear language to communicate with all children, young people, families and carers, including people who find communication difficult, or are at risk of exclusion or under-achievement.

1.8 Be able to adapt styles of communication to the needs and abilities of children and young people who do not communicate verbally, or communicate in different ways.

1.9 Build a rapport and develop relationships using the most appropriate forms of communication (for example, spoken language, visual communication, play, body and sign language, information and communication technologies) to meet the needs of the individual child or young person and their families and carers.

1.10 Hold conversations at the appropriate time and place, understanding the value of regular, reliable contact and recognising that it takes time to build a relationship.

1.11 Actively listen in a calm, open, non-judgemental, non-threatening way and use open questions. Acknowledge what has been said, and check you have heard correctly.

1.12 Make sure that children, young people, parents and carers know they can communicate their needs and ask for help.

### Summarising and explaining

1.13 Summarise situations in the appropriate way for the individual (taking into account factors such as background, age and personality).

1.14 Present genuine choices to children and young people, explaining what has happened or will happen next and what they are consenting to.

1.15 Decide together how to involve parents or carers in the choices to be made.

# Effective communication and engagement with children, young people and families

## Consultation and negotiation

1.16 Consult the child or young person, and their parents or carers from the beginning of the process.

1.17 Make informed judgements about how to involve children, young people, parents and carers in decisions as far as is possible and appropriate. Take account of their views and what they want to see happen. Be honest about the weight of their opinions and wishes.

1.18 Inform, involve and help the child or young person to express what they are feeling. Help them to describe what they are experiencing and to assess different courses of action. Help them understand the consequences of each and, where appropriate, agree next steps.

1.19 Recognise that different people have different interests in a situation and be able to work with them to reach the best and most fair conclusion for the child or young person.

1.20 Share reasons for action with the child or young person and their parent or carer, unless to do so would increase the risk of harm to them or another person.

1.21 Judge when, and how to hand over control of a situation to others.

## Knowledge

### How communication works

1.22 Understand the value of the role of parents and carers, and know how and when to refer them to further sources of information, advice or support.

1.23 Know that communication is a two-way process.

1.24 Know how to listen to people, make them feel valued and involved.

1.25 Understand the importance of building good relationships with children, young people, their parents and carers.

1.26 Know when it is important to focus on individuals and when it is important to focus on groups.

1.27 Know how your attitude and behaviour have an effect on children, young people, their parents and carers, and the importance of offering praise and support.

1.28 Understand the effects of non-verbal communication such as body language, and that different cultures use and interpret body language in different ways.



1.29 Be aware of different ways of communicating, including technological methods. Understand barriers to communication, which could include poverty, cultural or faith requirements, disability, disadvantage or anxiety about accessing services.

1.30 Understand that parents and carers are partners who have the lead role and responsibility for children and young people. Involving them in decisions affecting their child can have a positive effect on supporting their children to achieve positive outcomes.

1.31 Know how children and young people's communication skills develop, how to recognise communication difficulties, and how to support children and young people with communication needs.

1.32 Be aware that communication may be inhibited by factors such as cultural background.

1.33 Understand that certain issues such as sex, death and violence are particularly sensitive or difficult and that children, young people or their families may sometimes associate or experience stigma with certain issues, such as mental health problems. It may be necessary to explain to children, young people, parents and carers that it is helpful to discuss them.

1.34 Be aware that the child, young person, parent or carer may not have understood what is being communicated. Know how to check understanding.

1.35 Know how to report and record information formally and informally in the appropriate way for the audience.

1.36 Understand that sometimes it is necessary to go against a child, young person, parent or carer's expressed wishes in the best interests of the child or young person. If this happens, make sure the child or young person understands what is happening and why, unless to do so would increase the risk of harm to them or another person.

#### Sources of support

1.37 Know where information, advice and support services for children, young people, parents and carers are available locally.

1.38 Know when and how to refer to sources of information, advice or support from different agencies or professionals in children's or adult services.

#### Importance of respect

1.39 Be self aware. Know how to demonstrate a commitment to treating all people fairly. Be respectful by actively listening and avoiding assumptions. Make sure your actions support the equality, diversity, rights and responsibilities of children, young people, their parents and carers.

# Child and young person development

**2.1 This core area covers the physical, intellectual, linguistic, social and emotional growth and development of babies, children and young people. It is difficult to determine specific times when developmental changes occur, as they differ from person to person.**

2.2 It is essential to understand these changes, and the effect they can have on behaviour. Parents and carers may be well placed to identify developmental and behavioural changes in their children, but they may also find them difficult to cope with and may seek reassurance, information, advice and support at various stages. It is important to be able to assess and respond to children and young people's needs as they emerge, and to parents' and carers' needs for support at different stages.

2.3 Parents' and carers' engagement in their children's learning and development is a key factor in determining children and young people's attainment, physical and emotional health and well-being as well as their social and cultural development. The impact of parents' communicating and participating in activities with their children from an early age continues into adolescence and adulthood.

## Skills

### Observation and judgement

2.4 Observe a child or young person's behaviour, understand its context, and notice unexpected changes.

2.5 Recognise signs that a child or young person may be engaged in unusual, uncharacteristic, risky or harmful behaviour, including in the online world.

2.6 Listen carefully and respond to concerns expressed about developmental or behavioural changes.

2.7 Record observations appropriately. Observations should be based on evidence not opinion.

2.8 Evaluate the situation, taking into consideration the individual, their situation and development issues.

2.9 Be able to recognise the signs of possible developmental delay and/or regression in the behaviour of children and young people.

2.10 Support children and young people with developmental difficulties or disabilities.

2.11 Make considered decisions on whether concerns can also be addressed by providing, or signposting, additional sources of information or advice.

2.12 Where further support is needed, know when to take individual action and when to refer to managers, supervisors or other relevant professionals.

2.13 Judge when it is appropriate to intervene early to stop problems developing.

### Empathy and understanding

2.14 Support a child or young person to reach their own decisions while taking into account health and safety, any concerns about harm, and their age and stage of development.

2.15 Encourage children or young people to value their personal experiences and knowledge.

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**“We place a real emphasis on encouraging children’s development by getting them out of the classroom.”**

**Damian Mars, Nursery Worker**

## Knowledge

### Understand context

2.16 Know and recognise the child or young person’s position in their family or caring network, as well as a wider social context. Appreciate the diversity of these networks.

2.17 Understand the importance of parental engagement in their child’s learning and development, and the barriers that may be faced by parents and carers.

2.18 Understand that effective forms of parental engagement change as children and young people develop. Understand how the balance of influence from parents, peers, authority figures and others alters as the child or young person develops.

2.19 Understand and take into account the effects of different parenting approaches, family structures and composition, backgrounds and routines.

2.20 Know and recognise that for some children and young people, delayed or disordered development may be a symptom of an undiagnosed disability.

2.21 Understand how children or young people may be affected by underlying problems faced by them or their families, or their peers.

2.22 Understand the impact of technology on children and young people’s lives.

## Child and young person development

### Understand how babies, children and young people develop

2.23 Know that development includes emotional, physical, sexual, intellectual, social, moral and character growth, and that these can all affect one another.

2.24 Understand the different ways in which babies and children form attachments and how these might change.

2.25 Understand that babies, children and young people see and experience the world in different ways.

2.26 Understand the importance of forming positive relationships in the development of children and young people, and how this can be supported.

2.27 Understand that play and recreation that is directed by babies, children and young people – rather than by adults – has a major role in helping them to understand themselves and the world. It also helps them to build confidence and realise their potential.

2.28 Know how to interact with children and young people in ways that support the development of their ability to think, learn, and become independent.

### Be clear about your own job role

2.29 Understand that families, parents and carers should be treated as partners and respected for their lead role and responsibility in addressing the specific needs of their child.

2.30 Know when and how to obtain information, advice and support for children, young people, their parents and carers, and when and how to report concerns about their physical or emotional health and development.

2.31 Know how to use theory and experience to reflect upon, think about and improve practice. Know how to take responsibility for meeting your professional development needs.

2.32 Be aware that working with children, young people and their families may affect you emotionally and know how to access support for yourself to manage this professionally.

2.33 Draw upon personal experiences and other people's perspectives, to help you to reflect, challenge your thinking and to assess the impact of your actions.

2.34 Know how to motivate and encourage children and young people to achieve their full potential in their physical, emotional and social development and resilience. Know how to empower and encourage parents and carers to motivate and encourage their child.

# Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child or young person

**3.1** People who work with children and young people have responsibilities to safeguard and promote their welfare. This is an important responsibility and requires careful attention. It means being able to recognise when a child or young person is not achieving their developmental potential, or when their physical or mental health is impaired. It means recognising when a child is displaying risky or harmful behaviour, or is being neglected or abused. It also means being able to identify sources of help for them and their families. Sometimes more than one risk factor may be affecting a child or young person and it may be necessary to work with others to address them.

**3.2** It is important to identify concerns and where appropriate take action as early as possible so that children, young people, their families and carers can get the help they need. The proposed action should be proportionate to the nature and severity of the risk factors identified and build on strengths and positive factors. As well as ensuring that children and young people are not suffering from harm, it is equally important to ensure their well-being and quality of life.

## Skills

### Relate, recognise and take considered action

**3.3** Establish respectful, trusting relationships with children, young people, their parents and carers.

**3.4** Make considered judgements about how to act to safeguard and promote a child or young person's welfare. Where appropriate, consult the child, young person, parent or carer. This may mean making decisions early when the situation may not be clear, with a view to protecting children and young people from harm.

**3.5** Give the child or young person the opportunity to express their views and participate in decisions that affect them, as appropriate to their age and ability, and taking their wishes and feelings into account.

**3.6** Address barriers to a child or young person expressing their views due to disability, stage of development or other factors.



## Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child or young person

3.7 Judge when it is appropriate to speak to the child or young person on their own.

3.8 Involve parents and carers appropriately in safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare.

3.9 Recognise the factors that can affect parenting and increase the likelihood of a child being neglected or abused, for example domestic violence or parental substance misuse.

3.10 Recognise the range of possible behaviours which may harm children and young people. Know how to address them.

3.11 Support children and young people to develop resilience and build mental, physical, emotional and social well-being.

### Communication, recording and reporting

3.12 Use appropriate information and communication technology and language skills to observe, record and report.

3.13 Undertake formal, or informal, assessments and be alert to concerns about a child or young person's safety or welfare. This includes being alert to unexplained changes in behaviour and signs of abuse or neglect.

3.14 Be able to recognise when a child or young person's life is in danger, or when they are likely to suffer harm, and take action to protect them.

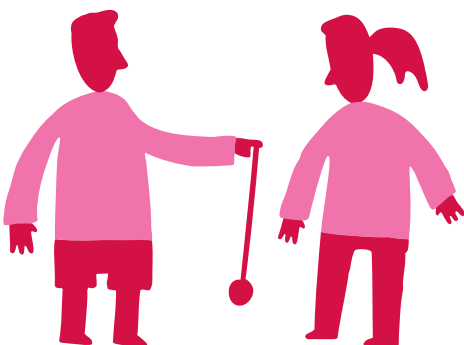
### Personal skills

3.15 Have self-awareness and the ability to analyse objectively.

3.16 Have the confidence to actively represent the child or young person and his or her rights.

3.17 Have the confidence to challenge the way you or others practise.

3.18 Develop appropriate professional relationships with children and young people.





## Knowledge

### Legal and procedural frameworks

3.19 Understand what is meant by safeguarding and the different ways in which children and young people can be harmed. This includes by other children and young people, by a single event or ongoing maltreatment, through the internet and other media, or by their own risk-taking behaviour.

3.20 Have awareness and basic knowledge, where appropriate, of the laws and policy areas relevant to your role that relate to safeguarding children and young people, including in the online world.

3.21 Know how to find information about the risk factors that may impair a child or young person's health or development.

3.22 Understand that signs of abuse or neglect can be subtle and be expressed in play, artwork or online activities, as well as behaviour and the way children and young people approach relationships with other children and adults.

3.23 Know about government and local guidance on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

3.24 Understand the crucial role that information sharing plays in maintaining the safety and well-being of children and young people.

3.25 Understand when information may be shared, with and without consent, to safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

### Wider context of services

3.26 Know when and how to discuss concerns with parents and carers.

3.27 Understand the use that children and young people make of new technologies to understand the implications of risks of harm.

3.28 Be aware of local procedures and inter-agency arrangements for safeguarding children and young people, including the role of adult services.

### Self understanding

3.29 Know the boundaries of personal competence and responsibility, when to involve peers, managers, supervisors or professional bodies, and where to get advice and support.

## Supporting transitions

4.1 The term ‘transitions’ is used to refer to changes between services, such as moving from primary to secondary school, or transitions at 16 to school, college, an apprenticeship or part time training alongside full time employment or volunteering. The term may also refer to life changes which may be common, such as experiencing puberty, or particular and personal transitions, not necessarily shared or understood by all their peers. These include: family illness or the death of a close relative, divorce and the split of the family, issues related to sexuality, adoption, the process of asylum, leaving care, teenage pregnancy, disabilities, parental mental health or substance misuse, and the consequences of crime.

4.2 As recognised in the sections on effective communication and child development, it is important to understand a child or young person in the context of their everyday lives, and to recognise the impact of transitions they may be going through or where they are struggling to cope. It is also vital to acknowledge the role of parents and carers in working in partnership to support children and young people at points of transition, and to understand the need for reassurance, advice and support that parents and carers may have.

### Skills

#### Identify transitions

4.3 Listen to children and young people’s concerns. Recognise and take into account the signs of changes in attitudes and behaviours.

4.4 Manage the process of transition in a timely way and help the child or young person to reach positive outcomes by making choices appropriate to their age and stage of development.

4.5 Support young people to develop confidence in their own decision making.



### Provide support

- 4.6 Communicate straightforward, reassuring messages about key transitions.
- 4.7 Reassure children, young people, their families and carers by explaining what is happening, by involving them in decisions as appropriate, and by exploring possible actions to deal with new and challenging situations.
- 4.8 Identify opportunities to discuss the effects and results of transition.
- 4.9 Act to ensure that information transfers ahead of the child or young person, when appropriate, to support transitions.
- 4.10 Illustrate the benefits and challenges of transition for a child or young person's physical, sexual, mental, intellectual, moral or social development.
- 4.11 Develop appropriate one-to-one relationships with children and young people and employ mentoring skills that enable the child or young person to address the various issues they may face in making transitions.
- 4.12 Make effective links with other practitioners if further support is necessary.
- 4.13 Operate cross-agency referral processes where appropriate.

### Knowledge

#### How children and young people respond to change

- 4.14 Understand issues of identity, delayed effects of change and be aware of possible signs that someone is going through a particular transition.
- 4.15 Know about the likely impact of key transitions, both between services and life changes.
- 4.16 Understand how transitions may affect those most at risk of exclusion or under-achievement and that it may be necessary to adapt or intensify support for these children or young people.
- 4.17 Understand patterns of transition from childhood to adulthood.
- 4.18 Understand that children and young people with disabilities or special educational needs (SEN) or at risk of not fulfilling their potential, and their parents or carers, may need additional support to manage transitions. Know when to seek specialist advice.

#### When and how to intervene

- 4.19 Know about organisational procedures and legal frameworks, as well as appropriate referral routes within your own organisation and to other agencies.
- 4.20 Know that in some family situations you may need to be more proactive about involving services – for example, if you know parents or carers have not accepted help, but are continuing to experience problems with their child's behaviour.

## Multi-agency and integrated working

**5.1 Multi-agency working means different services, agencies, teams of professionals and other staff working together to provide services that meet the needs of children, young people, and their parents or carers.**

5.2 As multi-agency working becomes more widely practised, it is increasingly referred to as integrated working, defined as where everyone supporting children, young people and families works together effectively, putting children, young people and their families at the centre of decision making in order to meet their needs and improve their lives. This is supported by a number of tools and processes that make integrated working more effective in meeting those needs. These include early intervention, information sharing, common assessment processes and supporting information and communication technology (ICT) tools.

5.3 There are a number of different models of multi-agency working. They include multi-agency panels, multi-agency teams, integrated services (such as extended services) and the team around the child approach.

5.4 To work successfully with children and young people it is important to be clear about your role and to be aware of, and respectful of, the roles of other workers and agencies. You should actively seek and respect other people's knowledge and input to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people. These behaviours should apply across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

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**“Bringing together professionals who share the same aim working to support young people is what integrated working is all about.”**

**Susan Priest,  
Social Worker**

## Skills

### Communication and teamwork

5.5 Communicate effectively with other practitioners and professionals by listening to them and ensuring that you are being listened to.

5.6 Provide timely, appropriate, succinct information to enable practitioners to deliver support to children, young people, parents or carers.

5.7 Record, summarise, and share information where appropriate, using information and communication technology skills where necessary.

5.8 Work in a team context, forging and sustaining relationships across agencies and respecting the contribution of others that work with children, young people and families.

5.9 Develop skills and knowledge with training from experts, to work with specialist services; enabling continuity for families, children or young people while enhancing your own skills and knowledge.

5.10 Share experiences through formal and informal exchanges.

### Assertiveness

5.11 Be proactive, initiate necessary action and be able to put forward your judgements.

5.12 Be persistent with families judged to need support even when they are reluctant to engage with offers of help.

5.13 Have the confidence to challenge situations by looking beyond your immediate role and asking considered questions. Be assertive about what is required to avoid or remedy poor outcomes for the child or young person.

5.14 Present facts and judgements objectively.

5.15 Judge when you should provide support to a child or young person yourself and when you should refer the situation to another practitioner or professional using common assessment processes where appropriate.

# Multi-agency and integrated working

## Knowledge

### Your role and remit

5.16 Know your main job and responsibilities within your working environment.

5.17 Understand the value and expertise you bring to a team and that which is brought by your colleagues.

5.18 Understand that different factors may combine to cause particular risks for children and young people, and that it may be appropriate to seek support from colleagues in other agencies early, before problems have developed.

### Know how to make queries

5.19 Know your role within different group situations and how you contribute to the overall group process.

5.20 Have a general knowledge and understanding of the range of organisations and individuals working with children, young people, their families and carers. Be aware of the roles and responsibilities of other professionals.

## Procedures and working methods

5.21 Know what to do in given cases – for example, referrals – involving appropriate services or raising concerns when a child or young person is at risk of harm or of not achieving their potential.

5.22 Know about procedures for intervening at an early stage, or where the situation is not clear.

5.23 Know what the triggers are for reporting incidents or unexpected behaviour.

5.24 Know how to work within your own and other organisational values, beliefs and cultures.

5.25 Understand that others may not have the same understanding of professional terms and may interpret abbreviations and acronyms differently.

5.26 Know what to do when there are insufficient responses from other organisations or agencies, while maintaining a focus on what is in the best interests of the child or young person.

5.27 Understand the procedures, objectives, roles and relationships of partner services, in order to work effectively alongside them.

5.28 Know about tools, processes and procedures for multi-agency and integrated working, including those for assessment, consent, and information sharing.

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*“I know there’s a lot more we can achieve through integrated working. I plan to develop every opportunity that comes up.”*

*Heather Clifford  
Head Teacher*

## Information sharing

**6.1** Sharing information in a timely and accurate way is an essential part of delivering better services to children, young people, their families and carers. Sometimes it can help to save lives. Practitioners at different agencies should work together and share information appropriately for the safety and well-being of children. It is important to understand and respect legislation and ethics surrounding the confidentiality and security of information.

**6.2** It is crucial to build trust with the child or young person and their family from the outset by clarifying issues and procedures surrounding confidentiality, consent and information sharing. Practitioners should adhere to the correct principles, policies and procedures for information sharing, ensuring that the child or young person, parent or carer understands the process.

### Skills

#### Information handling

**6.3** Make good use of available information, appraising its content and assessing what else might be needed.

**6.4** Bring together relevant information about clients, either by completing paperwork or electronically.

**6.5** Assess the relevance and status of information – for example whether it is observation or opinion – and handle it appropriately.

**6.6** Identify gaps in information.

#### Engagement

**6.7** Be open and honest with the child, young person and their family or carer about why, what, how and which information will, or could be shared, unless to do so would increase the risk of them or any other person suffering harm.

**6.8** Encourage children, young people and their families to consent to the sharing of information where appropriate, ensuring that they understand why it is important to do so, their rights and the implications of sharing or not sharing the information.

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**“90% of our time should be working with young people, not trying to find the right information from somewhere unknown.”**

**Becky Shorthose, Early Intervention Worker**



## Knowledge

### Importance of information sharing

- 6.9 Understand the need to balance the benefits and risks of sharing information with the benefits and risks of not sharing information and make a professional judgement based on the facts of the case.
- 6.10 Understand that consent is not always necessary to share information, even when the information is confidential. It may be shared without consent in certain circumstances, for example where a child is suspected of suffering or being likely to suffer significant harm, or when there are legal obligations to disclose information.
- 6.11 Understand that it is not always necessary to collect information directly from children, young people and families as this may frustrate them (if they are being asked to give the same information repeatedly). Be aware that information can often be gathered from other sources.

### Role and responsibilities

- 6.12 Know that information sharing usually involves the need to make case-by-case decisions about whether to share personal information, what to share, and with whom.
- 6.13 Know the importance of ensuring that information sharing is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure.
- 6.14 Know how to share information securely in writing, by telephone, electronically or in person.
- 6.15 Know what to record, how long to keep it, how to dispose of records correctly and when to feed back or follow up. This should include keeping a record of the decision to share or not to share information, the reasons for the decisions and what was shared with whom.
- 6.16 Be aware of your own, and other people's professional boundaries, particularly around confidential and sensitive information.

## Information sharing

### Awareness of complexities

- 6.17 Be aware that different types of information exist, for example personal information, confidential personal information, and sensitive personal information. Understand the implications of these differences.
- 6.18 Understand the importance of confidentiality and consent. Be aware that, in many cases, the consent of the child, young person or family will be required for the lawful sharing of information.
- 6.19 Be aware of the need to respect, where possible, the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. Know that information may be shared without consent if there is an overriding public interest.
- 6.20 Wherever possible, make clear to the child or young person, parent or carer how the information they provide will be used, unless to do so would increase the risk of harm to them or another person or hamper the investigation or prosecution of a serious crime – that is, a crime which causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a child or serious harm to an adult.

### Awareness of laws and legislation

- 6.21 Have awareness and sufficient knowledge of current legislation and the common law duty of confidentiality.
- 6.22 Know that the Data Protection Act (DPA) is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
- 6.23 Understand the legislation that governs your own profession; and the different policies and procedures surrounding confidentiality, consent and information sharing.
- 6.24 Be aware of any relevant legislation which specifically requires or restricts the disclosure of information.
- 6.25 Understand the principles that dictate when young people are considered sufficiently mature to give or refuse consent to their information being shared; in particular taking into account young people's ability to demonstrate understanding of what they are consenting to and the consequences of their decision.



The Children's Workforce Development Council leads change so that the thousands of people working with children and young people across England are able to do the best job they possibly can.

We want England's children and young people's workforce to be respected by peers and valued for the positive difference it makes to children, young people and their families.

We advise and work in partnership with lots of different organisations and people who all want the lives of all children and young people to be healthy, happy and fulfilling.

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