

# **Achieving permanence**

## **Responsibilities of managers/supervisors**

### **Introduction**

This briefing sets out how you, in your role as line manager/supervisor of a participant on the Achieving Permanence programme are required to support their learning and manage their development. It should be read alongside the Achieving Permanence programme Introduction and Overview document. The participant will need your support, encouragement and engagement before, during and after their learning journey with the programme.

### **Deciding who to put forward: the programme entry requirements**

Before putting your team member/supervisee forward for the Achieving Permanence programme, you need to be confident that they already evidence enhanced skill and confidence in:

- whole family assessment
- direct work with children/young adults and families
- preparation of analytical reports; ability to articulate defensible decision-making
- the practical skills required to prepare for and attend court.

All candidates must be:

- qualified for more than two years
- experienced in child and family social work
- experienced in care proceedings, either directly, or through shadowing another worker through a case
- engaged in regular reflective supervision.

You must also be satisfied that candidates have a clear understanding of:

- child development
- the impact of trauma and neglect on children/young adult's well-being;
- attachment and resilience
- child care and family law
- anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive social work practice.

### **Before**

You will be asked to formally verify that candidates:

- have/are working towards achieving a consistently high level of skill in child and family social work

- are consolidating all the requirements set out in the Knowledge and Skills Statement for Approved Child and Family Practitioners
- are engaged in complex and challenging practice
- are prepared for and open to advanced learning.

You will need to ensure that:

- the participant can commit to and fulfil every aspect of the programme
- the participant has a clear sense of what they hope to achieve (personal learning goals) and that you agree with these
- the participant's workload will give them opportunities to put their learning into practice
- the participants will have opportunities to demonstrate progress as they develop new skills and knowledge.

You should become familiar with the programme structure and content and discuss its requirements with the candidate.

You are responsible for ensuring that, before the participant engages with the Achieving Permanence programme, a clear process is in place to manage any complaints or difficulties that might arise (for example in relation to selection, attendance, participation, support, guidance and supervision, completion, or assessment).

## **During**

You will be afforded access to all material relating to the programme and should familiarise yourself with the content, expectations and requirements of each module.

You must enable the participant to attend the mandatory one-day workshops for all four modules. Participants should also be released for a mutually agreed period of time each week in order to fulfil the independent guided study. Within the first weeks of Module 1, you are expected to support them in drawing up a study plan/learning agreement that will enable them to complete all aspects of the programme. The learning agreement should specify release arrangements as well as clarify what of their own time candidates will commit to independent study.

Participants are expected to link new learning to their current work with children/young adults and families. You are responsible for identifying and sustaining relevant opportunities for the participant to learn and develop. For example, a participant's professional role may not routinely afford experiences where they can develop the full repertoire of knowledge and skills set out in the Knowledge and Skills Statement Achieving Permanence (2016). In that case, strategies such as secondments, joint working etc. should be devised, so that participants are able to practise and demonstrate the required skills and knowledge while they are on the Achieving Permanence programme.

In weeks one, two, five and six of each module, participants work independently on tasks and activities set out in the participant workbook. They are asked to discuss some of these with you in supervision.

Weeks three and seven of each module are designated as reading weeks. Essential reading is specified in the workbook for those weeks. Participants are encouraged to seek your guidance to help them identify and agree on relevant further reading throughout all four modules.

Both the face to face workshops and the learning materials are designed to be thought provoking. They demand that participants critically evaluate complex issues, think systemically, and engage creatively with the needs of children/young adults. Your supervision should mirror the expectation that the participant engages with research, theory, and practice at advanced level.

Structured opportunities to build evidence of personal and professional development are threaded throughout the programme. It is designed as an iterative process where participants review their practice, consolidate experiential and formal learning, and work with you to set themselves new developmental goals.

Participants are expected to engage in self-directed learning, and to take personal responsibility for their development, with a view to gaining confidence to make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations. You are expected to coach them towards more autonomy as they progress through the programme. It is hoped that by the end of the programme you will observe the participant demonstrating leadership within this field.

Participants are regularly directed to review their learning in supervision, and to discuss with you how the learning links to their practice with children/young adults, and families.

For example:

- during Modules 1 and 2, participants are expected to focus on one child/young adult they are concerned about, think about that child/young adult's relationships, and therapeutic needs
- participants are required to agree with you a theme or issue of special interest to them, and to create a "policy and practice " briefing paper alongside a plan for how this will be used to improve services.

It is intended that these discussions will contribute to:

- changing the participant's practice, both in the immediate short term and into the future
- enabling them to engage in or lead change within their service area
- identifying their professional aspirations.

As their line manager/supervisor you are in the best position to judge whether participants are successful in translating knowledge and ideas into improved direct practice with children/young adults and families. You should provide them with

constructive feedback, alongside a realistic appraisal of their progress, throughout each stage of the Achieving Permanence programme.

## **After**

Participants will be awarded a Certificate of Completion when they have successfully undertaken all elements of this Achieving Permanence programme.

This means that they are required to:

- participate in all four face to face workshops
- actively engage in online learning
- produce evidence of the development of their knowledge and expertise throughout the programme
- produce evidence of their enhanced skill in direct work with children/young adults, parents, carers, and other professionals; and
- create a practice portfolio that demonstrates the personal/professional development achieved and the impact of learning on practice.

You are responsible for reviewing participants' progress throughout the programme, ensuring also that they know and understand what you expect of them.

Participants are required to produce a practice portfolio and submit this to you after the programme ends. You are responsible for scrutinising this practice portfolio to ensure that it includes:

- evidence of engagement in all aspects of learning throughout the programme
- examples of reflective capacity and critical thinking
- discussion of how their learning and development has influenced their practice
- a plan for continuing professional development at the end of the programme
- evidence of self-evaluation as well as evaluation by children/young adults, parents and carers, professional peers, colleagues from across the multi-disciplinary network
- a "policy and practice " briefing paper on an area of special interest to the individual social worker. This is intended to deepen their understanding of one of the significant issues in achieving permanence. The goal is that both their team and their service will improve and transform practice.

A certificate of completion will be awarded when you have provided formal, written verification that the participant has completed a satisfactory portfolio, and demonstrated advanced social work practice that is consistent with the Knowledge and Skills Statement Achieving Permanence (2016).

If you identify that the portfolio needs enhancement, or that their practice does not meet the required standards, you will need to offer the participant guidance and support to make all necessary improvements.