

## **Bath and North East Somerset Council**

# **Caseload and Workload Monitoring Policy**

### **1. The Context**

- This caseload/workload policy is intended to create an easy-to-use, transparent process for staff and supervisors to discuss workload. It seeks to place any discussion of numbers of cases and workloads within a practice based framework.
- This Policy is based on the position that one child equates to one case. For example, if a Social Worker is working with a family of three children, this will count as three cases.
- The policy is also based on the presumption that it will assist in the equitable allocation of workload across teams and services.
- It is designed to be used in two ways. Firstly, because it is based simply on numbers of cases it is able to provide a very quick and easy guide to the type and complexity of work that Social Workers hold. Secondly, this provides a starting point for staff and supervisors to have a detailed discussion about the particular practice issues for each case and the issues that might (or might not) add complexity to the direct work with families. The list of workload issues set out in the policy are designed to act as a starting point for discussion of workload but are not exhaustive or definitive.
- There may be periods where the caseload for a practitioner either exceeds the prescribed guidance figures. In these circumstances, it will be important that both the staff member and the supervisor agree key tasks and those that might need to wait, and also agree a plan for reducing the overall caseload so that it can return to the agreed levels as soon as possible. If this is not felt to be achievable within a mutually agreed timeframe, then the matter must be raised with the line-manager so that additional scrutiny can assist in the reduction of the caseload.

### **2. How the Policy can be used**

Discussions of workload should highlight the importance of high quality recording which will be evidenced based, account for the views of service-users and other professionals. This will include an element of analysis. Each case will have a clear plan of intervention and will also be able to outline positive, achievable outcomes for the young person/family. The caseload/workload for each staff member should be in line with the aims and content of their skills set and should reflect their level of expertise and experience. The caseload/workload should challenge both the staff member and the supervisor to work at their optimum capability.

All case transfers will be overseen by the case transfer panel. The panel will meet on a weekly basis. All statutory visits must be covered and completed by the allocated Social Worker until the agreed date that the case will transfer. There should usually be a period of two weeks from the panel agreeing the transfer of the case, and the date that the new team assumes responsibility. From that agreed transfer date, it will be the responsibility of the new worker to undertake statutory visits.

**3. Suggested Optimum Case numbers within Services are as follows for qualified social work staff:**

- Duty and Assessment Team; 20-25 cases. (This would include; Assessments/s47 investigations/S7 and S37 reports/Pre-Birth assessments)
- Court and Child Protection Team; 18-22 cases. (This will include a mixture of court, CP and CIN cases)
- Disabled Children Team; 22-25 cases. (It is recognized that some cases where on-going provision is reviewed on a six-monthly basis will remain allocated to the "Team Hold" code)
- Children in Care Team; 18-22 cases
- Child In Need Team; 18-22 cases
- There is a separate allocation format for the Family Placement Team, which takes into account the slightly different requirements of caseloads that focus on the support of carers.
  
- NQSW's; 15 CIN cases or 12 LAC cases. No CP cases in the initial 9-12 months, and only then, following discussion in supervision about the appropriateness of the case and with agreement of both parties
- Students; Usually between 5-8 cases (dependent upon which year of their course)
- Family Support Practitioners; 17-20 CIN cases
- Leaving Care Practitioners; 22-25 young people

**4. Suggested Workload Issues are as follows;**

The Workload issues that need to be considered within any discussion/review of workload are as follows:

- a) Size of each family
- b) Court
- c) Complexity (e.g.; multiple presenting issues/disability/split addresses/violent or threatening parents)
- d) Distant placements
- e) Additional assessments (e.g.; Risk assessments/Connected persons assessments/court ordered assessments)
- f) Considerable background history that needs analysis and consideration
- g) Existing assessment/plans
- h) Co-working arrangements
- i) Intensive short-medium interventions

**5. Other Professional Issues that need to be taken into account  
in discussions of allocation are:**

- a) Membership of working groups
- b) Mentoring commitments
- c) PQ/MSc commitments
- d) Training commitments
- e) Attendance on courses/in-house training
- f) Practice Teaching
- g) Panel membership

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