“Keeping children safe is everyone’s responsibility … the £58m investment I am announcing today will mean more graduates, it will mean a better induction year, it will mean Master’s training; and particularly getting people with experience back into the social work profession and allowing them to stay and be rewarded at the front line. We need social workers and we need the best people to be social workers.”

— Rt Hon Ed Balls MP, Children’s Secretary, May 2009

“We see this [2020 workforce] strategy as an important step on our journey to making this country the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up in … We will need our partners at national, regional and local level – from trade unions to voluntary organisations, public bodies to private employers – to join together if we are to meet the workforce recruitment, retention, status, training and reward challenges we will all face in the next 12 years”

— Maggie Atkinson, Joint Chair, Children’s Workforce Expert Group, December 2008

Minding the Gap: Recruitment and Retention in Children’s Services

In a further response to the Baby Peter tragedy, the Government has pledged £58m towards employing more highly skilled social care professionals and improving overall recruitment and retention levels within the children’s services workforce. The new package of measures include:

- Sponsoring 200 university places from September to attract “the brightest and highest achieving graduates, from any discipline”
- Funding for a new master’s degree in social work, starting in early 2011
- A recruitment campaign to attract 500 experienced former social workers back into the profession
- Pilot schemes to give newly qualified social workers high-quality supervision and more structured training during their first year of practice
- Providing “advanced social work” status for experienced frontline professionals

This latest announcement seeks to underpin many of the commitments already outlined in the 2020 Children & Young People’s Workforce Reform Strategy published in December, which set out the Government’s vision of creating a children’s services workforce that is “ambitious, excellent, committed and valued”. Key proposals outlined include:

- Investing £73m over the next 3 years to improve social work training, induction, practice and recruitment
- Establishing a Social Work Taskforce to support the workforce reform programme
- Setting up a development programme to transform the leadership culture within children’s services

This special one-day conference, hosted by the Centre for Parliamentary Studies, offers a timely opportunity to assess the latest workforce reform measures and discuss their practical contribution to tackling deep-rooted recruitment and retention problems in children’s services. The conference will also consider what further measures still need to be implemented to build a robust framework with a workforce equipped to deliver the radical changes needed to improve the lives of all children and young people who need support and protection. Delegates will have the opportunity to debate, share best practice and network with colleagues from across the children’s services, local authority and government landscape.

Who Should Attend?

Directors of Children’s Services, Children’s Services & Families Services Officers, Local Safeguarding Children Boards, Sure Start, Children’s Trusts & Children’s Centres, Early Years & Childcare Practitioners, Children’s Health Service Professionals, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Practitioners, Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinators, Teachers & Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, HR, Training & Organisational Development Professionals, Local Education Authorities, Education Providers, Extended Schools Advisors, Social Workers & Social Services Officers, Children & Youth Organisations, Community Development Managers, Social Exclusion & Neighbourhood Renewal Teams, Youth Workers & Youth Offending Teams, Community Safety Teams, Police Service, Welfare Rights Organisations, Training Organisations, Employers, DCSF, DWP, DoH & other Central Government Departments & Agencies, Equality and Diversity Practitioners, Third Sector Practitioners, Academics & Researchers, Trade Unions

Event Details

Title: Minding the Gap: Recruitment and Retention in Children’s Services

Date: Tuesday 30th June 2009

Time: 10:00am — 5:00pm


Organiser

Public Policy Exchange, in association with the Centre for Parliamentary Studies, holds regular interactive seminars which provide an invaluable interface for policy discussion, debate and networking.

These special events offer local practitioners, civil servants and other stakeholders not only an insight into current policy thinking, but also the opportunity to feed into future policy development across all areas of public policy.

Overview

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