

# One Minute Guide – CSC Practice Framework Model

This guide explains the fundamentals of the CSC Practice Framework Model within Barking & Dagenham and details how these concepts inform all our work and collaboration.

Compassion

## What is CARES?

Accountability

Respect

Empowerment

Sharing

1. **Compassion** We treat children with compassion, see them as competent, give weight to what they communicate & keep the improvement of their lived experience central to our practice. We use creativity to help children express themselves, be heard & make sense of & process their experiences.
2. **Accountability** We hold ourselves, our partners & families to account, acting on the things that matter most. We recognise the harm caused by trauma & make a conscious, continuous effort to ensure our language & behaviour is human & kind.
3. **Respect** We are respectful of & responsive to children's culture, experience & the context they live in. We see risks through the child's eyes & keep the child's lived experience as the driving factor of all decision making. We respect children's right to education & ensure that learning & development are an integral part of all plans for the child.
4. **Empowerment** We empower children by developing their resilience. We build their self-esteem & sense of agency by celebrating their achievements large & small. We encourage their aspirations; we connect them to opportunities & go the extra mile to advocate for those children who are vulnerable or unable to advocate for themselves.
5. **Sharing** Children are safe & seen in assessments, decisions, plans, visits & reviews. We notice, we put ourselves in the child's shoes to understand what they see, think, feel & experience day to day, week to week, month to month. We take time to make connections, to mentalise children's behavior in terms of their underlying needs, to build stable, trusting relationships & to understand what each child needs to feel & be, safe, secure, happy & healthy. We let them participate so that nothing that occurs about them is without them.

# CARES– Practice principles

**Curious** : We show professional curiosity, thinking about all possible options and reasons for the child's experiences, remaining non-judgmental.

**Child centred** :We rigorously remain focused on the child and their views and experiences, advocating and showing advanced empathy.

**Collaborative** :We always involve the child and family in their plan, seeking views and working jointly with partners .

**Cultural competence** : we seek to understand all issues of marginalisation, prejudice, and discrimination, being activists in challenge and seeking justice. We will be culturally and contextually competent researching gaps in our knowledge, record views well and escalate where appropriate.

**Consistent** :We stay involved, stay focussed and stay committed, saying goodbye when we can safely move on

**Creative** :We think outside of the box in how we work, being expert engagers, always undertaking meaningful participation.

**Challenge** :We gently but robustly help families to demonstrate responsibility having courageous conversations where appropriate

**Communicative**: We use transparent, honest, and open ways to communicate and amplify the voices of those least heard

## What are the 10 Relational Practice Principles for CSC?

### *The ten (steps) components of relational practice*

#### 1. **Be collaborative.**

We **collaborate** with families as much as possible, using relational techniques to promote change for the child. These include the use of Attachment Theory, **mentalisation** and guided parenting tasks.

#### 2. **Be child centred.**

We focus on the **whole journey** of the child and aim to build relationships and **permanence** at every stage.

#### 3. **Use caring language, avoiding jargon and acronyms.** Consider what is **kind, child-centric** language building upon strengths.

#### 4. **Use yourself and your relationship as the main intervention and catalyst for change with children and families.**

Emphasising **'the use of self'** and the relationship as the mechanism through which interventions are channelled. This emphasises the need to be self-aware and be open to using your innate skills and what makes you unique, for e.g., can you play an instrument, speak another language, have a different coloured skin to others around you, then use all these things to impact change for those you relate to?

#### 5. **Respond contextually.**

Our practitioners recognise that family complexities are changing rapidly in the current socio-economic and political climate in the UK and **respond contextually** to this, by shaping financially creative and problem-solving techniques as part of the **helping relationship**.

#### 6. **Take a neutral stance / be non-judgemental.**

We are encouraging our practitioners to move away from solely psycho-dynamic "case"-led assessment

which can take a blaming approach to social work, to more of a **neutral stance**. We do this by hypothesising about what might be happening (one of many scenarios at any given time) and avoiding situations where we feel **certainty** about what is occurring (we are not flies on the wall and need to arrive at “safe uncertainty”).

7. **Be professionally curious.**

Our children and families should experience practitioners who *collaborate* with them at every stage of their journey with services. As far as is possible, practitioners will use **open-ended questions and professional curiosity**.

8. **Listen, observe, reflect, and analyse.**

Children and families should experience practitioners who are able to use reflective, observational, **analytical**, and advanced listening skills to evaluate levels of both potential and actual risk, in accordance with government guidance, policies and procedures to ensure the best outcomes for children are achieved.

9. **Think of people as often needing help to achieve and succeed, and that sometimes they are hindered due to trauma.**

Children’s social workers will be equipped to address unresolved trauma and loss, as the first port of call prior to therapeutic services. We will train you to utilise Trauma-Informed approaches to your work.

10. **Be human.**

As part of a more collaborative approach, we want you to think what you might like if you were in the service user’s shoes. This is all about advanced empathising, being self-aware and inclusive and is typified by taking a human approach to our work. For example, as the lead practitioner you could coordinate a multi-agency **team around the relationship**.

## **Our Range of Approaches which sit under Relational Practice**

### **Restorative Practice**

#### **Who currently uses this approach and why?**

Youth Justice Service, Specialist Intervention services such as Mediation, FGC and other group work focused interventions. The aim is for improvement; to repair harm where there has been conflict. Like Relational Practice, Restorative Practice is a way of behaving which helps to build and maintain healthy relationships, here we work with and alongside people, rather than make decisions about them in isolation. We utilise this approach because there is strong evidence to say that outcomes for children and their families are improved when we act in this way.

## **Strengthening Families**

### **Who currently uses the approach and why?**

Our Assessments and Child Protection child protection conferences use Strengthening Families; an approach where honest and respectful relationships between the worker and families, and between all professionals involved, help to achieve a shared understanding of what needs to change and how this will be achieved within a culture where collaborative, appreciative inquiry methods are valued. We use this because we want practitioners to recognise and work with foremost the strengths of the family and ability to collaborate with them to reach agreed goals.

## **Trauma Informed Practice**

### **Who currently uses this approach and why?**

Trauma-informed Practice recognizes and responds to the signs, symptoms, and risks of trauma to better support the health needs of children and parents who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress. Our Youth Justice Service use these skills set, and as we embark on embedding a contextual safeguarding approach in LBB, this approach will be promoted more widely to ensure practitioners respond appropriately to and recognise the trauma they see and experience daily.

## **Contextual Safeguarding -being mindful of the child and family's context in your work with them.**

### **Who currently uses this approach and why?**

The approach is being introduced into all areas of social work, but currently is more established in the Adolescent and Youth Justice Service. We use it to ensure that practitioners are consistently mindful of the context of the child, young person, and family they are working with, to flexibly plan safeguarding *around them* rather than bring them into traditional statutory mechanisms. This primarily addresses *extra-familial* harm.

## **Transitional Safeguarding**

### **Who currently uses this approach and why?**

Corporate Parenting teams as they think about the interface with Adults Services for some of those young people leaving our care. Also, Adolescent and Youth Justice services for those young people entering criminality or who become subject to custody. We use this approach to ensure that children's *transitions* into adulthood become planned for and centralised to our work with them.

## **Safe & Together Approach for working with Domestic Abuse**

### **Who currently uses this approach and why?**

The Safe & Together™ Model is a recognized suite of tools and interventions designed to help child welfare professionals become domestic violence informed. The whole of CSC uses this model which focuses on 3 governing principles; 'keeping the child safe and together with the non-Justice parent, partnering with the non-Justice parent as our default position and intervening with the perpetrator to reduce risk and harm to the child.' We use this approach because we know victims of domestic abuse can often suffer having to leave their home, losing their child, becoming blamed due to the nature of risk assessment and workers often losing sight of the child because of the parental focus.

## **New Town Culture for working creatively with children and families.**

### **Who currently uses this approach and why?**

New Town Culture is a programme of artistic and cultural activity in children's social care. They support artists, social care staff and carers to explore new creative ways of working to compliment social care services and to unlock the value of art and culture for all LBB communities. The project incorporating a creative social work course with Goldsmiths University and creative mentoring is currently being embedded into our services and is being used to help practitioners develop different thinking about the children and families they work with.

