

Cafcass Workforce Development Strategy

2017-20

This Workforce Development Strategy, sets out the key people priorities that will contribute to delivery of the Cafcass strategic objectives to 2020. We have a broad and diverse workforce comprising employed staff, self-employed and agency workers who deliver direct frontline social work services to children. Underpinning this we have a range of vital specialist functions whose role is to provide critical support to ensure the best possible frontline service provision.

As an organisation we must continue to deliver outstanding services for children and families, whilst managing increasing levels of demand for our services. With this in mind our priority for the first year of the strategy and beyond is to expand workforce capacity and capability through a focused programme of resourcing. Our Workforce Development Strategy has four key themes and sets out our key plans in respect of each of these areas:

Talent Attraction

Supporting our People

People Development

Rewarding Performance

Although our four key themes will not change, the specific strategies and targets that are encompassed may do. The Workforce Development Strategy supports our organisational culture and objectives and therefore must remain agile to respond to changes in the internal and external environment, including any factors affecting the sector workforce.

This strategy will be a live document that is updated regularly to report on both our progress and any changes in approach. A six monthly progress report will be submitted to the Board and the Executive with updates at every Board meeting. The Workforce Development Strategy is owned by the organisation and by the whole workforce to whom it applies, as such updates will be shared widely with staff as appropriate.

TALENT ATTRACTION

Vision:

Cafcass attracts and engages sufficient numbers of talented people to meet our current and future challenges; those people who have the right skills, knowledge and attitudes to contribute to the delivery of outstanding outcomes for our service users. Selection decisions will be based on an efficient, safe and fair recruitment process.

As a potential applicant, Cafcass...

- has a high profile and is an employer of choice, offering me clear opportunities for career development, being innovative in its working practices and focused on my learning and development;
- has a strong employer brand, a positive, discernible culture of high performance, learning, development and continuous improvement and a compelling appeal, providing clarity about how my role will contribute to improving outcomes for vulnerable children and families;
- emphasises the benefits of working for them, through its advertising and job application process, helping me to understand the unique nature of its work and making it easy for me to find and apply for the job I want;
- makes the application and selection experience engaging, with clarity of information and efficient processes at each stage to help me demonstrate my best performance;
- offers an attractive total rewards package, with a competitive salary and flexible ways of working that promote my work life balance and continuing learning and development;
- uses data and business intelligence to enable us to better understand the children's social care workforce;
- understands and responds to changes affecting the sector workforce and adapts their attraction strategies accordingly;
- has an onboarding/induction process that supports me to quickly understand Cafcass, how I can make a positive contribution to developing the culture within the organisation and to feel at home as part of a team, able to start achieving my potential straight away.

How we will measure impact:

- The number of applicants per vacancy;
- The percentage of posts recruited to first time;
- The time taken from post approval to conditional offer;
- The percentage acceptance of offers of employment;
- The percentage turnover of new starters (leavers within 12 months of starting).

SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE

Vision:

Cafcass is characterised by strong workforce engagement and support for colleagues to maximise their full potential, having the capacity and flexibility to be able to respond to change and new challenges whilst maintaining the requisite quality of service delivery. We will continue to prioritise this whilst supporting and enhancing our people's physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

As an employee I can see how Cafcass...

- develops and implements initiatives to further enhance my feelings of engagement and satisfaction with the vision of the organisation, supporting and encouraging me to contribute ideas and feedback and to work as part of an effective team to respond to change and / or increased challenges;
- uses a range of tools, technology, training and development to support and empower me and my managers to champion staff wellbeing and a healthy work environment, supporting me to take greater responsibility for my own health;
- seeks to understand and takes steps to alleviate the work pressures on me and my colleagues, provides clarity about the expectations of my role while maintaining a focus on wellbeing to assist me to be able to achieve optimal performance and realise my full potential;
- is proactive in supporting me at times when I am under pressure (in work or outside of the workplace), to prevent or reduce any feelings of stress or anxiety I may experience;
- recognises my contribution and that of others through celebrating high performance and staff loyalty in a fair and timely way, at a local and organisational level;
- nurtures our workforce to become even more agile and able to adapt to changing organisational needs, with new ways of working and appropriate assistive technology continually being explored, developed, explained and implemented;
- commissions and utilises advanced IT systems, equipment and information analytics for the whole organisation which are relevant to business need and designed to enable staff to work effectively, efficiently, remotely in an agile way that prioritises impact for children and service users;
- deploys a dedicated team of IT trainers to support all staff to understand and obtain the full utility of the IT systems and equipment at their disposal;
- supplies me with a range of data and information about my performance, contribution and continual professional development.

How we will measure impact:

- The outcome of engagement surveys and the monitoring of follow-up actions;
- Feedback from staff focus groups;
- The outcome of pulse surveys;
- Average Working Days Lost due to sickness absence and the reasons for sickness absence;
- Organisation KPIs which demonstrate that we continue to meet organisational requirements;
- Feedback from staff via Performance and Learning Reviews (PLR) process, dedicated surveys, IT trainers and ECMS Champions to measure the effectiveness of IT system and equipment usage and future developments required;
- Staff usage of myWork and workload tools to test the engagement of staff with regard to key information on performance and contribution.

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

Vision:

As an organisation that continually strives to be outstanding, we will continue to be a learning organisation, with managers and staff who have an appetite for learning and where all staff and services, whatever their role, understand and can articulate their contribution to improving outcomes for service users. As such, all of their learning and development will contribute to continuous improvement of front line services.

As an employee I...

- have regular conversations with my manager about how I am doing, what I have learned and how best to achieve my full potential;
- benefit from learning that is accessible when and where I need it, that is up-to-date and delivered across a range of platforms, reflecting changes within and external to the organisation;
- realise my role in embedding a 'feedback culture' throughout the organisation. I am encouraged to provide feedback and am receptive to feedback about my performance, understanding that this is a key feature in helping me to learn and improve;
- understand how formal learning programmes such as leadership & management development and talent management are supported by more informal, social learning to harness our organisational expertise and learn from each other;
- access social learning, communities of practice and networks of practice experts;
- adopt a strengths-based approach to development; meaning I get the chance to use my strengths, to be energised in my work and be even more successful;
- will commit to making the most of new technology to improve my learning and support me in becoming more successful in my role;
- know how learning has helped me, my team, my area and the organisation to be successful in providing outstanding service to children and families;
- am supported to fulfil any mandatory professional assessment and accreditation applicable to my role.

How we will measure impact:

- The percentage of Performance and Learning Reviews (PLRs) completed, the percentage of PLR ratings and PLR audit outcomes that meet or exceed expectations;
- The percentage take-up of learning by type, over time, by role and location;
- The impact of feedback culture and mechanisms, e.g. surveys, focus groups;
- Analysis of the "70-20-10" learning model in Cafcass;
- The level of engagement with social learning and evaluation of its impact.

REWARDING PERFORMANCE

Vision:

Cafcass recognises and rewards the contribution of colleagues in a way which supports and encourages all to perform to the best of their abilities and to achieve their potential, thus retaining the very best talent within the organisation. Our approach to reward recognises the need to be flexible across and within service areas, is sustainable within current and future budgets and will at all times remain compliant with government policy and guidelines.

As an employer we...

- ensure that we maintain salaries that are sufficiently competitive in order to attract and retain high performing people across the country;
- understand that our salaries and other financial rewards will allow us to address differing regional resourcing issues and will include attraction/retention premiums where there is a demonstrable business case for doing so;
- ensure that our pay structures are clear, simplified as far as possible and support and reward career progression;
- desire to have a diverse workforce and will seek to offer a range of benefits which are attractive to all;
- continue to innovate in order to provide a total reward package (salary plus non-financial benefits) which is relevant to our workforce and maximises value for money;
- use data and intelligence about the wider sector to identify opportunity and risk with regard to package and reward;
- include appropriate non-financial elements in our total-reward package which support health and wellbeing, enable flexible/agile working and enhance personal development;
- underpin our reward strategy with appropriate recognition methods for those colleagues whose talent, efforts and contribution to outcomes for frontline service delivery go above and beyond in support of our key priorities. This may include such mechanisms as peer recognition and nomination schemes, spotlighting particular work and non-work based achievements.

How we will measure impact:

- Salaries to be benchmarked regularly against equivalent sector roles;
- Uptake of voluntary/lifestyle benefits;
- Internal survey evidence/feedback demonstrates that total reward package is understood and valued by the whole workforce.