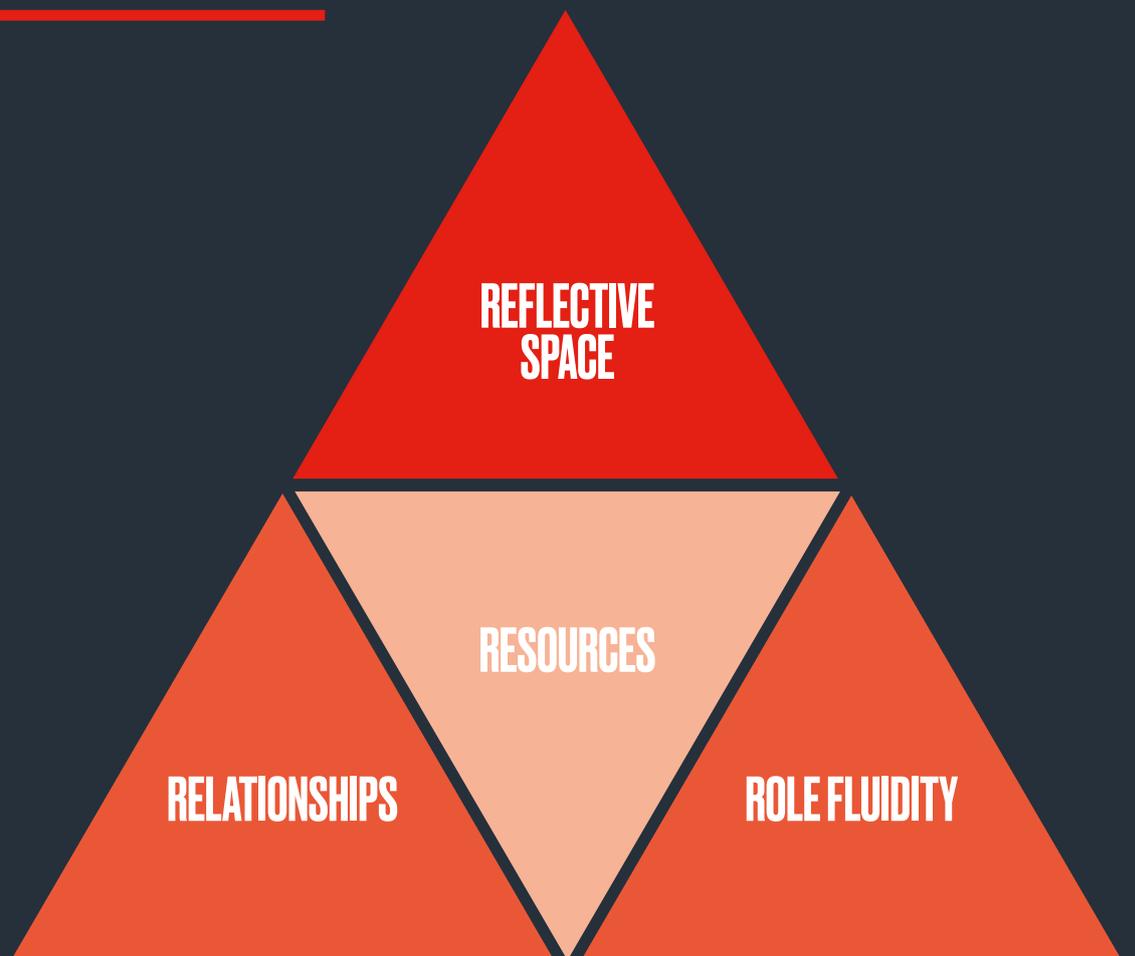


**SOUTH EAST  
LONDON**



**TEACHING  
PARTNERSHIP**

**EVALUATION REPORT  
JUNE 2018**



# CONTENTS

<b>1.</b>	<b>Acknowledgements</b>	Page 4
<b>2.</b>	<b>Summary</b>	Page 5
<b>3.</b>	<b>Context</b>	Page 6
3.1	The Development of the South East London Teaching Partnership	Page 6
3.2	The Partnership's Objectives	Page 6
3.3	Governance and Staffing	Page 7
3.4	Areas of Activity	Page 7
<b>4.</b>	<b>Scope of the Evaluation</b>	Page 8
<b>5.</b>	<b>Methods</b>	Page 8
<b>6.</b>	<b>Findings</b>	Page 9
6.1	Continuing Professional Development	Page 9
6.1.1	The CPD-focused Evaluation	Page 11
6.1.2	The New MA in Professional Leadership in Social Work	Page 13
6.2	Academics into Practice Initiative	Page 14
6.3	Teaching Consultant Programme	Page 17
6.4	Recruitment and Selection of Social Work Students	Page 20
6.5	Placement Provision for Social Work Students	Page 22
6.5.1	Student Hubs	Page 22
6.5.2	Quality of Practice Education	Page 23
6.6	Transition into Practice for Social Work Students	Page 23
6.7	Intervision Model of Reflective Practice	Page 26
6.7.1	Intervision Groups for MA and BA Social Work Students	Page 26
6.7.2	Intervision Groups within Local Authorities	Page 28
6.8	Experts by Experience Activities	Page 28
6.9	Research into Practice Initiatives	Page 29
6.9.1	Research in Practice/Research in Practice for Adults	Page 30
6.9.2	Twilight Sessions	Page 33
6.9.3	SELTP Conference 2017	Page 34
6.9.4	Impact and Evaluation Workstream	Page 35
6.9.5	Practitioner Involvement in Research	Page 35
6.9.6	Knowledge Transfer with the City of London	Page 27
6.10	Workforce Analysis	Page 37

<b>7</b>	<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Page 38</b>
7.1	What has worked well and what has worked less well	Page 38
7.2	Sustainability: a model for a well-functioning teaching partnership in future	Page 40
7.2.1	Reflective Space	Page 41
7.2.2	Relationships	Page 42
7.2.3	Role Fluidity	Page 43
7.2.4	Resources	Page 44
<b>8.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Page 45</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>Page 46</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>References</b>	<b>Page 47</b>
	Appendix A - SELTP CPD Qualitative Evaluation Report Appendix B - The Experiences of Social Workers who Teach Social Work Students in the Classroom: A Research Report Appendix C - List of Sources for this Evaluation Appendix D - Theory of Change for 2018-19 Evaluation	



# 1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*The South East London Teaching Partnership has been a labour of love for a large number of people since it came into existence in 2015. These people include social work practitioners and managers, academics and organisational development practitioners and Experts by Experience. In times of acute financial restriction, to embark upon a project of this kind requires a leap of faith and we would like to acknowledge the senior leaders past and present who have been willing to take this leap.*

We would like to acknowledge the considerable support of the following valued colleagues and collaborators with the production of this report and the data collection and analysis:

---

Debbie Hole  
Conrad Moriarty-Cole  
Linda Crawford  
Nika Dorrer  
Charlie Baker  
Nimal Jude  
Lee Clark  
Adi Staempfli  
Mark Taylor  
Keith Goodman  
Dan Timariu  
Tom Henri  
Sharon Jennings  
Jeanette Sutton (RiP/RiPFA)

---

*Rachel Hughes, Anna Fairtlough  
and Joan Fletcher  
June 2018*

## 2. SUMMARY

---

Quote from a Principal Social Worker about a multi-generational group for young care-experienced mothers which captures the essence of SELTP

*“This multi-generational multifamily group would not have happened without the Teaching Partnership because: There wouldn’t have been the relationships to exchange information and ideas in the first place. We wouldn’t have had the resources to release a full time Practice Educator to work with students to establish this group. We wouldn’t have used academics to provide consultancy. We wouldn’t have had time & resources to make it happen. We wouldn’t have had the practitioner time to get our head above the parapet to discuss & consider a relevant evidence-based intervention”*

*SELTP Principal Social Worker*

---

This evaluation report considers the principal activities of the South East London Teaching Partnership between 2016 and 2018. It identifies the Teaching Consultant programme, the approach to placement provision, the roll-out of the Intervision (intercolleagial) reflection practice model and the Academics into Practice programme as activities which worked particularly well. There have been notable, quantifiable achievements in these areas including:

- **745 hours of classroom teaching co-designed and co-delivered by practitioners**
- **94% of 2016-2017 teaching rated by social work students as 4 or 5 (highest rating)**
- **230 practitioners attending ‘Twilight’ sessions**
- **Over 400 practitioners completing SELTP accredited CPD workshops and courses**
- **99% of 2017-2018 placements in the statutory sector with 72% in partner boroughs**
- **90% students employed six months after qualifying, with a trend towards more of them taking up posts within the partnership**

Key areas for future development include supporting frontline practitioners’ engagement with research, continuing to develop the CPD offer to best meet the needs of practitioners, organisations, service users and the profession, and building on the workforce development activities that have begun.

Activities which have been successful have been characterised by reflective space, relationships and relational knowledge, role fluidity and resources. Keeping this in mind should contribute to the sustainability of the Partnership’s activities in future.

# **3. CONTEXT**

## **3.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELTP**

The South East London Teaching Partnership (SELTP) was one of four pilot social work teaching partnerships established with Department for Education and Department of Health funding in 2015. The core members of the Partnership are the London Borough of Southwark, the Royal Borough of Greenwich, the London Borough of Lewisham and Goldsmiths, University of London. The City of London Corporation and the organisation Research in Practice/Research in Practice for Adults joined the Partnership as Associate Members in 2017. In 2016, the SELTP Programme Board applied for and was granted continuation funding to continue the work of the Partnership in 2016-2018. This report focuses on the activities of the Partnership during 2016-2018. The Partnership now has further funding to continue its programme into 2018-2019; this programme will be the subject of a separate evaluation.

## **3.2 THE PARTNERSHIP'S OBJECTIVES**

The Partnership's shared ambition is to recruit and retain a permanent, capable social work workforce that delivers effective personalised relationship-based social work, that makes a positive difference to service users. The Partnership wants social workers to progress their careers in South East London. It wants its social workers and those who supervise and lead them to focus on continuous improvement in their practice, to the benefit of service users. It wants to bring the workplace into the university and the university into the workplace. The Partnership wants to develop a centre of excellence in the provision of social work and build a community of learning that attracts students and social workers. It wants its services to be flexible and adapt to the current and future needs of our diverse communities.

The Partnership's objectives reflect its collaborative areas of work across the whole social worker workforce planning system. These objectives are consistent with and contribute to the individual workforce development plans of the three local authority partners. The objectives are to:

1. Select students who are motivated and have the potential to become effective person-centred and outcome-focused social workers
2. Train and develop students through providing high quality placements in statutory settings with well-supported and capable practice educators, joint delivery of training and other learning opportunities for students through using the teaching consultants in the university
3. Provide high quality learning and development opportunities. Use a shared social work career pathways model to address the continuing professional development needs of our workforce: staying in practice and developing specialisms, practice education and teaching, and leadership and management
4. Provide opportunities for academic university staff to deepen their understanding of social work in practice and contribute through research to our understanding of the needs of people who use our services and how we can best improve outcomes for them

## 3.3 GOVERNANCE AND STAFFING

The Partnership is governed by a Programme Board. During the period covered in this evaluation, membership of the Board consisted of the SELTP Programme Director and Workforce Development Adviser, the Directors of Children's and Adults' Social Care and the Principal Social Workers from the three local authority partners, the Head of Social Work and the Professor of Social Work from Goldsmiths, University of London and representatives from the City of London Corporation.

During the 2016-2018 phase, the work of the Partnership was co-ordinated by a team of paid staff including the Programme Director (1.0), the Workforce Development Adviser (1.0), two (0.25) Research, Evaluation and CPD Advisers and three (0.5) Workforce Leads based in the partner local authorities. The work of the Partnership was also carried out by academic and administrative staff in the social work team at Goldsmiths, University of London, staff in the Learning and Development /Organisational Development teams of the partner boroughs and practitioners working as 'Teaching Consultants' or as researchers.

The Partnership is a member of the National Network of Teaching Partnerships, which it helped to found following the 2017 SELTP Conference.

## 3.4 AREAS OF ACTIVITY

The Partnership has been active in a wide range of areas since its inception. In this report its activities have been categorised into ten areas:

1. Continuing Professional Development for qualified Social Workers
2. Academics into Practice Initiative
3. Teaching Consultant Programme
4. Recruitment and Selection of Social Work Students
5. Placement Provision for Social Work Students
6. Transition into Practice for Social Work Students
7. Intersession Model of Reflective Practice
8. Experts by Experience Activities
9. Research into Practice Initiatives
10. Workforce Analysis

*An explanation of each of these areas of activity is included below (section 4), although for full details, the original documentary sources for this evaluation report should be consulted. These are available on the SELTP website or from Rachel Hughes or Anna Fairtlough.*

## 4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation focused on the activities of the SELTP during 2016-2018. The SELTP now has further funding to continue its programme into 2018-2019; this programme will be the subject of a separate evaluation. This 2016-2018 evaluation is an internal one, carried out by a team led by the SELTP's Research, Evaluation and CPD Advisers. In line with Department for Education/ Department of Health requirements, it is an evaluation of activities (essentially, what worked well and what worked less well) rather than an impact evaluation. As such, it is a data-driven evaluation rather than a theory-driven one. Planning for the 2018-2019 is already underway and a theory of change has been developed for the purposes of that evaluation (Appendix D). Governance and communications have been excluded from the scope of this evaluation as it was felt that these areas could not easily be tackled in an internal evaluation. We (the internal evaluators) recommend some form of external evaluation addresses these areas in future.

## 5. METHODS

During the 2016-2018 phase and previously during the pilot phase of the Partnership, a large amount of management information has been generated for the purposes of ongoing internal audit. This includes the data and analyses provided as part of quarterly returns to the Department for Education. We (the evaluators) have had access to all of this information to use in our evaluation. We have also had access to management information routinely generated by Goldsmiths, University of London. This includes, for example, data on the recruitment, attainment and diversity of social work students, statistics relating to student placements and evaluation forms completed by social work students and practitioners participating in CPD courses. In addition we have generated data through focus groups, interviews and observations of the Partnership's activities and we have also drawn on published articles about the work of the Partnership. **A list of data sources is included in Appendix C.**

The data sources have been analysed thematically, with reports being produced on each sub-set of data. These reports have then been collated and analysed for the purposes of evaluating the whole programme. Where necessary, we have returned to the original data in order to complete our whole programme analysis.

# 6. FINDINGS

In this section we report on our findings, identifying what worked well and what worked less well within each area of activity. In each sub-section we begin by providing brief factual details about each area of activity, referring back to the Partnership's 2016-2018 implementation plan. In the section which follows (5) we draw out common themes and also consider sustainability.

## 6.1 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Developing the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) offer for qualified social workers was a major component of the work of Partnership between 2016 and 2018. This area of work had three main threads: development of a coherent CPD framework that supports whole career progression; piloting, implementation and evaluation of a range of new CPD courses and programmes; and a comprehensive review and re-write of the accredited modules and programmes on offer at Goldsmiths, University of London. The CPD framework is aligned to the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF), the Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS) for children and family and adults social workers and the KSS for practice supervisors and practice leaders. It was designed to support the Partnership to implement the child and family National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) by providing a range of CPD opportunities for practitioners, supervisors and those responsible for endorsing practice and determining readiness for assessment decisions. The framework aims to provide a flexible set of CPD opportunities to support the development of expertise amongst the workforce in direct practice, practice education, leadership and management. It includes both short courses and modules that carry recognised academic and professional credits at different academic levels, to meet the diverse needs and aspirations of practitioners and managers. It recognises that much professional development occurs through experiential on-the-job learning and work collaboration, social learning through supervision, peer learning and mentoring as well as through more formal learning programmes and events. All three learning modes need to be integrated.

The Partnership has funded a greatly expanded set of CPD opportunities for practitioners and managers within South East London. The CPD opportunities have been delivered by number of different providers including Skills for Care, Research in Practice and Research in Practice for Adults, the Centre for Action Learning Facilitation, Royal Holloway, Goldsmiths and a range of individual specialist practitioners and academics delivering twilight sessions. Take up of these CPD opportunities was good overall although not all of the available places were filled and not all planned intakes of all the programmes or courses ran.

Two programmes did not run (the Subject Matter Experts and the Senior Managers programme) though we intend to deliver the latter in 2018/9. We hypothesise that competing priorities for staff and the pressures of managing the day-to-day work meant that releasing staff to undertake this expanded range of opportunities was challenging. Additionally, because confirmation of funding was delayed the time frame for delivering these programmes was compressed adding to these pressures.

# SOUTH EAST LONDON TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

Assessed and Supported Year in Employment

Consolidation and Early Professional Development (1 x 30 credit module)

NASS for Children's Social Workers

KSS Practice Supervisor Assessment

KSS Practice Leaders Assessment

PEPS 1 & 2 Practice Education (2 x 15 level 7 credit modules)

Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Programmes

Fully Taught Level 7 Academic Modules

National Policies and Standards

Work Based Learning Modules Level 7 (15-60 credits)

## PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP - DIRECT PRACTICE

Accredited Level 7 Practice Modules - e.g. Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse

The Care Act and Social Work Interpersonal Skills for Direct Work with Adults

Accredited Level 7 Work Based Learning Modules

Academic Recognition of Learning and Practice Expertise in Direct Practice

## PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP - EDUCATION, SUPERVISION, PRACTICE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Designing and Facilitating Learning for Teams and Groups (2 x 15 level 7 credit modules)

Professional Supervision and Practice Assessment (1 x 15 level 7 credit module)

Reflective Supervision within and Across Organisations (1 x 15 level 7 credit module)

ILM Aspiring Leaders Programme (Level 5)

ILM Practice Supervisors Programme (Level 5)

ILM Practice Leaders Programme (Level 7 can be used directly for recognition of prior learning (RPL) to gain credit for academic level 7 modules)

Accredited Work Based Learning Modules  
Academic Recognition of Learning and Practice Expertise in Education, Supervision, Practice Assessment and Management

## PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP - RESEARCH IN SOCIAL WORK

Research Methods in Professional Leadership (15 x Level 7 credit module)

Research and Practice in Professional Leadership in Social Work (45 x Level 7 credit module)



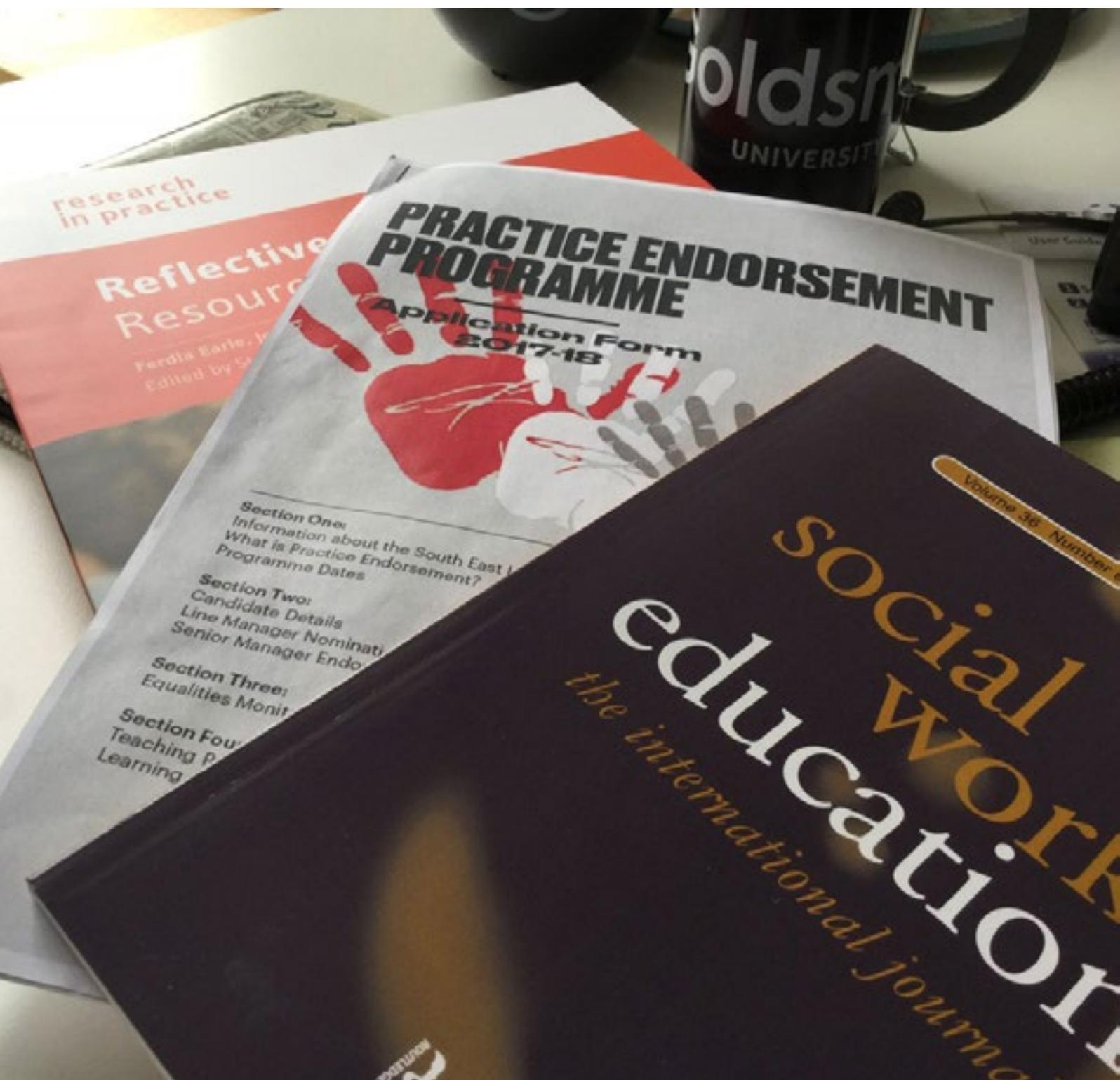
## **6.1.1 THE CPD-FOCUSED EVALUATION**

In addition to the routine post-event or post-module feedback forms, we wished to gain a deeper insight into the impact of a selection of these programmes from the point of view of participants. Recent policy initiatives developing standards for practice supervisors and practice leaders have highlighted the centrality of good quality supervision in supporting social workers to do good quality social work. In the light of this we chose to focus this component of the evaluation on four of the new programmes and courses that were geared towards practice supervisors, and aspiring and actual leaders and managers. The evaluation design was informed by Research in Practice's (2012) publication on training transfer that highlights four factors that influence how far learning is transferred into practice: the individual characteristics of the learner; training design and delivery; subject climate and workplace factors. **Appendix A SELTP CPD qualitative evaluation report provides a full account of this evaluation.** The overall conclusions and recommendations are highlighted below.

The CPD evaluation aimed to provide an in-depth picture, from the perspective of those who have participated as learners, of four of the new CPD programmes initiated by the SELTP. These four programmes were designed to provide a range of CPD opportunities, some of which carried recognised qualifications for practice supervisors, leaders and managers at different stages of their careers. This report needs to be used alongside other sources of data about the value or otherwise of the programmes. An obvious caveat to this report is that only a sample of the learners on the programmes were interviewed and our participants may not be representative of all of the learners. We were only able to recruit 13 out of the 24 participants we originally planned to interview. Nonetheless, the sample does provide a good spread of participants from across the four programmes and the three LAs and some rich and valuable data have emerged. There is clearly a demand for good quality CPD opportunities, attuned to social work practice and environments, for practice supervisors, leaders and managers. The vital role this group of staff play in providing support to social workers to provide an effective social work service emerged strongly from the interviews. Participants gave some powerful and concrete examples of how the programmes have contributed to enhancing their supervision and leadership practice. Practitioners welcomed the opportunity to reflect on their practice as supervisors, leaders and managers, which is all too frequently neglected given their day-to-day work pressures. In general, the interactive, skills-based components of the programmes were the most valued.

Each of the four programmes has been reported on separately to inform decision-making about which programmes, if any, should be offered in the future for this group of staff. The degree to which participants gave a positive evaluation about the programme they attended differed widely between participants on the same programme, though overall the reflective supervision course was highly appreciated by all of the participants. This indicates that each programme may have its own strengths and limitations, and that careful consideration of the suitability of each programme for an individual is warranted.

Participants did not identify that support for research-informed practice was a strong feature of any of the programmes. In general, with a few exceptions, participants felt that they had been well supported by their organisations to attend and put into practice what they had learned on the programmes. Unsurprisingly, participants felt the biggest barrier to their ability to develop themselves and enhance their supervision and leadership practice was the pressure of work and the competing priorities they face. A full review of the CPD offer to this group of staff is indicated. The new Practice Supervisor Development Programme is a major policy initiative that, as it develops, will also contribute to this discussion.



## 6.1.2 THE NEW MA IN PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL WORK

The revision of the post-qualifying programmes at Goldsmiths coalesced under the domain of professional leadership in the revised PCF framework. The programme has been re-named as the MA in Professional Leadership for Social Work. It will provide opportunities for social workers to develop themselves as practitioners, practice educators and managers or in a combination of all three. It recognises that professional leadership is something that is and should be undertaken by all social workers at all stages of their career, albeit with varying degrees of depth, scope and complexity, not just by those in designated management or leadership positions. Concepts of distributed and shared leadership underpin the programme and are core to the Partnership's vision. All of the modules have been reviewed and revised to ensure that they are up-to-date, relevant to the needs of individual learners, support organisational and professional priorities and are geared to support candidates to use professional leadership capabilities to improve direct practice, practice education, and management. New consolidation and early professional development and work-based learning modules have been validated. Commitment to supporting and sustaining values-based social work practice that is informed by service user perspectives, professional wisdom and research is core to the programme.



## 6.2 ACADEMICS INTO PRACTICE INITIATIVE

Between July 2015 and December 2018, 14 out of 18 Goldsmiths academics (78%) had protected time in practice through the Partnership's Academics into Practice (AiP) initiative. Twenty-two projects were delivered ranging from membership of Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) moderation panels, to co-facilitating reflective supervision groups and, increasingly, to undertaking small-scale, practice focused, research projects in response to local authority demand.

During phase two of the Partnership, priorities have shifted towards AiP initiatives which:

- Match academics' research expertise to employer priorities and needs thereby supporting the Partnership's aims of: fostering a spirit of enquiry amongst students and practitioners; improving research literacy and strengthening research collaboration.
- Are aligned to the development of the Partnership's emerging Practice Framework(s) e.g. Restorative, Systemic and Relationship-based approaches - to support critically reflective, evidence informed, practice
- Have a partnership-wide, cross-cutting adult and children's social care benefit e.g. the Child Sexual Exploitation project led by Professor Claudia Bernard and Professor Jenny Pearce.

In reports of their work, academics have highlighted a range of benefits from their AiP projects, coalescing around the following three main areas:

### 1. Research-mindedness and curiosity in practice

Academics feel that their involvement in AiP initiatives, particularly practice-close research, has enhanced their credibility with students. They have also been able to role-model for students the importance - and feasibility - of remaining research-minded, and generally curious about 'why things happen', after they leave the learning environment of a university. As one lecturer explained

*I'm keen to see social workers qualifying as professionals who are going to think critically, challenge assumptions, and incorporate (and even conduct) research into their practice, rather than just 'go through the motions' behind a local authority desk. I've been careful to emphasise this at every stage, so that from the start of their careers my students know that they don't have to choose between 'getting things done' and retaining an insatiable desire to learn more and reflect on their knowledge and practice.*



## 2. Teaching that is grounded in practice realities

The AiP initiatives have enhanced academics' credibility with students and social work practitioners in a way that challenges the 'anti-intellectualism' found in some social work settings. The AiP initiative has also fostered greater respect for the expertise academics can bring to addressing contemporary, front-line concerns. The time academics have spent embedded in local authority departments has enabled them to gain insight into the current practice context, thereby ensuring that their teaching is relevant and practice-focussed. As a result of their AiP experience, academics have introduced new areas of teaching such as: working with children and adults on the autism spectrum; making good use of supervision; and greater emphasis on trauma-informed, self-care strategies. Lecturers have outlined the way in which spending time at a desk in a local authority team for the first time in many years has improved their understanding of the lived experience of front line practitioners. For example, several remarked that they had underestimated how frustrating and unsettling hot-desking can be, with one lecturer remarking,

*I had forgotten just how noisy it can be in an open plan office.*

This sharpened understanding has meant that, in drawing up placement learning agreements, academics place greater emphasis on students' wellbeing by ensuring students are provided with protected time for studying away from the office, in a space conducive to mindful critical reflection.

## 3. Direct incorporation of findings from AiP research projects into teaching

This initiative has enabled academics to incorporate findings from their research into their teaching. As one academic explained,

*I have drawn conclusions in my research about the characteristics, direction and factors determining the outcomes of care proceedings. In my teaching about court work and child safeguarding, particularly to children's services specialists on the Step Up programme, I have been able to feedback these research findings directly, for them to consider in their practice - in much the same way as I have fed them back to the partner local authority. I have also fed back (again without giving away details of the local authority involved) the factors making it particularly difficult to prevent a young person coming into care - factors I unpicked for another project on edge-of-care work.*

The AiP work has not been without its challenges. While academics have been allocated time for AiP work, scheduling AiP activities can be challenging, given the relative inflexibility of other commitments such as university teaching. Academics have identified changeovers of local authority staff as creating difficulties, for example, where the member of staff who wrote the AiP brief has left and the staff who remain are uncertain about the need which was identified. Some academics encountered logistical difficulties where arrangements for access to local authority sites and computers were not clear. These difficulties seem to have been addressed in more recent projects which have focused on meeting research needs identified by local authorities (e.g. Chris Dyke's analysis of repeat proceedings data). In these projects the level of access and resources required for the work have been clearly identified at the start and agreed by all parties.

The graphic which follows is the logo for a group for women who have lost children due to social services intervention facilitated by academic Sharon Jennings as an AiP project. A wider benefit of the AiP programme has been the possibility for local authorities to flag up marginalised groups whose needs are perhaps not being fully met by existing provision (another AiP project is being carried out with young prisoners).



## ***6.3 TEACHING CONSULTANT PROGRAMME***

The major vehicle for taking forward our aim of providing joint learning and development opportunities for social work students has been the teaching consultant role. Teaching consultants jointly develop, deliver and evaluate teaching in their specialist areas with academic staff on the Goldsmiths Social Work Programmes. Teaching consultants are experienced social workers working within the partnership as practitioners or managers and who are recognised for their expertise in particular aspects of social work. In order to be considered for the role teaching consultants have to submit an application form outlining their practice knowledge, skills and values and their experience of teaching and facilitation. The application must be endorsed by their line manager. Once all the applications are received staff at Goldsmiths and the Partnership match the applicants to suitable learning and teaching activities. Teaching consultants also have the opportunity to influence and be involved in curriculum development, thus supporting the programme to be responsive to changes in practice. At the end of each teaching activity the teaching and consultant undertake a detailed review and self-evaluation of the session and propose any necessary changes.

Modules on the MA in Advanced Social Work - Practice Education (now the MA in Professional Leadership for Social Work) have provided and will continue to provide development opportunities for those undertaking this role. Academic staff also provide induction and review sessions for teaching consultants. Throughout the life of the partnership the numbers of practitioners and managers expressing an interest in becoming a teaching consultant has expanded. The numbers of teaching consultants and the range of teaching activities they are involved in is continuing to increase. In 2017/18 58 teaching consultants from the three SELTP LAs provided a total of 745 teaching consultant hours.

This represented an additional twenty teaching consultants from the previous year and a doubling of the number of consultant hours provided overall. This was partly due to the involvement of teaching consultants in designing the new PG Diploma in Social Work (Step Up).

Mark Taylor, one of the academics at Goldsmiths has undertaken qualitative research with teaching consultants about their perceptions of undertaking the role (Appendix B). Teaching consultants reported that becoming a teaching consultant was generally a positive experience: they enjoyed interacting with students and being part of the university environment; student enthusiasm helped rekindle their own enthusiasm for social work; and that the teaching helped them reflect on their own social work careers, practice and development. Wider tangible benefits to social work practice and the local authorities in the Partnership included: reflection on practice decisions; adopting a different approach to supervision; supporting social work students on placements more effectively; and working with and viewing service users and other professionals differently. Social work managers reported that involvement in teaching may lead to changes in their team's practice and facilitate new practice initiatives. Teaching consultants act as ambassadors for their work place and the presence of social workers from a particular local authority may encourage students to consider that local authority as a potential place of work post-qualification.

Teaching consultants gave similar responses at meetings organised within the three local authorities by SELTP employed staff. Feedback at these three meetings about undertaking the TC role was almost universally positive. There was agreement that having the opportunity to undertake the role was an incentive for experienced staff to stay. The following quotes give a flavour of this.

*It reminded me of why I came into social work - reignited my passion for the job after all these years.*

*Let's stop and get re-excited about the job.*

*This is something that would make me want to stay (in my job).*

Social work students complete an evaluative feedback form for each session that Teaching Consultant have co-taught or facilitated. Students are asked to provide quantitative and qualitative feedback about a number of components of their teaching and learning experience. Our analysis of this feedback determined that student responses to the input from teaching consultants were almost universally positive - 94% of 1245 session evaluation forms completed by students in the 2016-2017 gave ratings of 4 or 5 (the highest rating). Students undoubtedly appreciate the extensive practice experience and knowledge that teaching consultants bring into the university setting. Students particularly value the contribution of teaching consultants in: providing specific examples of good and not so good practice; relevant, up-to-date case scenarios; advice for students when they go on placement; illustrations of the law in practice; involvement in skills-based activities including role-play; and emotional support and professional inspiration. On the rare occasions when students gave more critical feedback this was because they would have liked the teaching consultant to have contributed more fully to the session or for the session to have been clearly structured. Teaching consultants were valued not only for their contribution to the content of the teaching sessions but also for their teaching and facilitation skills. Students provided some constructive and concrete suggestions for how the sessions could be improved.



## Teaching Consultant programme case study: Development of the Working with Disabled Children Workshop

The Working with Disabled Children workshop was developed by Teaching Consultant (TC) Jodi Mathers from Royal Borough of Greenwich and social work lecturer Rachel Hughes in collaboration with a parent advocate Sam Goncalves, who had previously collaborated with Jodi. The workshop focuses on four areas - listening to the voice of the disabled child; safeguarding disabled children; the legal framework; and support planning - and has received consistently positive feedback from students. One of the factors identified as underpinning the success of the workshop is the complementary expertise of the lecturer, TC and parent advocate. For example, the lecturer has a critical awareness of the historical development of person-centred planning, the TC knows how her team uses it in practice and the parent advocate has experience of participating in it and supporting the development of new technology to facilitate it (the 'Wiki' system developed with the Rix Centre). Pooling resources for teaching and practice has also been helpful. For example the TC has brought copies of the assessment and support planning proformas which her team uses in practice, the team's Big Mack communication devices and Talking Mats kit and the lecturer has brought toys aimed at children with disabilities and existing teaching materials on mental capacity issues. A key factor has been the ability to make an informed selection of case examples for students to work with. The TC can contextualize case examples - is this case bread and butter for disabled children's team or would it be quite exceptional? The key challenge of the work has been the amount of preparation time needed with all three contributors undertaking preparation in their own time. Wider benefits of the workshop include recruitment to the Disabled Children's Team (students who have attended the workshop have approached the TC about placement and job opportunities) and the production of resources and training materials that can be used more widely (some of the materials developed for the Workshop are being used by the Council for Disabled Children and by the local Safeguarding Board). A working relationship has developed between the lecturer and TC which goes beyond the workshop. For example, the lecturer has been involved in introducing the Intervision reflective practice model to the Disabled Children's Team and the TC is going to contribute an article to a journal which the lecturer edits.

## 6.4 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

The Partnership plays an active role in the recruitment of students to both pre-qualifying programmes at Goldsmiths, University of London (the MA and BA in Social Work). Members of the Partnership have worked together on the recruitment and selection of students for the Step Up Postgraduate Diploma programme which is run by the South East London Regional Partnership (Step Up).

In its implementation plan for the 2016 to 2018 period, the Partnership committed itself to the following targets in respect of the MA and BA programmes:

- Applying an academic entry threshold of 120 UCAS points (BA) and a 2:1 (MA)
- Developing a programme of entry tests which would assess applicants' intellectual ability, social work values, and behaviours and would include written assessment, verbal reasoning, group discussion and role play/case scenarios.
- Involving service user and carer and employer representatives at all stages of the recruitment and selection process

All of these targets have been achieved:

- The academic entry threshold of 120 point/2:1 was in fact implemented in September 2015 and has been maintained since then.
- Written assessment, group discussion and role play/case scenarios have been in use in the same format for the whole of the 2016-2018 period. A commercial online verbal reasoning test was in use between September 2016 and 2017. In September 2017, this commercial test was replaced with a collaboratively designed test of verbal reasoning that is integrated into the written assessment. This change was introduced as a result of significant (30-40%) attrition at the VR test stage and research by The Bridge Group (2016) suggesting that on-line verbal reasoning tests disadvantage students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
- Service users and carers who are members of the Partnership's Experts by Experience Group have been members of selection panels. This has meant that they have assessed applicants during group discussions, reviewed applicants' written reflections, participated in, observed and assessed applicants in role plays, asked questions of applicants during individual interviews and, with other panel members, jointly made the final decision about whether to offer an applicant a place. As members of interview panels, they have also participated in the assessment of applicants' suitability for social work, where an applicant has disclosed information which places this in question (e.g. a chronic health condition or a criminal record). Finally, they have participated in training and provided feedback on the recruitment and selection process.

Employer representatives (social work practitioners or service managers) have been involved as members of panels in the same way as Experts by Experience. Between 2016 and 2018, there has been increase in the proportion of employer representatives on selection panels who come from Partnership boroughs. During the 2017-2018 selection cycle, 11 out of 12 employer representatives were from Partnership boroughs. Employer representatives (social work practitioners, service managers or representatives of local authority learning and development teams) have also been involved as members of Suitability for Social Work decision-making panels.

One aspiration of the Partnership (identified in its strategic plan for 2016-2018) was to identify and assess the impact of the higher entry thresholds on student recruitment, attainment and diversity. While recruitment, attainment and diversity data is available for the period 2014 to 2017 (data for the academic year 2017-2018 not yet being available), it is not really possible to attribute any variations in this data to higher entry thresholds post 2015 because of the confounding influence of other variables (for example, changes in the social work bursary and in university fees and the impact of training schemes such as Frontline, Think Ahead and Step Up). In fact there have been insignificant variations in attainment and diversity across the MA and BA programmes between 2014 and 2017. So far as recruitment is concerned, the MA intake in the academic year 2016-2017 is comparable with that in 2014-2015. A reduction in intake to the BA in the academic year 2016-2017 was thought to be attributable to the online verbal reasoning test and led to the commercial test used being replaced with one integrated into the written assessment (see above).

The Partnership has also aspired to create a sense of ‘shared ownership’ of the Goldsmiths qualifying programmes and commitment to nurturing the development of students recruited. ‘Teaching Consultants’ are social work practitioners who have contributed to teaching pre-qualifying social work students and who have also, in many cases, sat as employer representatives on selection panels. In the research conducted by Mark Taylor from Goldsmiths,

*Teaching Consultants explained that they see the work they are doing as upstream work to safeguard service users and that they appreciate the opportunity to do this alongside academics. I feel like we’re the stakeholders actually, you know, in terms of clients that we work with - safeguarding. When you’re involved in this process right through to student level...you want to be guiding them along(side) the academics here.*

*Social Work Manager / Teaching Consultant quoted in Taylor 2018*

Feedback from the Partnership’s Experts by Experience Group suggests that recruitment and selection work has acted as a friendly introduction to the Partnership for their members. Liz Sibthorpe, who contributed to Goldsmiths’ courses prior to the establishment of the Partnership commented as follows:

*It feels like there’s more structure now for me. I used to be quite scared of talking to students about such personal things. I’m much more confident being part of this. Our group now feels like it has boundaries and a purpose and I understand why I’m here more. For example, they involved us in the new way of admissions. That involvement makes it much easier for people like me coming in from the outside.*

*Liz Sibthorpe, member of the SELTP Experts by Experience group 3*





## **6.5 PLACEMENT PROVISION FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

A major goal of the national teaching partnerships initiative was to improve the quality and quantity of statutory practice learning opportunities available to social work students. This has been an important focus of the work of the SELTP. One of the Partnership's aims was to increase the overall number of statutory placements provided for Goldsmiths students and another was to increase the proportion of these placements provided by the Partnership local authorities. Prior to the establishment of the SELTP, Goldsmiths had a good track record of providing statutory placements for its students and local authority partners similarly had a good reputation for practice learning delivery. During 2016-2018, the relevant metrics have improved.

Overall, in 2017/8 99% of Goldsmiths/SELTP social work students were provided with a statutory placement, up from 96% in 2016-7, and up from 82% in 2013/14. This compares with a London average of 55% statutory placements in 2017-8. SELTP has provided 72% of all placements in 2017/18, up from 65% in 2016/17, and again up from 52% in 2015/16. In addition to placements provided to MA and BA students the SELTP have also provided sixteen statutory placements for the new SELTP Step-Up to Social Work programme.

Clearly, then, the Partnership has been very successful at securing local statutory placements for social work students. One significant factor in this may have been the establishment of a Partnership-wide matching panel. It is also the case that placements are organised by a very experienced and stable team of lecturer and administrator at Goldsmiths. Further analysis needs to be done to determine the factors underpinning the success of the Partnership's placement activity, to ensure it can be sustained. It would also be beneficially to conduct a systematic analysis of student evaluations' of the quality of placements.

### **6.5.1 STUDENT HUBS**

The SELTP established two student hubs in 2016/7 and 2018/7 - one in children's services and the other in mental health services. These hubs employed two practice educators each supporting and assessing five students. These hubs have not been formally evaluated and informal feedback from students (via students' tutors) has been variable. Providing placements through the hubs is more expensive than a single practice educator model and the SELTP management board has already taken the decision that given the reduced funding available for the SELTP in 2018/9 and the ending of funding from 2019 the hubs will be discontinued.

## **6.5.2 QUALITY OF PRACTICE EDUCATION**

There have been a number of strands of SELTP activity that have aimed to improve the quality of placements and support the development of practice educators and practice education more broadly. SELTP funding has been used to continue to provide Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS) stage 1 & 2 training, thereby increasing the existing pool of qualified practice educators. A series of workshops for practice educators on the PEPS and the KSS have been run. Goldsmiths continues to provide optional workshops for all practice educators offering a placement to a Goldsmiths student. Attendance at these workshops has stabilised at about 80% - a rise from only 20% attendance in 2004/5.

A SELTP practice learning task and finish group has been active in preparing a cross-Partnership process for designation of practice educators who meet all of the PEPS stages 1 & 2 requirements and standards. This group has agreed a comprehensive practice educator designation policy. A database of all practice educators in the SELTP giving details of placement setting, qualifications, placements offered, and whether and how the practice educator has maintained currency has been established.

The designation process will enable the SELTP to:

- Improve the quality of placements we provide by ensuring learning is aligned to the PCF, KSS and HCPC standards;
- Improve workforce planning by helping us know where placements are taking place and where we need to develop placement pathways in order to address staff shortages in hard to recruit to social work posts;
- Ensure that all Practice Educators are trained to the same high standard;
- Ensure that all Practice Educators have the current skills and knowledge required for working with students;
- Ensure that employers and the Partnership can support the continued development of Practice Educators.

The impact of this cross-Partnership designation process needs to be evaluated in 2018-2019.

## **6.6 TRANSITION INTO PRACTICE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

One indicator of placement success may be the extent to which students who complete their placements at one of the Partnership local authorities move into NQSW posts in these agencies. However, quality of placement is not the only factor determining the likelihood that students will stay on. Other factors including the timing of NQSW recruitment and ASYE cohort start dates may also have an impact. Principal Social Workers and organizational development staff within the Partnership authorities have worked hard to try to ensure these dates fit with university programme end dates and graduation dates. In some cases, through close contact between university lecturers and PSWs, it has been possible to make adjustments for students who are submitting dissertations late, facilitating their transition into practice. Overall, work on aligning dates seems to be most developed in children's services with some further work still needed in some authorities to align recruitment and ASYE dates for adult services.

Another element of the strategy to increase the take-up of posts within the SELTP local authorities by Goldsmiths students is the Careering Ahead workshop (see case study below).

### Careering Ahead

This two-day event was co-developed by staff from Goldsmiths social work section and the university-wide careers office alongside representatives from Royal Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark. It takes place at the end of teaching in the final year of the students' studies. Workshops are offered on applying for jobs, interview skills, the experience of being a social worker working in a local authority, continuous professional development, and the ASYE scheme. Students reported in feedback this year that it was valuable to have information about the ASYE and the National Assessment and Accreditation System though they would have liked to have information about the ASYE for adults' social workers as well. The event ends with a Jobs Fair and in 2018 there were representatives from seven LA employers (Royal Greenwich, Lewisham, Southwark, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets and Merton).

The move from student social worker to NQSW is acknowledged to be one of the most important transitions in a social worker's career (Fairtlough 2018). It may be particularly significant for those in statutory children's placements. NQSW's experiences of this transition shape a social worker's future professional development and orientation and influence whether they stay in statutory child care practice or even in social work altogether (Frost et al. 2018). Retention of experienced social workers, particularly in statutory child care teams, continues to be both a national and local challenge. Hence, one priority for the SELTP was to find out more about the experiences of NQSWs across the three LAs in the partnership and improve the support, and quality and consistency of the assessment provided to them.

To this end in the second phase the Partnership sought to build on work in phase one in harmonising ASYE processes between the three LAs in the partnership. Data on a range of different aspects of the organisation of the ASYE have been gathered to support mutual learning. The focus on developing the quality of practice supervision, assessment and endorsement across the partnership through the CPD programme has already been discussed in section 4.1 above. One of the strands of the 'Academics into Practice' initiative (see section 4.2) involved the inclusion of academic staff in an ASYE assessment panel to provide an independent view on the quality and consistency of decision-making.

Another strand of this work involved focus groups with NQSWs in the children and families service in each of the partnership Local Authorities (LAs). Although there was a specific emphasis on this service, there was also a wish to hear from social workers in adults' services so one focus group was also held with that group. A semi-structured interview schedule was used. One of the aims was to explore the NQSW's views about the quality and frequency of the supervision they were receiving and whether their supervision had enabled them to critically reflect on their practice. General questions were asked about what had worked well or not so well for them in their ASYE, in what ways they thought the support offered to NQSWs in their workplace could be improved and what support they thought they would need from employers and the university in the next stage of their career. A summary of the relevant findings for each individual LA was provided to managers and learning and development staff and a report was produced summarizing findings from the whole data set. As the Partnership's ASYE harmonization initiatives were in the early stages of implementation when the research was conducted, the findings do not necessarily represent feedback on their value but rather provide information which can shape the future development of these initiatives. Such service evaluation work is an example of the additionality generated by the Partnership.

The report drew the following conclusions and recommendations. Participants across each of the LAs in both children and families and adults' services expressed broad support for the ASYE scheme. The following sources of support were particularly valued:

- the support and opportunities to critically reflect on their practice provided by those in the professional educator/advanced practitioner role;
- the group-based activities including reflective practice groups and specific training sessions and workshops;
- the role of dedicated staff supporting the ASYE.

Participants reported more mixed views of line manager support and supervision. Many felt well supported and provided with good, frequent supervision. However, some felt supervision with their line manager tended to be task-focused rather than reflective, analytic or development-focused. A few had some very critical things to say about the lack of support provided by their line manager. Some participants recognised the extreme pressures that their line managers were under and felt that this detracted from their managers' capacity to be available to them.

Participants would like to see:

- existing supports and resources for NQSWs preserved;
- clear, comprehensive and up-to-date set of resources for NQSWs explaining the ASYE scheme and CPD opportunities available to them;
- protected case loads and reflection time;
- line managers offered training and time to undertake tasks relating to the ASYE;
- consistently good line management support and supervision - i.e. not based on the 'luck of the draw';
- stream-lined ASYE assessment documentation;
- a learning culture throughout the organisation that supports critical reflection;
- support, CPD opportunities and career development conversations to support them to move into the next phase of their career;
- efficient HR processes and an organisation that welcomes NQSWs;
- senior management support for the ASYE;
- safe and effective channels for addressing concerns about the ASYE process or decisions.

The sometimes polarised views of the NQSWs about the different levels of support and reflection provided by their professional educators/advanced practitioners and by their line managers is something of a concern. If organisational processes allow reflective, analytical and development aspects of supervision to be concentrated in the supervision practices of professional educators/advanced practitioners this raises questions about what happens when NQSWs move out of their ASYE and the overall quality of supervision practice within the organisation. A priority for the future would appear to be to find ways to ensure that all of those in a practice supervisor role are able to provide high quality reflective supervision that meets the KSS and other standards and thus reduces the likelihood that this is 'the luck of the draw'.



## 6.7 INTERVISION MODEL OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Intervision is a peer consultation process that is carried out in a group, in which participants discuss professional practice issues by following a specified process with distributed and reversible roles (Tietze, 2010). Although relatively well established in continental Europe (Lippmann, 2013), particularly in social work (Tietze, 2010), the method is less known in the UK.

### 6.7.1 INTERVISION GROUPS FOR MA AND BA SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

One of the key innovations introduced into the teaching for the BA and the MA in Social Work through the SELTP was the use of Intervision groups to replace the previous case discussion groups. These groups take place while students are on placement and provide an opportunity within the university for students to reflect on their learning and experiences on placement. An academic member of staff and a teaching consultant worked together to support these groups.

#### The Intervision group process

A usual Intervision process starts with a participant sharing a challenge, followed by a round of clarifying questions by the reflecting team and subsequent identification of a question or focus by the case presenter. The reflecting team then provides feedback by offering hypotheses to which the case presenter then responds (Akhurst and Kelly, 2006). The participants and the case presenter are taking turns with no direct interaction between them (Tietze, 2010). Lastly, an optional discussion period between all participants focusses on the learning of all (Akhurst and Kelly, 2006). This basic process can be applied flexibly, if the principles of separation between presenter and reflectors are observed. The whole process takes one to two hours at the most (Tietze, 2010; Akhurst and Kelly, 2006) and the recommended number of participants varies between four and ten with an average of six (Lippmann, 2013; Tietze, 2010; Akhurst and Kelly, 2006)

A piece of qualitative research comprising two focus groups with twenty-three BA and MA students was undertaken (by Goldsmiths lecturers) to ascertain the perceived value and impact of the the Intervision groups. In general the students, particularly those from the MA group, gave very positive reports about the value of these groups. Four themes were identified: emotional containment; perspective change; learning how to reflect; professional development across the boundary of university and practice.

A theme from many of the student accounts is that the groups offered them emotional support and the opportunity to integrate thinking and feeling about practice situations.

*There's a beautiful openness and transparency in Intervision, I think, where people are honest, open and emotional. (MA student)*

*A space where you can share your ideas and feelings without being judged. (BA student)*

*I cried for about half an hour when I did my Intervision, it just gave me a kind of space to release my emotion that I kind of kept inside that I didn't feel safe enough to release whilst on placement. (MA student)*

However, for some students in some groups this response was less pronounced. Participants reported that when student commitment to participation was less strong the capacity of the group to provide emotional containment was reduced.

A number of students found that when the Intervision session were working well they were enabled to challenge their assumptions, consider different hypotheses and think about how they could do things differently.

*It gave me such wider spectrum ... and opened so many other doors which I wouldn't necessarily think about ... because we are all different we all approached it differently. (MA student)*

*It was very affirming as an experience - you weren't just being sensitive or incompetent and that this was a really challenging situation. I think that was confidence boosting as well as giving practical tips. (BA student)*

A minority of students questioned the value of the Intervision sessions if they or others in the group had less experience of a particular practice setting.

*I found it hard um to engage, to contribute as much, when people ... adult services presented ... because I didn't expect to know the legislations as much around it and I didn't know what services were available. It kind of came from a place of less knowledge. (BA student)*

*Overall there was a positive response from student about learning how to use the Intervision model. They appreciated the clear structure and the ways that this enabled everyone to participate. A consensus emerged that using the model had supported them to develop new skills and gain confidence in using, facilitating and contributing to critical reflection groups As we became familiar and became more confident doing it, it seemed to become more fluid. (BA student)*

A key theme in the student accounts is that the intervision groups supported their professional development across the boundaries of the university and practice. This enabled them to make better use of their practice learning, to become more confident in having professional conversations at work, more adept at picking out key features of practice situations and to think more flexibly and openly about about their professional practice.

For instance, students made the following comments:

*You also reach conclusions that weren't about the presentations - they're about social work, about life, about work-life. (MA student)*

*A bit of practice meets theory...otherwise we're here or we're there and it was the only opportunity where those two really came together, and it felt great. (BA student)*

The crucial role of the Teaching Consultants in providing this bridge between the academy and practice was stressed. Students highly valued 'the experience and knowledge that [they] brought' into the university and they were seen as 'a really strong contribution' with one student saying they had 'the most amazing facilitator'.

## ***6.7.2 INTERVISION GROUPS WITHIN LOCAL AUTHORITIES***

A wider consequence of the involvement of Teaching Consultants in supporting university-based Intersession sessions was that a number of Teaching Consultants decided to share the model with their own practice teams. The Intersession model was also shared through the Academics in Practice programme, with a number of instances of academics facilitating Intersession groups in practice settings. Subsequently, training about the method was introduced into a reflective practice CPD module for qualified social workers with a view to offering staff participants the detailed knowledge, skills and values to actively engage in peer-led reflective practice sessions in their organisations.

It seems that, by precisely the kind of dispersed professional leadership the Partnership is seeking to promote, the Intersession groups have become an important component of its objective to develop effective, motivated, person-centred and outcome-focussed social workers in the university and in practice. We are aware that one of the local authorities is planning a systematic roll-out of Intersession across its adults services, facilitated by a Teaching Consultant who is also a student on the Goldsmiths MA in Practice Education.

## ***6.8 EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE ACTIVITIES***

The Partnership's Experts by Experience (EBE) group has a membership of people who have used social work services either as service users in their own right or as carers. It is facilitated by a social work academic from Goldsmiths (Keith Goodman). EBE group members have contributed in a number of ways during the 2016-2018 phase:

- As members of selection panels for social work students including Step Up to Social Work students
- As members of 'Readiness for Practice' assessment panels (which establish whether or not students are ready to be sent out on their first placement)
- By sharing their experiences of social workers and services as part of lectures and seminars
- By acting as 'second readers' for practice placement portfolios
- By attending Partnership Board meetings and other strategic and governance events such as the HCPC validation event for the Step Up programme
- By presenting at Partnership events including the 2017 conference and the launch event for this phase of the Partnership
- As members of panels giving feedback to Step Up social work students presenting their research projects

The Partnership's EBE group has grown from an existing service user and carer involvement group based at Goldsmiths. The input of EBE members has always been and continues to be highly valued by social work students on Goldsmiths' programmes. This is evident from feedback collected by Goldsmiths from its students at periodic reviews (end of term, end of year) and in student evaluation of session forms collected between 2016 and 2018. Consequently it is no surprise that EBE input to Partnership events, such as the 2017 conference, has also been highly valued by participants.

Thus the EBE group is certainly one of the activities supported by the Partnership which has ‘worked well’. The benefits appear to have been mutual; the Partnership seems to have had a positive impact on the standing of the EBE group.

*The Teaching Partnership has supported the formalisation of the EBE group and the impact has developed a stronger EBE voice and more opportunities for the group to become involved in various activities.*

*Liz Sibthorpe, Chair of the SELTP EBE Group*

Liz has also talked about the development of a stronger collective voice, which is more clearly embedded in the organisation (the Partnership) and its processes.

*By embedding the collective voice more transparently into the organisational process, which includes having more formal meetings with minutes where the group requests things rather than it just be the other way around, it becomes a two way process.*

*Liz Sibthorpe, Chair of the SELTP EBE Group*

One of the challenges the group has faced is ensuring that it has sufficient members in order to meet demands from the Partnership, without growing so big that members no longer feel part of something. One way of doing this which is currently being explored is to establish relationships with other service user and carer involvement groups operating within the Partnership area. Another may be to recruit members who have different experiences or histories compared with the existing members. For example, at the moment there are no members who have a learning disability in the group. Finally, there is perhaps scope for members to specialise in particular areas of activity. For example, a number of EBE members joined workshops on research at the Partnership’s 2017 conference and there is considerable scope for members to become more involved with the Partnership’s research activities (section 4.9 below).



## 6.9 RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE INITIATIVES

The Partnership has undertaken a number of discrete initiatives with the aim of promoting research-mindedness and the utilization of research in social work practice, as well as social workers’ participation in research. In addition to the research work conducted as part of the Academics in Practice programme, the following initiatives have also been put in place.

## **6.9.1 RESEARCH IN PRACTICE/RESEARCH IN PRACTICE FOR ADULTS**

The Partnership has funded contracts with the agencies Research in Practice and Research in Practice for Adults for all three of the Partnership boroughs. Academics at Goldsmiths, University of London have also had guest access and student social workers have been able to access RiP/RiPFA resources while on placement. As a result of this membership, social work staff within the Partnership boroughs have been able to access RiP/RiPFA's online resources and to attend 'tailored support' sessions (training days on topics requested by the Partnership/ borough and provided on-site at the local authority). A total of 19 tailored support sessions were provided. The topics covered are given below.

### **RIP Tailored Support Sessions**

- Restorative approaches: senior leaders session and session for all staff
- Supporting the quality assurance and observation of reflective supervision
- Using restorative approaches in direct work
- Working effectively with men in families
- Developing a more effective response to risk in adolescence
- Applying professional judgement and decision-making in social work
- Children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours
- Adolescent mental health and wellbeing
- Working preventatively in adult social care
- Developing good relationship between commissioners and providers in adult social care
- Strengths-based workshop focused on working with people with ASD and LD
- Working with people who may lack mental capacity
- Making safeguarding personal
- Working with parents with learning disability

For all sessions evaluated, participants rated the content / presentation style and achievement of learning outcomes as 'high' or 'very high' (or equivalent top two categories), with qualitative feedback being overwhelmingly positive. Thus it seems that this aspect of RiP/RiPFA activity has worked well.

RiP/RiPFA have provided us with statistics on use of their websites by Partnership account holders.

Website Statistics RiP				
Authority	Active Accounts	Current Total Accounts	Visits	Page Views
Greenwich	206	239	689	6693
Lewisham	86	113	227	1839
Southwark	139	385	386	2935
SELTP	422	737	1302	11467

Website Statistics RiPfa				
Authority	Active Accounts	Current Total Accounts	Visits	Page Views
Greenwich	67	84	154	1280
Lewisham	62	80	113	1224
Southwark	53	64	105	937
SELTP	182	228	372	3441

In the table above, active accounts refers to accounts which have been activated by the user (individual practitioner). The total number of qualified children's social workers in the South East London Teaching Partnership is 781; there are 291 adults social workers. Therefore the statistics above suggest a relatively good uptake of RiP/RiPFA accounts even considering that some account holders may be unqualified social care staff. A smaller proportion of RiP accounts are active compared with RiPFA accounts. This may be accounted for by the relative low proportion of Southwark RiP accounts which are active. Southwark had RiP membership in its own right prior to SELTP-funded membership of RiP and RiPFA starting in October 2016 so some of its accounts may be long-standing ones; it is not known whether or not this is a factor in proportion of active accounts.

The statistics indicate a total of approximately 3 visits per active account for RiP and approximately 2 visits per active account for RiPFA. We do not have any data on how the website is being used / which online features are being used or comparable data on use of other research sites (e.g. Community Care Inform, Social Care Online).

One benefit of RiP/RiPFA membership which cannot be easily be quantified is the sharing of ideas on a strategic level. RiP/RiPFA contributed to the Partnership's 2017 conference and helped to facilitate away days for the Partnership Board.

*RiP/RiPFA have been a critical friend and supported us to promote a culture of learning and evidence informed practice across the partnership alongside strengthening our governance arrangements.*

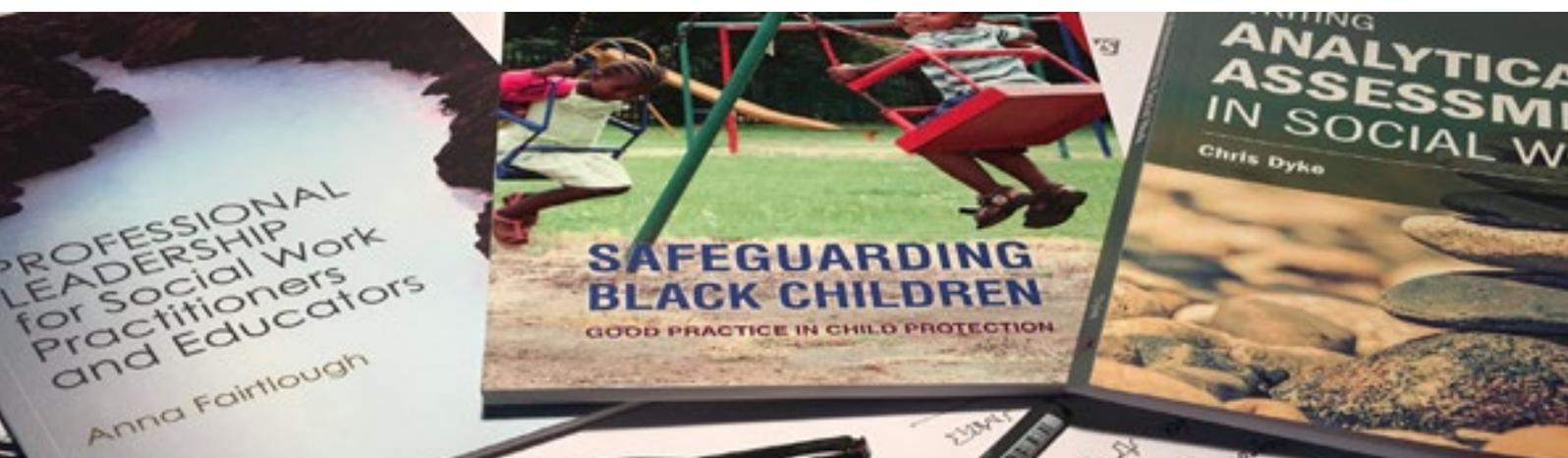
### *SELTP Annual Report 2018*

This productive sharing of ideas led Goldsmiths and RiP/RiPFA, along with the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust and the University of Surrey to bid together for a contract to deliver a pilot Practice Supervisors Programme. This programme is likely to be of considerable benefit to the whole South East London Teaching Partnership.



## 6.9.2 TWILIGHT SESSIONS

During the 2016-2018 phase, the Partnership has continued to run the 'Twilight' (4 to 6pm) knowledge exchange sessions which we piloted in 2015-2016. These have continued to attract very good attendance; a total of 230 practitioners, academics and students attended Twilight sessions in 2016-2018. They have also been positively evaluated. Some of the sessions have included speakers who are Experts by Experience (Humane Social Work and Introduction to Non-Violent Resistance). Others have showcase recent research including publications by Partnership members (Safeguarding Black Children, Writing Analytical Assessments in Social Work, Professional Leadership in Social Work, Responding to the Needs of Asylum Seeking Children and Practitioner Research Showcase).



The events have been organised by the Partnership's paid staff and held at Goldsmiths, University of London. One consideration for the 2018-2019 is whether or not these should continue to be held at Goldsmiths and who will support the administration of the sessions

### Twilight Sessions held 2016-2018

- Humane social work practice? - exploring the family's experience of court proceedings
- Professional Leadership in Social Work
- Responding to the Needs and Experiences of Asylum Seeking Children and Care Leavers
- Writing Analytical Assessments in Social work
- Safeguarding Black Children
- Introduction to Non-Violent Resistance - a model for working with challenging behaviour in young people
- Witchcraft labelling as a child safeguarding concern: considerations for social work practice
- Maintaining professional identity in an integrated team
- Dual sensory loss - when one and one make three
- Practitioner Research Showcase
- International Women's Day Leadership Exchange

## **6.9.3 SELTP CONFERENCE 2017**

The Partnership hosted the first conference on the Teaching Partnership model, attended by 120 participants including representatives of Teaching Partnerships across the country and of similar projects internationally, as well as social work practitioners, students, academics, managers and Experts by Experience from South East London. Representatives of the Department for Education also attended and a keynote address was given by the Chief Executive of Research for Practice/Research for Practice in Adults on the potential for role fluidity between practitioner and researcher roles in social work.

The conference provided an opportunity to showcase and celebrate work completed to date within the South East London Teaching Partnership as well as to exchange experiences of the process of establishing and running a Teaching Partnership.

*Sharing thoughts, learning about TPs, experiences and plans for the future. For a developing TP this has been fantastic.*

### ***Participant from another Teaching Partnership***

Following a workshop at the conference, a National Network for Teaching Partnership Leads was established, which is continuing to operate.

The conference was evaluated very positively by participants, who identified the breadth of content and the high quality of the speakers as what was most valuable about it. Participants experienced the conference as energizing.

*Feeling energised and excited about social work/the partnership and as a front line practitioner I'm very keen to get seriously thinking about research and hopefully some teaching.*

### ***Social work practitioner***

Maintaining the energy from the conference over the following year was identified by some Partnership colleagues as problematic.

*We did a great conference last year which was a rip-roaring success. . . But to follow through on that has proven to be difficult for many legitimate reasons.*

### ***Social work academic***

The factors highlighted as causing difficulty included changes of key staff members in the partner boroughs and lack of time for academics to provide leadership in developing and sustaining ideas generated at the conference. Despite this, it is possible to identify a number of continuing projects which were initiated at the conference including work on practice models, a roll-out of the Intervision reflective practice model within the Partnership boroughs and the evaluation of the Partnership's impact.



## ***6.9.4 IMPACT AND EVALUATION WORKSTREAM***

The impact and evaluation workstream was set up following a Partnership Board away day in June 2017 and has been meeting since then. The membership of the group consists of the SELTP Board or their representatives, social work academic staff from Goldsmiths and identified front-line practitioners and Experts by Experience with an interest in evaluation and research. The focus of the workstream has been on providing strategic and direct support to the evaluation of the SELTP's activities. The intention was that it would further develop the work begun on a Theory of Change for the Partnership at the 2017 conference as well as monitoring and implementing the evaluation strategy. While there has been reasonable attendance at meetings, work and implementing the evaluation strategy and shaping a new Theory of Change has continued to be carried out mainly by paid staff of the Teaching Partnership. The challenges of progressing complex pieces of work such as an impact evaluation as a multi-agency Partnership are discussed more in the section on sustainability (5.3) below.

## ***6.9.5 PRACTITIONER INVOLVEMENT IN RESEARCH***

The Partnership has pursued a number of different initiatives to encourage and support its social work practitioners to engage in research. For example, we (the evaluators) sought and received help with interviews and analysis for this evaluation from a current social work practitioner with a research/evaluation background. This practitioner has also attended meetings of the London Borough of Southwark's Research Interest Group, which vets applications from researchers looking to carry out empirical research in Southwark, alongside one of us. Another evaluator is a social work PhD student at Goldsmiths. At Goldsmiths, Teaching Consultants have been assisting, together with Experts by Experience, on a first year research module on the Step Up to Social Work programme.

The 'all-round' benefits of this kind of initiative are explained below by the academic who facilitated it:

*The three local authorities selected a topic that's relevant for their area, and then a group of students was asked to undertake research on that topic with support from a lecturer here at the university and then with support from a teaching consultant within the local authority so the teaching consultant has to meet the group of students for one hour every week. . . the teaching consultant (was) saying how the night before she had to read and refresh her knowledge and (it) made her think about her work with some of the cases. So I think the benefits are there for students, for the university, but also for local authorities because teaching consultants get time to reflect as well and refresh their knowledge, do a bit more reading, get to know about more recent research as well.*

#### **Social work academic**

This model of research undertaken by students, supported by practitioners with an interest in research and carried out in consultation with Experts by Experience is one which the Partnership has endeavoured to develop on the Goldsmiths MA dissertation research module. This has been harder to achieve for this final year project compared with the smaller scale first year Step Up project, for a number of reasons. Local authorities within the Partnership do not currently draw up annual research strategies for social care/social work research; instead research is commissioned as and when practitioners and managers identify a need for it and request support from senior managers, Principal Social Workers or directors. However, levels of research awareness or 'research-mindedness' vary among practitioners and managers and so it may be that many research needs are not identified or highlighted. Unidentified research needs often become apparent to social work students once they begin their final placement, and the majority of social work students carry out research on topics connected in some way to their placement setting. In this way, research which is relevant to the local authority's (and the Partnership's) needs is being supported by its HEI partner. A disadvantage of this system, however, is that, because research-mindedness is variable across the Partnership, there is no certainty of the level and type of support for the research which will be available to the student from their team colleagues or team manager within that setting.

Despite these issues, two MA students have carried out projects based on research needs identified by Partnership local authorities in this 2016-2018 phase. One project (carried out by Andrew Davy) was designed in response to a request from the Director of Social Care in Southwark for data and analysis relating to families' experiences of the Family Drug and Alcohol Courts. A second collaborative MA project (being carried out by Naomi Lusk) is an evaluation of a new project being run by Southwark's Pause team and is currently in progress (end date September 2018).

Establishing and maintaining a list of research-minded practitioners within the Teaching Partnership who can step in to support student projects (and are given time to do so) may be one way in which future practice-near student research projects can be enabled. Such a list is likely to include a large number but perhaps not all Teaching Consultants. Graduating Masters students who have carried out excellent dissertation research projects may wish to join the list. A recent Twilight session showcase the work of students who had obtained distinctions in their research and are now in practice. Mechanisms for ensuring that the findings of student and practitioner research are disseminated are important in the absence of a research strategy which would otherwise provide for dissemination. As well as the Twilight format, Southwark's Research Interest Group has begun to play a role in ensuring that the findings of the research projects it approves are shared within Southwark. It may be that its work could be mirrored by the other Partnership boroughs or even that a Partnership-wide Research Interest Group could be established to encourage and monitor practice-near research, in particular research carried out by students and practitioners of the Partnership.

## **6.9.6 KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER WITH THE CITY OF LONDON**

The Partnership's HEI Goldsmiths has a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with the City of London, an Associate Member of the Partnership and two major pieces of research were complete by Goldsmiths academics during the 2016 - 2018 phase. The first, published in August 2016, was an evaluation of a training strategy for practitioners in the Solihull Approach, which went on to influence the development of City of London's Early Help strategy and was positively evaluated in the City of London's 2016 OFSTED inspection report:

*The City of London's approach to increasing the skills and abilities of childcare professionals to provide outstanding services is exemplary. The knowledge transfer programme, an innovative partnership with a local university, provides practitioners with valuable opportunities to improve their practice.*

*OFSTED, 2016*

The second piece of research, completed in 2018, was an exploration of how child protection social workers work with parents from affluent backgrounds. This report has generated considerable interest and received coverage in national media.

## **6.10 WORKFORCE ANALYSIS**

The Partnership invited an external expert to conduct a workforce data analysis and produce a regional labour market plan. The aims were to:

- undertake workforce analytics to provide regional workforce intelligence
- provide an indication of the number of qualified social workers required across the Teaching Partnership over the next three to five years and
- identify regional recruitment and retention priorities that need to be addressed.

This work has been completed and has provided the Partnership with useful data for workforce planning. A historical analysis (2013 to date) indicated that the Partnership boroughs are generally doing better than other London boroughs at recruiting and retaining staff. In terms of the number of qualified social workers required across the Partnership over the next five years, the market plan identifies that a minimum expansion of the SELTP workforce of 27 adult social workers and 64 children's social workers will be needed. It found that children's social care within the Partnership is currently successfully recruiting permanent social workers to aid the expansion of its workforce (although it is not clear whether the recent rise in permanent appointments of children's social workers is a temporary occurrence or not). Adult social care is recruiting sufficient workers to meet a rise in demand but is relying on the employment of agency social work staff to achieve this.

The identified regional recruitment and retention priorities therefore include finding new ways to bring about further expansion in the supply of labour to adult social care. The plan highlighted evidence of a contraction of the supply of newly qualified social workers from universities (a national trend which may be affecting Goldsmiths). A further priority is therefore for the Partnership to support Goldsmiths to attract more students onto its social work programmes. Part-funded scholarships for local students is one way in which it is suggested the Partnership could do this. At the moment, no definite plan has been put in place to do this. The report also suggests that the Partnership should plan to extend the provision of employment-based routes to qualification. The Partnership's Step to Social Work scheme which began in January 2018 begins to do this. Finally, the report suggests that the Partnership should continue to develop and embed a CPD framework and pathway for qualified social workers, in order to promote retention of social workers within the Partnership boroughs. CPD has been one of the principal areas of activity of the Partnership (section 4.1 above).

In summary, the workforce analytics funded by the Partnership are enabling the Partnership to make progress towards more accurate and effective workforce planning, and it would seem sensible to continue working with the same analyst on these issues.

## **7. ANALYSIS**

In this section we identify common themes in terms of what has worked well and what has worked less well and also address sustainability issues. How can the Partnership ensure that successful activities are able to continue and grow in the future?

### **7.1 WHAT HAS WORKED WELL AND WHAT HAS WORKED LESS WELL**

Before proceeding to report on our thematic analysis, it may be useful to briefly summarise our findings in terms of which activities have worked well and which have worked less well.

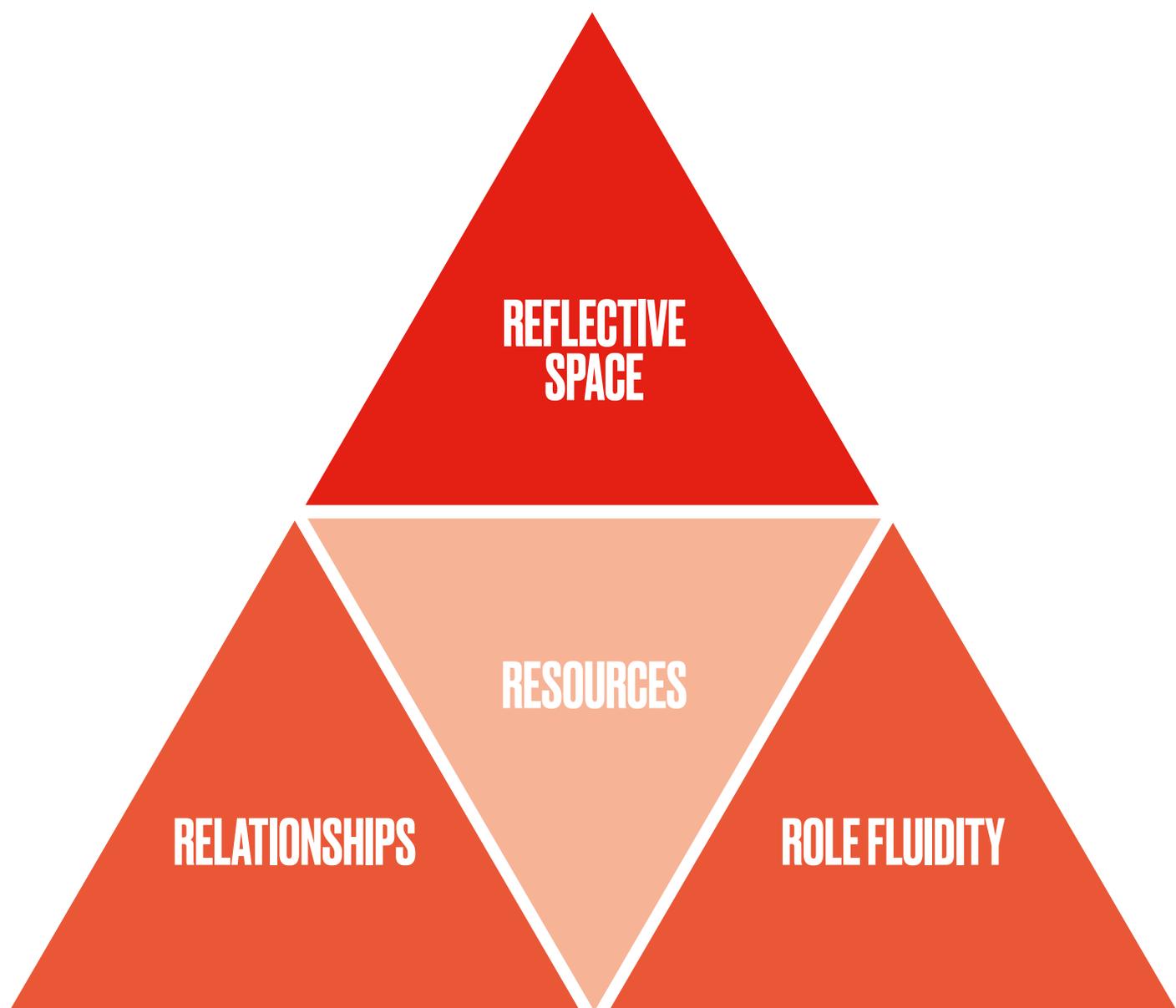
- 1. The Teaching Consultant programme is widely recognised as having direct benefits for social work students, for the Teaching Consultants themselves and for the academics with whom they work.** In addition, Teaching Consultants and lecturers have identified indirect benefits for service users because of the impact on the Teaching Consultant's practice and motivation levels. Teaching Consultants feel their work at the university has made them more enthusiastic about their work in local authorities and prompted them to update their knowledge of relevant research and to critically reflect on their work.
- 2. The success of the Partnership in all aspects of placement provision for MA and BA students is also noteworthy.** The figures of 99% of placements within the statutory sector and 72% within the SELTP local authorities are remarkable, given that the corresponding figures at the start of the Partnership were 65% and 52%, and that the Partnership is additionally providing 16 placements for Step Up students.
- 3. The Academics into Practice initiative has helped academics to ensure that their teaching is grounded in practice realities and that their own direct social work skills are maintained.** It has benefited local authorities by giving them access to research expertise and resources for their own research priorities, and expertise in facilitating action learning sets and reflective practice groups.

4. **The successful and rapid development and implementation of the Intervention model of reflective practice across university and practice settings within the Partnership is of national significance**, demonstrating, as it does, the appetite for a systematic approach to reflective practice within local authority social work.
5. **The establishment of processes to which the contribution of Experts by Experience is integral** (student selection processes, readiness for practice assessment) appears to have strengthened not only these processes but the Experts by Experience group itself.
6. **The work which has been done to date on workforce analysis by an external consultant is of high quality** and has the potential to positively impact on recruitment and retention of social work students and social work practitioners if recommendations are followed in the next phase of the Partnership.
7. Considering the recruitment and selection of social work students, it appears that **the formalisation and strengthening of existing selection processes which has taken place under the Partnership has been successful in creating a sense of shared ownership**. However, recruitment, attainment and diversity data (available from the period 2014 to 2017) do not show any clear trends (positive or negative). Even if they did, it would be difficult to separate the impact of measures the Partnership has taken from that of external variables (e.g. changes in the social work bursary, fees and the impact of schemes such as Frontline, Think Ahead and Step Up).
8. **Progress has been made towards harmonising ASYE processes. More could be done in this area** so that the strengths of different local authorities' programmes become strengths across the whole of the SELTP. A starting point may be to establish a cross-SELTP harmonisation/endorsement panel.
9. **Participants gave some powerful and concrete examples of how the Partnership's CPD programmes have contributed to enhancing their supervision and leadership practice**. The degree to which participants gave a positive evaluation about the programme they attended differed widely between participants on the same programme. This suggests that **each programme may have its own strengths and limitations, and that careful consideration of the suitability of each programme for a particular individual is indicated**. The most valued components of all programmes were the interactive, skills-based elements. The reflective supervision course was highly appreciated by all of the participants. CPD participants did not identify that support for research-informed practice was a strong feature of any of the programmes; this merits consideration when the Partnership's CPD offer is reviewed.
10. **A number of research into practice initiative have had considerable success, including the 2017 national conference, the Twilight sessions, the RiP/RiPFA tailored support sessions, the Knowledge Transfer Partnership**. However, we do not know at present **whether these initiatives have resulted in SELTP social workers making more use of research in their everyday practice**. Use of the RiP/RiPFA online resources offered through the Partnership seems relatively low (based on web statistics), although we have no comparison data for other online research services. Considerable strides have been taken in improving practitioner involvement in research and making social work students' research more relevant to local authority research needs. However, there is much more that could be achieved in this area with a shared commitment from all four SELTP partners. For example, the model of the Southwark Research Interest Group could be mirrored across the other Partnership boroughs or a cross-Partnership Group could be set up.

Analysing our data thematically/conceptually helps us to understand why certain things have worked well and others less well, thus contributing to thinking on the sustainability of the partnership. We present such an analysis in section 7.2 below.

## ***7.2 SUSTAINABILITY: A MODEL FOR A WELL-FUNCTIONING TEACHING PARTNERSHIP IN FUTURE***

Our analysis identified four factors which we believe have characterised activities of the Partnership which have worked well. We believe that those factors were either not present or were present to a lesser degree in those activities which worked less well. These factors are represented in the diagram below and are then discussed in turn. We feel that our sense of these factors is best conveyed through the voices of Partnership members and so we have included relevant quotes from them below.



## 7.2.1 REFLECTIVE SPACE

Our analysis suggests that a key feature of the Partnership's most successful activities has been the creation of space for reflection on practice. For example, in Mark Taylor's research with Teaching Consultants, the TCs talked about how much they enjoyed and benefitted from coming into the physical space of the university. For some of them, it felt like crossing a boundary, in a very positive, energising sense.

*Having a forum to, you know, grapple in a way with it as well, having not really had the space to necessarily to do that in that way over the time [in] practice like these guys[students] being in an academic environment again, the first time in several years and realising how refreshing that can be and that kind of appetite for learning that I once had and the students have and just it's a different, it's a very different environment to practice, and yet at the same time it's the same because they're learning the same thing that you're doing but yet it's so different and it's, I think there's something refreshing about kind of coming across that boundary.*

*Social work practitioner quoted in Taylor 2018 (Appendix B)*

The benefits for practitioners of having this alternative physical space was also identified by social work academics working with the Teaching Consultants.

*For practitioners it's giving them a space away from the day to day business of being practitioners and managers and coming into a space that allows them to think and reflect more on what they're doing. Students will always ask questions they haven't anticipated so it's a good way to help them think about what they're doing and why they're doing it and where they're going.*

*Social work academic*

The work carried out by Teaching Consultants at the university also allowed them space in the sense of dedicated time for reflection. As Mark Taylor (2018) puts it:

*The teaching space therefore affords teaching consultants with a creative opportunity to reflect on cases and work, outside the deadline, procedural and organisational constraints of the local authority setting.*

Dedicated time for reflection has also been enabled by the Partnership's CPD courses. This being said some of the critical feedback on the CPD courses came from participants who felt that they had not had enough time, in particular to work on written reflections. This participant felt that more time needed to be allowed for the cognitive shift away from doing to reflecting; in informal terms, for creating 'headspace'.

*My head is full of social work and you get pulled in so many different directions...To be able to undertake and achieve your job and that is stuff to take priority. So, you know, you stop to do your assignment and your head is still in the place of work. It takes a while to, to be able to cut off from that.*

*Participant on CPD course, quoted in Fairtlough 2018 (Appendix A)*

It is worth noting that much of the work of the Partnership has been carried out according to very tight timescales and deadlines and that, where activities have been less successful, this may be due to a lack of dedicated time or 'headspace' for thinking about how to tackle them. This may be particularly true of the Partnership's attempts to encourage greater use of research in practice, given that integrating research and practice is a long-standing and complex problem in social work.

The creation of reflective space in the ways outlined above has served to **validate reflective practice as a workplace activity**. This was felt by participants on the Partnership's CPD courses:

*The feelings and emotions side of reflection yes, I think it was a reminder that we do need address that and enable the social worker to get in touch with their feelings, which lessens the risk of burnout.*

*Participant in the Reflective Supervision course quoted in Fairtlough 2008 (Appendix A)*

In the case of the practitioner quoted below, this validation meant that she was better able to carry out supervisory activities within her own workplace.

*I've been doing direct observations with my own team and using some of the ideas and some of the paperwork and also being more aware of some of the pitfalls and drawbacks of it. I just feel I've had time to think about it more properly and hopefully to do it better and to make sure it's a more useful process for everybody.*

*Participant in the Practice Endorsers course quoted in Fairtlough 2008 (Appendix A)*

## **7.2.2 RELATIONSHIPS**

Our analysis suggests that those activities of the Partnership which have worked well have entailed the formation of close personal working relationships, within which there is knowledge of the strengths and expertise of each other.

These relationships may function as reflective spaces (cf. 7.2.1 above).

*That two-way process [during teaching] reminded me that we have to change our perspective and look at the work we are doing. That's come very much from having that relationship with students. It's also informed how I supervise the work of the social workers that I have. I've always been a big fan of reflective supervision. But I guess what it did, it refocused me on what that might mean, in relation to the way I choose to work and I choose to practice. I had to look at myself critically too.*

*Social work practitioner quoted in Taylor 2018 (Appendix B)*

They also transcend the usual spatial and organisational boundaries. At an SELTP event one social work practitioner and Teaching Consultant talked of the pleasure he got in seeing a student at a selection panel interview, in the university classroom and then in his own local authority when the student came on placement.

The knowledge of one another acquired through SELTP activities functions as a resource for the Partnership. This is conveyed particularly well by the following quote from a social work academic, which highlights the asset represented by the relational knowledge which the Partnership's business support coordinator has of the Partnership's Teaching Consultants.

*We've had a fantastic administrator and one of the conversations we've had this morning is, when she moves on, who's going to pick up the reins of being there for social workers who want to apply to become teaching consultants, for someone to contact when an interested social worker wants information, but also crucially, the qualitative aspect of what someone like her brings because of her sensibilities, for example, to arrange the teaching consultant matching exercise, which we did this morning. She's got a sense of many people who've applied, and that's very important, it's not just purely an administrative function, you need to have that sense of the individual social worker. So, when we were doing our matching this morning we were kind of looking at - if the social worker would fit with someone else to teach the students and I think you need to have that kind of qualitative understanding for this to work as well because you want to make sure you create a smooth process.*

### *Social work academic*

It may be that is such relational knowledge (held by the placements lecturer and local authority practice education co-ordinators) which underpins the success of the Partnership's placement strategy. Equally, it is worth noting that where Partnership activities have worked less well, those involved have often highlighted personnel changes as problematic. Furthermore, while we have excluded governance from the scope of this evaluation, the obvious importance of relationships and relational knowledge to the functioning of the Partnership identified by this evaluation is something we would suggest future governance planning could take account of. Put simple, how can the Partnership ensure that those who are working to fulfil its purposes know each other? Close personal working relationships with external individuals - such as those formed at the 2017 conference and continued through the National Network of Teaching Partnerships - are also likely to be important to future success.

## **7.2.3 ROLE FLUIDITY**

The Partnership has enabled many individual workers to try out different roles. The most obvious example of this is the Teaching Consultant programme which has enabled practitioners to take on the role of teacher or lecturer, albeit working closely with an experienced academic. The Academics in Practice programme has similarly enabled some academics to engage in direct practice and others to carry out collaborative 'practice-near' research, commissioned by local authorities. Some practitioners have also taken on leadership or project management roles, as a consequence of either their Teaching Consultant work or their learning on one of the CPD courses offered through the Partnership. For example, one senior social worker in Adults Services who has worked as a Teaching Consultant co-facilitating Intervention reflective practice groups and is a student on the Goldsmiths MA in Advanced Social Work - Practice Education is now leading on a project to roll-out this model of reflective practice within her local authority.

Role fluidity is a known characteristic of well-functioning organisations and successful inter-agency working (Leathard, 2003). One criticism of it is that it can result in services being delivered by less expert practitioners (on the basis that a practitioner carrying out multiple roles will not be able to achieve the same level of expertise). We have not found evidence of this happening through this evaluation and therefore we would argue that activities which encourage role fluidity should continue to be carried out within the Partnership.

One area in which role fluidity was not as present as we had hoped was practitioner research and the development of research-informed practice. The keynote speech at our 2017 Teaching Partnerships conference focused on the notion of the researcher-practitioner; someone who moves between social work researcher and social work practitioner roles. As we have explained in section 6.9.4 above, there continue to be logistical barriers to facilitating this idea; we hope they can be overcome in future.

## 7.2.4 RESOURCES

The final triangle in our pyramid model of a well-functioning teaching partnership is ‘resources’. There is no doubt that many of the Partnership’s activities are underpinned by resources which are not going to be available in future. Warmly persuasive terms (Williams, 1975 in Ferguson, 2007) such as reflective space, relationships and role fluidity may prove ephemeral without a structure to contain them. As one colleague put it:

*Feelings, if they are going to be sustained, they have to have an infrastructure behind it, because otherwise - feelings will just vaporise...*

### *Social work academic*

The question for the Partnership now is how to create and sustain such an infrastructure with fewer resources, in a climate of acute financial restriction. This is not a question which we can answer here but we have tried in our list of recommendations below to identify those activities which we feel are most in need of particular kinds of resources, in particular, business support.



# 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the evaluation work carried out for this report, we recommend that the Partnership should:

1. Continue the Teaching Consultant programme. Ensure that the programme has dedicated business support resources.
2. Continue to support the implementation of the successful Intervision reflective practice programme across the Partnership and create a communications and publications strategy to publicise this work.
3. Continue to support an Academics into Practice programme with a focus on supporting the roll-out of Intervision and assisting with small-scale research and service evaluation projects identified by local authorities. Consider setting up protocols which will enable the data protection and logistical issues entailed in such projects to be dealt with easily.
4. Conduct work to identify what the factors are underpinning the considerable success the SELTP is enjoying in achieving placement targets, to ensure that this can be sustained. Create a communications strategy to publicise success in this area.
5. Implement the recommendations of the recent externally commissioned workforce analysis and continue to work with this workforce analyst
6. Continue to monitor recruitment, diversity and attainment statistics across the established BA and MA in Social Work programmes at Goldsmiths and the numbers of applicants to both programmes. Consider supportive measures as suggested by the recent workforce analysis, including part-funded scholarships, to ensure continued supply of social work students in the face of the national decline in numbers.
7. Continue with RiP/RiPfA tailored support. Monitor the use of RiP/RiPfA web resources and consider a comparison with use of other online research services. Consider which activities may be most successful in increasing take-up of RiP/RiPfA resources, support their implementation and evaluate their effectiveness. Continue to use RiP/RiPfA as a critical friend and strategic partner (as in the Practice Supervisors Development Programme).
8. Review the CPD offer on the basis of the detailed CPD evaluation report and in particular, participants' favourable evaluation of the reflective supervision course and of the skills-based components of all courses.
9. Continue to support the involvement of Experts by Experience in all Partnership processes. Consider how Experts by Experience could become more involved in research across the Partnership
10. Continue with the Twilight session format and provide business support for this to happen.
11. Consider establishing a Partnership-wide Research Interest Group with similar functions and aims to the existing Southwark Research Interest group and with dedicated business support.
12. Establish and maintain a list of research-minded practitioners within the Teaching Partnership who can step in to support student projects and other research projects identified by local authorities as priorities.

13. Adjust start dates for ASYE cohorts in adult services across the Partnership as well as children's services in line with university programme graduation dates to facilitate the transition of students into practice. Consider establishing a Partnership-wide ASYE assessment panel.
14. Agree a framework for future evaluation which is oriented towards identifying impact but is realistic in its aspirations. Multi-component interventions such as the Teaching Partnership programme present considerable complexities when it comes to impact evaluation. Consider obtaining external advice on impact evaluation and in order to evaluate governance and communication strategies. Monitor the implementation of the framework through the existing Impact and Evaluation workstream. Through senior leadership, support and encourage participation in evaluation processes by individual practitioners, managers and senior leaders.



## ***9. CONCLUSION***

This evaluation report has considered the principal activities of the South East London Teaching Partnership between 2016 and 2018. It identifies the Teaching Consultant programme, the approach to placement provision, the roll-out of the Intervision reflection practice model and the Academics into Practice programme as activities which worked particularly well. Key areas for future development include supporting frontline practitioners' engagement with research, continuing to develop the CPD offer to best meet the needs of practitioners, organisations, service users and the profession, and building on the workforce development activities that have begun. Activities which have been successful have been characterised by reflective space, relationships and relational knowledge, role fluidity and resources. Keeping this in mind should contribute to the sustainability of the Partnership's activities in future.

# 10. REFERENCES

Akhurst, J. and Kelly, K. (2006) 'Peer Group Supervision as an Adjunct to Individual Supervision: Optimising Learning Processes during Psychologists' Training', *Psychology Teaching Review*, 12 (1), pp. 3-15.

Fairtlough, A. (2018) 'Professional Leadership for Relationship-Based Practice' in G. Ruch, G., Turney, D. and Ward, A. (eds.) *Relationship-Based Social Work - Second Edition*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Press.

Frost, L. Hojer, S., Campanini, A., Sicora, A., and Kulberg, K. (2018) 'Why do they stay? A study of resilient child protection workers in three European Countries.' *European Journal of Social Work*, 21(4).

Leathard, A. (2003) *Interprofessional Collaboration*. London: Routledge.

Lipmann, E. (2013) *Intervision: kollegiales Coaching professionell gestalten*. Heidelberg: Springer.

Tietze, K. (2010) *Wirkprozesse und personenbezogene Wirkungen von kollegialer Beratung*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Turney, D. and Ward, A. (eds.) *Relationship-Based Social Work - Second Edition*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Press.

Williams, R. (1975) In Ferguson, I. (2007) 'Increasing User Choice or Privatizing Risk: The Antimonies of Personalisation', *British Journal of Social Work*, 37, pp. 387-403.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A

[SELTP CPD Qualitative Evaluation Report](#)

## Appendix B

[The Experiences of Social Workers Who Teach Social Work Students in the Classroom: A Research Report](#)

## Appendix C

[List of sources for this evaluation](#)

## Appendix D

[Theory of Change for 2018-2019 evaluation](#)