# Leadership Capability Framework

Leadership capabilities – Year 2 participants

The Leadership Capability Framework is intended to outline the social work leadership skills and attributes that are integral to improving outcomes for children and families. The leadership capability framework has been mapped out for different stages of leadership development across social work roles.

*This document outlines leadership attributes for **Year 2 participants of the Frontline programme** and can be used by Year 2 participants to understand their strengths and areas for development. Year 2 participants may also wish to use this document within the coaching sessions to support the development of leadership attributes.*

The framework is drawn from Seven Features of Practice and Seven Outcomes, PQS for Practice Supervisors & KSS for Practice Leaders and Frontline research and experience.
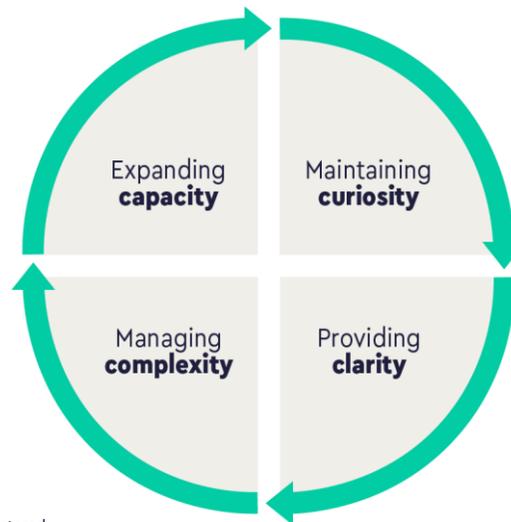
Maintaining Curiosity

Maintain a curious approach to understanding yourself, others and the context in which you work in order to remain aligned to your values,
build effective relationships and advocate for children and families' best interests.

Sub-capability	Effective attribute
Curiosity of values & moral purpose Maintain curiosity around your personal motivation, values and moral purpose to ensure actions and decisions centre around the best interests of children and families.	- Displays curiosity in relation to some of their values, personal motivations and moral purpose and is able to articulate this to others and reflect on how this impacts their practice.
Curiosity of self Demonstrate self-reflexivity by rigorously and forensically assessing personal strengths, potential and areas for growth, understanding how language and behaviour can impact on others.	- Clear on own strengths and development areas, and able to describe appropriate next steps in relation to these. - Aware of language and behaviour, reflecting regularly on how this influences their work with children, families, and other professionals.
Curiosity of biases and prejudices Pay attention to emotional triggers, biases, and prejudices, identifying ways to manage these effectively; have an awareness of aspects of your own identity, how these impact on how you are seen and interacted with to empower yourself and ensure a non-discriminatory approach.	- Developing awareness of and regular reflection on own biases and prejudices. - Displays commitment to anti-oppressive practice.
Curiosity of workforce Be visible and accessible to those you work with. Extend curiosity to your team; know the business, have familiarity with them – their strengths and areas for development - as well as their work, seeking and welcoming frank feedback on your relationships.	- Developing confidence in giving constructive challenge and feedback to colleagues and multi-agency partners. - Asks for and acts on feedback from peers, managers, and multi-agency partners.
Curiosity of leadership and governance Identify and maintain stable, focused leadership at all levels to foster effective, professional governance	- Developing understanding of the features of stable leadership and reflects on how to cultivate this within themselves when working with families and colleagues.
Curiosity of partners	- Recognises the benefits of sharing learning around practice with others and seeks opportunities to do so.

Engage with the local and national context, senior partners and multi-agency audits to review wider practice and support the improvement of social care services promoting up to date knowledge and practice	
Curiosity of the service Remain outward facing, engaging with direct practice with children and families, encouraging open and inquisitive curiosity of what is happening for individuals within their service, including systemic or structural factors such as experiences of discrimination and the impact of poverty. Notice whose voices are less heard from in the community and sector and question why this might be: seek to rebalance this with a drive to inclusive feedback loops and fostering representation.	- Able to access, interpret and apply research (including own research and existing models) to own direct work. - Seeks feedback to assess effectiveness of adopted approaches.

Providing Clarity

Sustain an unwavering vision of what good outcomes look like for children and families; know what is needed to achieve this both within and beyond your service, providing clarity on the role you and others play in this.

Sub-capability	Effective attribute
Clarity of vision, expectations, and goals Communicate a clear vision that keeps children at the heart of decision making; articulating high expectations and ambitious goals, ensuring these are achieved by holding others accountable to perform in line with expectations. Good practice is commended, shared, and modelled.	- Demonstrates ability to set clear goals with families and make decisions that keep children at the heart. - Ability to seek support from appropriate sources where required
Clarity of leading workforce Inspire staff and unite them around the goal to work directly with families to improve their life experience, holding high ambitions for children and their futures.	- Developing understanding of challenges facing wider service and how these inform their work with children, families, and other professionals.
Clarity of anti-oppressive practice Establish a safe and inclusive environment. Inspire teams to take ownership of the responsibility for dismantling racism and other forms of discrimination within the organisation and community and promote the importance of taking clear action supported by the principles of anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory direct practice.	- Understands why an anti-racist, anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory approach is central to social work practice and the implications of not adhering to this. - Proactively reflects on own practice and seeks out opportunities to act in line with the principles of anti-racist, anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice.
Clarity of empowerment Empowers practitioners to see themselves as active change agents, working with families with high intensity and consistency, rooted in a strengths-based framework. In turn, practitioners will empower families to take ownership of their own solutions and create sustainable change, whilst keeping children safe and managing risk.	- Understands their role as active change agent and able to utilise systemic, strengths-based approaches to influence change with and for families. - Work alongside families to empower them to take ownership of their own solutions where possible.

Clarity of family focus Work across the professional network to formulate a shared understanding of family histories and functioning informed by, and in collaboration with the family	- Work closely with families and relevant professional networks to formulate shared understanding of family functioning and behaviour. Use this information to make evidence-informed decisions to promote positive outcomes.
Clarity of relationships and influence Leverage power and professional authority responsibly to influence others at all levels and across agencies. Build relationships and engender confidence by understanding others and using excellent interpersonal skills to bring others round to your perspective. Balance this with an openness to the priorities of others where this will have best impact on outcomes for children.	- Able to build effective working relationships in which power can be leveraged ethically to influence behaviour change. - Actively seeks to understand the views of families and other professionals.
Clarity of strategy and implementation Dedicate time to focus on long term priorities, continually developing a vision and strategic plan that is right for the organisation. Utilise robust financial planning, engaging partners to align thresholds and maintain a secure front door, sustaining shared goals.	- Able to articulate a personal, child-centred vision, and use this skilfully to inform goal setting with the family and wider network.

Managing Complexity

Critically engage with the systems you inhabit, applying creative, evidence-informed approaches and harnessing these to prioritise activities which are meaningful, proactive and centred around the needs of children and families.

Sub-capability	Effective attribute
Complexity of knowledge & skills Demonstrate extensive knowledge and skill in the profession of child and family social work, leading by example to promote and govern excellent practice.	- Able to draw upon relevant research and social work theory to inform own practice.
Complexity of operations Recognise where developing routines to track progress, process and judicious use of resources can enable staff to do skilled direct work. Capture rationale for decisions in a comprehensive and well-expressed way. Be attentive to where unnecessary or excessive bureaucracy could hinder this.	- Able to navigate relevant processes and resources to work effectively with families and other agencies.
Complexity of decision making Critically evaluate data and evidence to analyse complex scenarios and spot patterns between potentially unrelated concepts, effectively managing risk to make informed decisions at pace. Support teams to sit in safe uncertainty throughout casework.	- Uses best available evidence to make informed decisions about work with families, based on a developing understanding of risk, knowledge of families' needs and awareness of the wider system. - Demonstrates ability to seek support and guidance about diecisions from managers and other colleagues where required.
Complexity of case discussion and supervision Engage and support the workforce to manage complex cases and their responses to these by undertaking effective group case discussion and individual supervision, enabling open and reflexive discussion around diversity and inclusion as it relates to relationships and practice.	- Actively utilises individual supervision and case discussions to think systemically and reflexively about all aspects of their work. - Demonstrates awareness of own biases and ability to reflect on discrimination and anti-oppressive practice and apply this to their work.
Complexity of quality assurance Lead quality assurance activities to review the performance of the service and individuals, including facilitating practice observations to enable feedback.	- Actively seeks feedback opportunities and direct observations of their work to develop and maintain high-quality practice with families.

Complexity of reflective practice	
Complexity of reflective practice Champion and create the conditions for practitioners to take a whole family focus and utilise a systemic practice approach to tackle the root causes of problems and create long term solutions working alongside other professionals and families themselves.	- Adopts a reflective, systemic, and whole-family approach to problem-solving, using this and other mechanisms to review the experience of families on their caseload and inform decision making.
Complexity of evaluation Evaluate rigorously ensuring the flow of cases reflects a child's journey.	- Developing awareness of child-centred approaches to evaluation. - Engagement with evaluation practice within their local authority.

Expanding Capacity

Through learning and innovation, expand what can be achieved by influencing others – improve systems, maximise relationships and create greater capacity for change that impacts positively on the lives of children and families.

Sub-capability	Effective attribute
Capacity for resilience & wellbeing Embed a culture of resilience at all system levels which acknowledges staff wellbeing in challenging circumstances, allows focus on work with children and families and enables the ability to bounce back even in the most trying situations.	- Developing awareness of the emotional labour of social work. - Able to identify their own needs and available resources to support wellbeing.
Capacity for resourcefulness & impact Invest and allocate time and resources where it is needed, measuring priorities by the highest expected impact, and integrating solutions appropriately until improvement is embedded.	- Able to prioritise tasks effectively within own work and seek support from relevant sources when required.
Capacity for impacting organisational culture Proactively embrace the opportunities created by new experiences, creating a learning culture where mistakes can be learned from. This is modelled for teams, empowering them to develop practice and make real, significant professional growth, taking advantage of coaching techniques to develop staff from within. Hear and learn from others who have diverse perspectives, identities and lived experience - seek to expand your understanding and use this to inform work which culturally competent.	- Actively seek out diverse learning experiences and shadowing opportunities to inform practice development. - Able to utilise successes and mistakes as learning opportunities and use them to improve future practice.
Capacity for innovation Involve staff in service development, enabling the use of initiative and creativity to discover different ways of doing things. Foster innovation, piloting new ideas carefully and influencing partner agencies and external bodies to secure buy-in for innovations at a systems level. This will facilitate multi-disciplinary skill sets to work together effectively.	- Developing awareness of how innovative approaches can be utilised to make practice improvements. - Able to identify potential problems that may benefit from innovative solutions.

Capacity for leading change Lead others through change and critical periods for the organisation	- Developing understanding of the challenges and opportunities of organisational change.
Capacity for positive interactions Raise the status of the social work profession, demonstrated through positive community and multi-agency interactions.	- Maintain and actively promote professional and positive interactions within the multi-agency network, acting as an ambassador for the social work profession.
Capacity for advocacy Incorporate the experiences of children and families into service improvement and innovation.	- Able to work effectively with families to develop a good understanding of their views and experiences. Use this information to advocate for families within a variety of settings.