



Statement of inter-professional values underpinning work with children and young people

Key attributes

Children and young people value practitioners who enjoy working with them, who treat them with respect and who are good at communicating with them.

Children's practitioners place the interests of children at the heart of their work. They share responsibility for a range of outcomes for children. They are committed to ensuring all children have the chance to: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and experience economic well-being^{[1][1]}. They recognise children's fundamental right to be safe, in order to reach other goals.

Practitioners concern themselves with the whole child, whatever their specialism. Although their own involvement with specific children may be short-term, children's practitioners work to develop the potential and capacities of children for the longer term.

Children's practitioners are committed to equality of opportunity for all children, and actively combat discrimination and its effects through their work. They respond positively and creatively to diversity among children and families, and colleagues.

Practitioners recognise that respect, patience, honesty, reliability, resilience and integrity are valued by children, families and colleagues. By demonstrating these qualities in their work they help to nurture them in others.

Work with children and young people, parents, carers and families

Children's practitioners recognise and uphold children's rights. They involve children in decisions about their lives and take account of their views and preferences. They recognise that childhood and early adulthood are times of change, and that they need to respond to changes in children's views, capabilities and circumstances.

Practitioners recognise the fundamental role played by parents in children's well-being and development, and all this implies for working in partnership with parents in the interests of children.

Practitioners are committed to engaging children and families fully in identifying goals, assessing options, and making decisions. They support children's and families' involvement in issues that matter to them, including through involvement in the development and evaluation of children's services.

Children's practitioners respect the right to confidentiality for children, and for families. They also recognise that their duty to safeguard children comes first. They acknowledge these commitments sometimes present dilemmas to be resolved.

Inter-professional work with colleagues

Children's practitioners value the contribution that a range of colleagues make to children's lives, and form effective relationships across the children's workforce. Their inter-professional practice is based on a willingness to bring their own expertise to bear on the pursuit of shared goals for children, and a respect for the expertise of others.

Practitioners recognise that children and families, and colleagues, value transparency and reliability, and strive to make sure that processes, roles, goals and resources are clear.

Practitioners involved in inter-professional work recognise the need to be clear about lines of communication, management and accountability as these may be more complex than in their specialist setting.

They uphold the standards, and values of their own professions in their inter-professional work. They understand that sharing responsibility for children's outcomes does not mean acting beyond their competence or responsibilities.

They are committed to taking action if safety or standards are compromised, whether that means alerting their own manager/employer or another appropriate authority.

Children's practitioners understand that the knowledge, understanding and skills for inter-professional work may differ from those in their own specialism and they are committed to professional learning in this area as well as in their own field, through training and engagement with research and other evidence.

They are committed to reflecting on and improving their inter-professional practice, and to applying their inter-professional learning to their specialist work with children.

Work with children can be emotionally demanding, and children's practitioners are sensitive to and supportive of each others' well being.

A note on terms - The text uses 'children' for 'children and young people' and 'parents' or 'families' for 'parents, carers and families' for brevity. We have used the terms 'children's practitioner' or 'practitioner' throughout.

1[1] In the English context, these goals are set out in the Green Paper (2004), *Every Child Matters*. The parallel framework in Scotland is (2005) *Getting it right for every child: proposals for action*, which states that all children need to be safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, respected and responsible, and included. Similar frameworks for inter-professional work with children are being developed in other parts of the UK.

<http://www.nmc-uk.org/aArticle.aspx?ArticleID=2326> / accessed 11.iv.2007
