

Keyworking Function

WORKFORCE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The Council for Disabled Children have developed this document with NHS England and NHS Improvement and Health Education England to support the set up and roll out of Keyworking pilots across the regions.

It has been designed through extensive consultation and co-production with key stakeholders including parents, young people, Learning Disability and Autism commissioners and service leads.

The guidance is designed to support pilots in their planning, delivery and testing of the Learning Disability and Autism keyworker function. It will be refined on the basis of the pilot areas' experience and evaluation.

Health Education England will be working with CDC and NHSE/I to develop a full set of workforce capabilities which will expand on the core competences outlined in this preliminary document. This, and learning collated from pilot work will be used as the basis for developing of any national education and training resources to support Keyworking.

Our thanks go to all those who gave up their time to input into its development and particular thanks to those that took part in stakeholder engagement workshops.

Introduction

This framework sets out and defines the core competences required by workers/ team members to deliver the Keyworking function, as identified in the function guidance document. Local areas will be responsible for deciding how this function is realised, whilst ensuring compliance with the competency, whether through existing, or new teams and roles. The emphasis being on improving outcomes for children and young people with autism and/or learning disability and complex needs, including a commitment to increasing the rates of children and young people who remain in the community rather than in inpatient settings.

Whilst there will be some flexibility for local approaches to deliver the Keyworking function in the local context, delivery will require expanding the workforce and these competences are fundamental to ensuring that Keyworking is developed, recruited and delivered effectively. The requirement for these competences will be influenced by the availability of this skillset within the wider system of services that are available to support children, young people and families with learning disabilities and/or autism who are most at risk of admission. Where services such as intensive support teams are immature or undeveloped, there may need to be further training in addition to these minimum competencies.

The key components of the workforce competency framework

It is essential the Keyworking function meets the requirements of the workforce competency framework, however it is structured for delivery in local areas. The four key elements of this framework – Placing the child, young person and family at the centre, Effective communication,

Achieving change and unblocking the system and Bridging and working across the System - are set out below along with their component parts. It is vital that they are met in full by the Keyworking function but it would not necessarily be expected that every person in the team would be able to fulfil each element.

Crucially, at their heart are a set of core values.

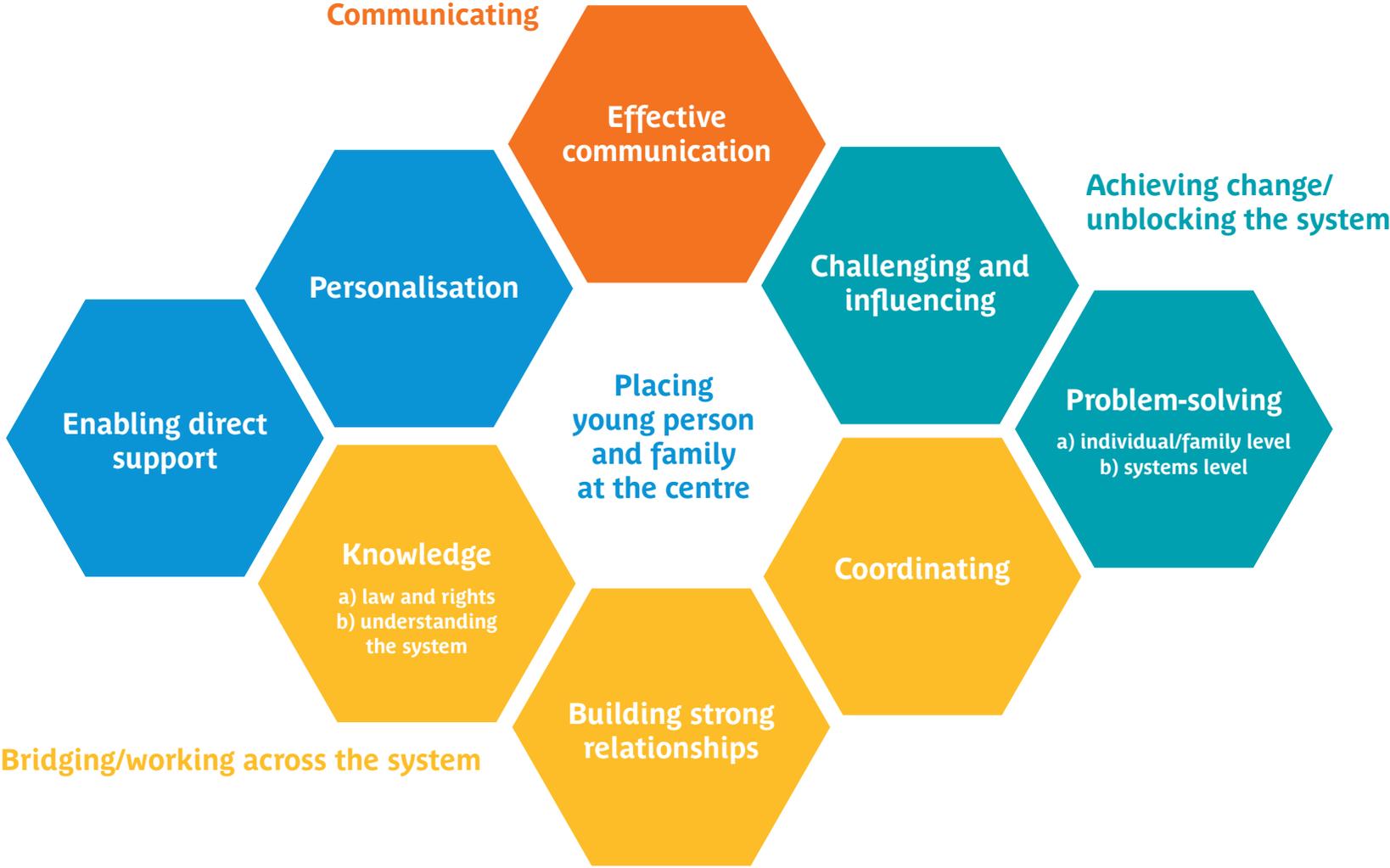


Core Values

Underpinning the core competencies are a set of core values that those performing the Keyworking function must embody. These are:

- **Empathy/Understanding** – Believes in an approach that requires an understanding of needs from the perspective of the child, young person and family.
- **Respect** – Respects the opinions and beliefs of the child, young person and their family and works to ensure they are represented, with a commitment to the principles of child-centred, personalised care.
- **Positive and Solution focused** – Has positive, solution focused approach to ensuring the best outcomes for the child, young person and their family.
- **Commitment** – Commitment to ensuring the rights of young people with learning disability and/or autism are protected and enforced and that their views and preferences, and those of their families, are listened to. Tenacious in the pursuit of the appropriate support and outcomes.
- **Always learning** – Commitment to personal learning and helping the system learn and improve.
- **Compassionate** – To listen and respond to the needs to the child, young person and their family with understanding and compassion.
- **Collaborative** – Commitment to joined-up, collaborative working.
- **Active listener** – Committed to fully concentrate, understand, respond and then remember what is being said by children or young people and their families.

Core Competencies



The ability to prioritise the family and child or young person is at the heart of this function and for this reason is addressed first. Also essential is the overarching core competency: **effective communication**.

Excellent written and verbal communication skills and the ability to communicate clearly, sensitively and effectively with a range of professionals and teams; with children and young people; and with their families and carers is an intrinsic part of the Keyworker function. As is the ability to listen actively.

Specific additional communication skills are also required, for example mediation or facilitation skills for work with the family; inclusive and creative approaches to communicating with young people with complex needs; and the use of persuasive communication for work with networks of professionals.

Keyworking Function Competency Framework

The specific elements of each of these parts of the framework are set out below.

i. Placing the child, young person and their family at the centre

- a) Enabling/Organising direct support
- b) Personalisation and child-centred planning

ii. Effective Communication

iii. Achieving change and unblocking the system

- a) Challenging and influencing
- b) Problem solving
 - i. For individual child/young person's care
 - ii. at a systems level

iv. Bridging and working across the system

- a) Coordinating
- b) Strong knowledge base
 - i. Law and rights
 - ii. Understanding the system
 - iii. [Direct support and knowledge]
 - iv. Understanding this group of children and young people and their families
- c) Building strong relationships and collaborating

Competency	Skill to be demonstrated	Related tasks and activities
1. Placing the child, young person and their family at the centre	a) Enabling/Organising direct support b) Personalisation and child-centred planning	See below
a) Enabling/organising direct support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to facilitate the provision of emotional and behavioural support and informed advice to children and young people with autism and/or learning disabilities and their families, based on strong knowledge base and experience of working with children, young people and families with complex needs. This will require good knowledge of therapeutic approaches available ● A compassionate and empathetic approach to children, young people and their families ● The ability to listen actively; a commitment to fully concentrate, understand, respond and then remember what is being said by children or young people and their families and then convey faithfully and appropriately ● Ability to manage multiple, competing case-loads through effective time management skills ● High levels of personal resilience and an ability to support team resilience ● Guide and support families to access and apply for a range of services, based on up-to-date, accurate knowledge of the local offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate the provision and implementation of tailored behavioural and emotional support to help a child or young person and their families develop skills for progress and self-management to meet their agreed goals and outcomes ● Support parents to access and implement support and tools for managing behaviour ● Facilitate the provision of interventions to prevent admission to in-patient settings where appropriate and support to facilitate transition out of secure settings ● Identify, guide and refer to other services where needed e.g. carer support services, CAMHS, short breaks provision etc. ● Actively listen so as to accurately capture and then convey the lived experience of the child or young person and their family Seek and offer supervision and/or support where appropriate

Competency	Skill to be demonstrated	Related tasks and activities
b) Personalisation, flexibility and child-centred planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child-centred planning skills ● Sound understanding of the theory and principles of personalised care ● Ability and commitment to act in a way that acknowledges the child or young person’s expressed views and preferences ● Based on child-led discussions, develop a set of key outcomes and a personalised plan for the Keyworker intervention ● Ability and willingness to work flexibly and responsively to provide support when families need it most ● A commitment to co-production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with a child, young person and their family to develop a personalised plan ● This plan will include a set of key outcomes for the Keyworker intervention, based on what matters to the child or young person. This will involve developing a plan of work around the child and family’s needs and identified outcomes, and delivering this with flexibility. ● Keep track of young person’s progress to gauge and meet ongoing support requirement
2. Effective communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Excellent written and verbal communication skills ● Ability to communicate to a range of audiences at different levels, tailoring language and style accordingly ● Ability to communicate clearly, sensitively and effectively with children, young people and their families, as well as a range of professionals, including senior professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use creative and accessible ways to communicate with children and young people with a range of communication needs, e.g. using pictures or role plays, to agree a set of outcomes for the Keyworking intervention ● Communicate clearly with the child, young person and their family to help them understand and navigate the system, for example conveying complex legal and medical information around Tier 4 admissions in a clear, accessible way

Competency	Skill to be demonstrated	Related tasks and activities
<p>2. Effective communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to communicate complex legal or medical information in a clear, accessible way ● Ability to represent and champion the views and wishes of the young person and family in an assertive, clear manner ● Mediation and relationship-building skills ● Ability to demonstrate active listening to children, young people and their families and respond with empathy and compassion ● Inclusive communication – use creative and accessible ways to communicate with children and young people with a range of communication needs, based on their needs and preferences ● Facilitation skills ● Utilise a range of skills to support behaviour management ● Confidently engage and communicate with a wide range of professionals, including at multi-disciplinary panels ● Apply skills and techniques to resolve or minimise conflict and distress (enhanced) ● Ability to share knowledge and upskill colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Represent and champion the young person and their family in discussions around provision of care as required, communicating compassionately with the young person and their family and communicating confidently with the range of professionals involved in their care ● Maintain clear, accurate records of work with each young person in accordance with local procedures on record keeping

Competency	Skill to be demonstrated	Related tasks and activities
3. Achieving change and unblocking the system	a) Challenging and influencing at a systems level b) Problem solving <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. For individual child/young person’s care ii. at a systems level 	See below
a) Challenging and influencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensuring rights in law are heard and upheld – ability and confidence to challenge and hold services to account ● Confidence and authority, based on a solid practice and knowledge base, to challenge inappropriate or inadequate practice, including where this is the status quo ● Ability to negotiate in an assertive and professional manner ● Previous record of influencing cultural or strategic change ● Providing constructive challenge ● Persuasive communication to achieve multi-agency buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Challenge inpatient admissions to ensure they are measured, appropriate and necessary. This may involve intervention, working with services to prevent admission to inpatient settings where appropriate ● Troubleshoot on behalf of the child, young person and their family where required to ensure the necessary support is put in place to enable them to remain within or be discharged into the community and to promote joined-up, consistent care that meets their needs and rights. This may involve constructively challenging the status quo, bureaucratic decision making and decision making in silos ● Create and encourage a culture which prioritises keeping children and young people within the home and local community by persuasively communicating with a range of teams and services and staff at different levels of seniority ● Assess procedures, systems and pathways of existing provision and teams and identify areas for improvement

Competency	Skill to be demonstrated	Related tasks and activities
b) Problem-solving i. for individual child/ young person's care ii. at a systems level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to solve problems and remain solutions-focused ● Asking the right questions and identifying key areas for change ● Track record of overcoming challenge and achieving change ● Ability to analyse local systems ● Troubleshooting: identifying and removing barriers and issues which prevent or delay effective care in the community for the young person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Troubleshoot on behalf of the child, young person and their family where required ● Rethink systems and approaches, based on what is in the best interests of children and young people ● Identify changes that would increase flexibility, integration, joined-up working, improve communication and above all lead to better outcomes for children and young people with autism and/or learning disability ● Keep track of young person's progress to gauge ongoing support requirements and address any challenges
4. Bridging and working across the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Coordinating b) Strong knowledge base <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Law and rights ii. Understanding the system iii. [Direct support and knowledge] iv. Understanding this group of CYP and their families c) Building strong relationships and collaborating 	See below
a) Coordinating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to coordinate care and achieve multi-agency buy-in, based on strong experience of health social care and/or education systems and cross-system knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinate assessments ● Maintain/hold responsibility for continuity for the child or young person

Competency	Skill to be demonstrated	Related tasks and activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate with different teams and share appropriate information in a timely manner ● Encourage and instigate joined-up working ● Communicate the young person’s needs and preferences with multiple teams ● Remind and challenge other individuals and services of their duties, responsibilities and agreements to ensure appropriate services are put in place and delivered on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Know who the key decision-makers are within different agencies and services and work across systems and services to ensure they respond and react to needs as required ● Understand the key motivations and structural/ resource-based pressures on different services in order to persuade them of need to commit to Keyworking aims where necessary ● Ensure that action points from care plans, CETRs and dynamic registers are followed up and to ensure action is being taken across teams ● Facilitation of transition into and out of secure settings for young people, providing support, advice and practical input as required ● Acting as a link between Health, Education and Social Care
<p>b) Strong Knowledge base for practice</p> <p>i. Legislation and rights</p> <p>ii. Understanding the system</p> <p>iii. Knowledge of support approaches</p> <p>iv. Understanding the group of children, young people and their families</p>	<p>Legislation and rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A good up to date overview of relevant legislation and rights frameworks. including the Children and Families Act; Mental Health Act; the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS); 117 After Care Procedures; the Care Act; and the Human Rights Act ● Commitment to ensuring this knowledge remains up-to date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the local offer and keep up to date with any changes to locally available provision, in order to signpost and refer young people and their families to wider support and provision ● Champion and reinforce adherence to the requirements of key mental health legislation, for example the Mental Capacity Act in decisions around Tier 4 inpatient admittance in order to prevent

Competency	Skill to be demonstrated	Related tasks and activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding of how to apply this knowledge within the sphere of own practice to ensure legal rights are heard and upheld ● Awareness of safeguarding for children and vulnerable young adults <p>System and services Good understanding of health, social care, and education systems for children and young people with SEND, and how these fit together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand how Keyworker intervention fits within these services and systems ● Knowledge of local provision and services – and knowledge of key support mechanisms for children and young people with SEND, to include EHCPs, Personal Budgets and care giver grants ● Understanding of inpatient services for children and young people with learning disabilities and/or autism ● Understanding of CETR process and dynamic risk registers <p>Understanding the group of young people and their families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Autism and learning disability ● Understanding of the intersection of mental health and learning disability/autism 	<p>unnecessary admission to inpatient settings where that is appropriate</p>

Competency	Skill to be demonstrated	Related tasks and activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The family journey <p>Confidence to acknowledge any gaps in knowledge and proactively engage in development opportunities to maximise knowledge and competency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the local offer and keep up to date with any changes to locally available provision, in order to signpost and refer young people and their families to wider support and provision
<p>c) Building strong relationships and collaborating</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to build and maintain strong relationships with colleagues and a wide range of professionals from different services, including clinical settings ● Ability to build and maintain positive, trusting and appropriate relationships with children, young people and their families ● Addressing silo working through forming strong relationships, good communication and instigating joint-working across teams and services ● Promote appropriate information and resource sharing across teams ● Engage with regional coordination mechanisms and regional and national good practice sharing opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Actively build and maintain strong relationships with a range of professionals across teams and settings in order to act as a link between Health, Education and Social Care teams ● Promote joined up, integrated working with colleagues and services ● Recognise your role as part of a wider team around a child and their family and seek to form ongoing, positive contacts with members of the wider team ● Work effectively with different services and teams to meet the needs of children and young people ● Work across systems and services to ensure they respond and react to the child or young person's needs as required ● Work effectively with colleagues to ensure a regionally coordinated response.



About the Council for Disabled Children

The Council for Disabled Children (CDC) is the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector with a membership of over 200 voluntary and community organisations and an active network of practitioners and policy-makers that spans education, health and social care. Their aim is to see a fully-inclusive society where disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs can lead full and happy childhoods and rewarding adult lives. They do this by working with the sector to find out what is and isn't working on the ground and use what they learn to influence policy and improve practice.

CDC hosts the following networks and projects:

Early Years SEND Partnership

IASS Network

Making Ourselves Heard

Special Educational Consortium

Transition Information Network

CDC is proud to be part of the National Children's Bureau (NCB), a leading children's charity working to build a better childhood for every child.