

News story: Social worker accreditation system plans announced

The government has today (5 December) published its [response](#) to a consultation on the implementation of the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) for child and family social workers.

The plans outlined today address feedback from the sector to ensure the new system is implemented effectively through an initial voluntary phased roll-out from 2018

The NAAS will raise the professional status of child and family social workers, providing a clear career path as well as ensuring they have the knowledge and skills they need to practice effectively.

The system forms a key part of the government's reforms to children's social work to ensure every child receives expert support and protection.

Children and Families Minister Robert Goodwill said:

Vulnerable children and families deserve the highest-quality care and support and that's why we are driving forward reforms in children's social work.

The National Assessment and Accreditation System is a key part of this work to strengthen the skills and >professional status of child and family social workers so they can provide this vital support to children who need it.

We welcome the constructive feedback we have received and will work closely with the sector and local councils to support them as they start to introduce the new system in 2018.

Steve Walker, Leeds City Council Director for Children's Services, said:

The National Assessment and Accreditation System has brought a welcome focus on the arrangements that local authorities have in place to set the conditions in which best practice can flourish.

Leeds' involvement in the accreditation system will provide us with an opportunity to review and strengthen our career development opportunities for social workers and enable us to recruit and retain great social workers, which is what children and young people need and deserve.

Carla Pawsey, Leeds City Council Social Work Team Manager, said:

The National Assessment and Accreditation System is an opportunity to professionalise our profession and to be seen as accountable and evidence-based in our practice wisdom.

The initial roll out of the NAAS will consist of Phase One involving five local authorities and Phase Two, involving up to 20 authorities, and will promote a stronger focus on learning and development within the children's social work sector profession.

Social workers in the authorities involved in Phase One and Two of NAAS will be assessed against specific criteria setting out what constitutes effective social work practice, known as the Knowledge and Skills Statements.

Recruitment also began today for a Chair and CEO of Social Work England, the new regulator for all social workers in England which will be based in Sheffield.

The Department for Education, jointly with the Department of Health, will establish Social Work England to ensure public protection and drive improvements in social work practice, from initial education and training to continued professional development.