

### **Cllr Nicole Burnett**

I'm really pleased that this framework has come into place. It's been 2 years in the making, really, and it's an ambition that we've had as a Council for a long time. The best interest of the child and the families that we work with always has to come at the centre of everything that we do but previously the paperwork and the procedures and the policies didn't always mould around the individual's in the way that they should so we've put a lot of work in to look at evidence base, look at best practice across the region. It has taken a lot of work; our Officers have worked really hard. I think now I'm confident that this outcomes-based model is the most effective way of working to ensure the best outcomes for our children and families.

### **Hannah Thomas**

So the outcomes approaches are strength based or relational approach to social work focuses on the principles and ethos of the Social Services and Wellbeing Wales Act, i.e. the principles of wellbeing, voice, choice and control, collaboration and co-production, that's working in partnership with families, early intervention and prevention. The aim is for practitioners to have meaningful conversations with families and with children and young people to really unpick what matters to them and what's important and what they want to achieve.

### **Raeanna Grainger**

In my team, the Independent and Reviewing Service, we are really going to benefit from this new approach; we really welcome it. It makes things a lot clearer, it puts families and children at the centre of this process which, of course, is going to be beneficial. I think an outcomes focused approach will potentially lessen the time that Children's Services are involved with the family so that is certainly better for my team. I think we will hopefully see a real benefit in terms of children's names coming off the Child Protection Register more timely because with this outcome focused approach, it's much easier to track progress and to evidence when change is occurring so that clearly is beneficial to professionals in terms of their assessment but also really beneficial to families because they can see the progress that they are making and I think it is really important that it is recognised. Certainly, for the Independent Reviewing Service, I think it's going to be much easier for us to evidence positive change and the maintenance of that change but also will hopefully reduce numbers or certainly the time that Children's Services work with families. So I think it's going to be really beneficial. There are no grey areas with an outcome focused approach; it's very clear what we are trying to achieve when we work with the families so when I supervise my staff, I am clear and they are clear as to exactly what we are trying to do here. So we will benefit – I will benefit from this as there are less grey areas and that will make it easier naturally in terms of how I supervise my staff.

### **Stephen Owen**

Foster carers play an integral part in the care that they provide to children and the support that they provide to the local authority in ensuring care plans are met. For foster carers to work in an outcome focused way, it enables them to have a clear plan, a clear direction and in doing so, are best placed to support the children in understanding what their care plans are and why those care plans have been implemented. Sometimes, drift can occur in cases, so having an outcome approach to working with children is quite empowering for the children; they know exactly what the plan is going to be, how it is going to be implemented and it allows them to be central to the process as well because their views and opinions are extremely important in the care planning process; they

contribute towards things such as foster care annual reviews, LAC reviews and that is fed back to them. So, quite often, children who are looked after are in crisis and trauma because of their past so having a clear plan and a direction forward will undoubtedly help them.

### **Hannah Thomas**

The outcomes that we identify need to be specific, they need to be measurable, they need to be individual and unique to that child or to that family and where possible; we need to capture those in the child's or young person's own words or the parents' own words so that any plan that's devised is meaningful, bespoke and is specific to them.

### **Reanna Grainger**

I think a real strength of the outcome focused approach is really how much easier it is to track progress and to evidence change; that is really helpful for families when you put them at the centre of the process and they feel more in control, then they are much more committed to that process of achieving change and maintaining that change as opposed to feeling that something is being done to them.

### **Stephen Owen**

In a profession when there is often quite a high turnaround of Social Workers, having an outcome focused plan enables that, when there are changes in Social Worker, that the new Social Worker coming in will have a clear knowledge of that plan is, how it is going to be implemented, what needs to happen to enable it to be implemented and that is particularly important where we consider permanence for young people such as special guardianship orders, it is extremely important that the permanence for children is secured in a timely manner and by adopting an outcome focused approach, it enables us to plan effectively, have clear timescales and clear responsibilities for each of the persons within that plan to enable it.

### **Hannah Thomas**

Managers and those with a supervisory role have received training in undertaking supervision in using the outcomes model. There is a heavy emphasis on reflective practice and supporting practitioners to get to the heart of the matter and really understand the priority risks. Again, it models the strengths based approach that the outcomes model does across Children's Services. We need to be asking here, what is working, where do we want to go, how do we get there and how do we engage families well to do that.

### **Raeanna Grainger**

This approach helps them to develop skills and puts the right support around them to be the best parents that they can be and if their children are thriving as a result of that then I think that is the best outcome that anybody can hope for. But in terms of the work of the Independent Reviewing

Service, my team, I think that a lot of those families that we work with, a positive outcome for them would be to have their child's name removed from the Child Protection Register and this approach is helpful to them because it makes everything so much clearer; the expectations on them are clearer so they know exactly what they need to do to achieve that and, as I have said, any process puts them more in control, they are clearer and is only going to be helpful and lead to successful outcomes and of course these are outcomes that the families themselves have identified themselves as being required and not just professionals telling them, so I think they are much more likely to buy in to that process.

### **Claire Marchant**

I am really pleased to be speaking at the launch of the outcomes model in Children's Services here in Bridgend. I think it is so important that this model informs everything that we do, not just in the short term but for the medium and long term. This model is about really good relationships with children and with families and understanding what matters to them and enabling our Social Workers, our frontline workforce, to do what matters and removing some of the bureaucracy, some of the systems that would have got in the way of doing the right thing. It enables us to demonstrate progress and positive change, it is very much in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and doing what matters and what it should result in for our children and families in far sooner achieving the outcomes that they want to achieve and for us as professionals, to be able to see more children remain living with their own families in their own communities or achieving permanent outcomes, accommodation, care and support more quickly. I think this is the start of a very very long journey and this will be the way that we will practice, not just for the next year, couple of years, but for the next 5 or 10 years and we will see really sustainable change over that period. I think it is a fantastic opportunity for Social Workers to really practice in the way that they are trained. We also need to see some changes in the way that our services are delivered, our commissioned services, our in-house services, so that they can respond to the really outcome focused care plans that the Social Workers develop and I am really excited about that part of the journey as well as the part that we have got to do date. I want to thank everybody who has been involved to date. This has been a massive piece of work across the whole department and I am looking forward to being part of leading that journey going forward.