



SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT ACCREDITATION

Kellie, Advanced Social Work Practitioner in Bury, was one of the first candidates to volunteer for the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS). In her second blog, she talks about her motivation for taking the assessment and the impact she sees it having on the social work profession as a whole.

For me, it was down to pure curiosity as to why I was one of the first social workers to volunteer and take the NAAS assessment. I wanted to know more about what NAAS was, so I attended an initial interest meeting and from there I was guided through the process.

NAAS for me is all about professional development. It has made me reflect on my own practice, taken me back to the Knowledge and Skills Statements and has enhanced the expertise and knowledge I have as a social worker.

I have gained a great deal personally through achieving the NAAS accreditation but I also see it as a good thing for the social work profession as a whole. I see it is as a benchmark of good practice across the board and I believe every family and child we work with should receive this standard or above.

I recognise that many of my colleagues saw the 'assessment' word and associated it with something to be feared. Let's face it, the idea of any assessment is daunting but now there are a number of us that have gone through the process people have a better understanding of what it is and I really can't say it enough that it is just what you are doing every day.

I'd be lying if I didn't say I had the usual reservations you would expect around taking an assessment, after all it is human nature. These worries were alleviated by the fantastic support throughout from my Local Authority who reassured us it is not a 'pass' or 'fail' but a 'met' or 'not met yet'. If it was a 'not met yet' then they would work with me to look at the development areas to enable me to retake and achieve a 'met'.

For me NAAS has been a positive experience and I'm pleased to see many more of my colleagues also volunteering now. If I could give advice to any social workers thinking about NAAS I'd say:

- do what you can to make the day easier by getting a good night's sleep, allow plenty of time to arrive and read all the questions carefully
- be as prepared as you can by taking advantage of the support that is available - support is key to the NAAS process; and finally
- don't over think it, this is what you do every day!

Kellie has been employed as a social worker in the safeguarding team in Bury Children's Services since September 2009, and as an advanced practitioners since January 2018. Prior to this, Kellie worked as an outreach worker and a nursery nurse.