

# MULTI-CULTURAL FAMILY BASE

## PRACTICE LEARNING EVALUATIONS 2008-2009

Evaluation forms are distributed to students, tutors and agencies at the end of the placement. The return rate is pleasingly high although there are several cases where only one form (i.e. student or tutor) is received. All ratings, comments and suggestions are carefully considered and, over the years, have helped us in our aim of continual improvement in the training we offer. It should be noted that these forms are not the sole source of feedback as verbal communication during or after the practicum also occurs.

Some students spend the entire placement at MCFB; others may divide their time between this organisation and an agency in the MCFB Network whilst a third group of students are based wholly in another organisation.

### Section I: Numerical Ratings

(in which 5 is the highest and 1 the lowest rating)

#### 1. STUDENT RESPONSES

##### a) Feedback on Student Unit

(including value of introductory visit, induction pack and process, resources/administrative support and Student Group)

Total number of responses 141

##### Scale

5

##### % Responses

44.0%

4

44.5.0%

3

11.0%

2

0.5%

1

0%

##### b) Feedback on MCFB

(including introduction, welcome received, range of learning opportunities, practical arrangements – computers, desks etc)

Total number of responses 106

##### Scale

5

##### % Responses

47.0%

4

33.0%

3

10.5%

2

9.5%

1

0%

##### c) Feedback on network agencies

(including introduction, welcome received, range of learning opportunities, practical arrangements – computers, desks etc, links with Student Unit)

Total number of responses 30

**Scale**

5

4

3

2

1

**% Responses**

43.5%

20.0%

33.5%

3.0%

0%

**d) Feedback on Curriculum**

Effectiveness of curriculum in aiding development of assessment skills and relation between theory and practice

Total number of responses 62

**Scale**

5

4

3

2

1

**% Responses**

32.0%

50.0%

18.0%

0%

0%

**e) Supervision**

Effectiveness of group supervision and its links with individual supervision. *(Not all students had both forms.)*

Total number of responses: 50

**Scale**

5

4

3

2

1

38.0%

40.0%

22.0%

0%

0%

**f) Feedback on Practice Teaching**

(including level of support and challenges offered; assistance in development of anti-discriminatory practice, understanding of SW role and SW skills. Help with workload management; assessment and joint meetings)

Total number of responses 358

**Scale**

5

4

3

2

1

**% Responses**

63.0%

31.0%

5.5 %

0.5%

0%

**2. TUTOR RESPONSES**

(including communication with Unit, learning opportunities, joint meetings, organisation)

Total number of responses 161

Scale	% Responses
5	58.5%
4	34.0%
3	5.0%
2	2.5%
1	0%

**3. AGENCY RESPONSES:** only three forms were returned. Consequently, no statistical details are included. Some comments are included in Section VI.

## Section II: Student Evaluation of Course Content

*A list of topics was included in the form and students were asked to add any additional ones which had featured during their time at MCFB. Not all the topics would be offered during a single placement.*

The following sessions were selected as **most helpful** (most popular listed first):

- Assessment Frameworks (12); Child Observation (11); Art Therapy (5); Solution Focused Theory (4); Child Protection (4); Communication Using 3<sup>rd</sup> Object (4); Therapeutic Work (4); Working with Sikh Families (3); Resilience (2). *Other single choices also listed.*

Reasons for choices (not always provided):

- Sessions which were deemed ‘relevant’, because they linked with the actual casework being undertaken or were considered as fundamental for future SW practice were particularly valued (18). New topics or those deemed ‘informative’ were also singled out (5). Also mentioned favourably were those which provoked helpful discussion (2) or were confidence-building (2). *Other more personal reasons were also listed.*

The following were listed as **least helpful** (least popular given first):

- Art Therapy (2); Working with Sikh Families (2); Drugs and Alcohol awareness (2); Final Report (2). *Other single choices also listed.*

Reasons for choices:

- Previous knowledge (3); not immediately relevant or insufficiently general (2); too early in placement to make an impact (e.g. Final Report) (2). *Other more personal reasons were also listed.*

*Note: ten respondents specifically indicated that they would not assign any topics to this category as all were ‘helpful’ in some way or would be useful in future practice. A couple indicated that the programme of topics was good but that the order of delivery could be improved.*

Additional suggested topics (those which referred to topics which particular students had been unable to attend or were not included during their time at MCFB are omitted from this list):

- Working with Polish community and/or interpreters; Mental health – especially depression; Domestic Violence and Asian families; Parenting; Families affected by disability; Attachment in families with a non-Western

- background; Children (Scotland) Act; Social Policy in relation to children; Throughcare and Aftercare; Group work.
- Further material on Legislation; Child Development; Assessment
  - Also: more practical exercises – e.g. on statutory paperwork.

### **Section III: Student Evaluation of Group Supervision, Practice Teaching and Learning Opportunities**

*Note: not all respondents provided written comments in the course of or at the end of the evaluation form.*

#### Advantages of Group Supervision (in order of frequency of mention):

- Discussing and hearing views of others (11); sharing/comparing experiences (5); discovering a range of perspectives (5); collective learning and mutual support (2); sharing ideas and knowledge (2); wide-ranging as well as in depth approach.

#### Disadvantages of Group Supervision (in order of frequency of mention):

- Some topics previously studied (3); time-consuming (2); hard for students based outwith MCFB to integrate; lack of individual attention; different levels of participants; challenging for some individuals to have to speak in front of a group.

#### Practice Teachers

- Practice teachers ‘very supportive’; ‘excellent’. Considerate towards specific needs of individual students.

#### Other Staff

- MCFB staff - all helpful, willing and readily available to provide advice and support.
- One student at another agency noted that no support other from PT was provided.

#### Placement

- Experience described as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ – as well as ‘enjoyable’. The quality of support and supervision was mentioned, together with the range of learning opportunities. Reference was made to the beneficial mix of voluntary and statutory tasks available.
- Several students reported an awareness that they had progressed professionally and personally and had developed new skills.
- Group sessions provided excellent training.
- The surrounding support of the student community at MCFB was beneficial.

### **Section IV: Practical Arrangements**

#### Suggestions for improvements at MCFB:

- Improve the ratio of students to computers/desks/telephones. There is a particular problem when student numbers are at their peak.

- Additionally, make it easier for confidential telephone conversations to be held.
- Establish a better information system (e.g. emailing) to ensure everyone kept informed (e.g. 'Kicks for Kids'; use of MCFB Leisure Card etc).
- Improve Risk Management for students.
- Refine the Induction system – rather fragmented and leaving some uncertainties.
- Ensure that the Duty Desk Management Rota is fair for everyone – some imbalances noted.
- More support for BME SW students.

#### Suggestions for improvements in Individual Agencies

- All agencies should have an Induction Pack, which would include agency policies and guidelines.

### **Section V: Summary of Comments from Tutors**

| *(Most frequently mentioned comments listed first in each paragraph.)*

#### *Positive Comments:*

- The quality of the practice learning opportunity was frequently highlighted (12), together with the support and expertise of the Practice Teacher (16). Some PTs were singled out for their excellence or 'added value'.
- The range of learning opportunities (whether at MCFB or another agency) was underlined (12) and the term 'positive' was used to describe the overall student-learning experience (10). The combination of group and one-to-one work was beneficial. Many drew attention to the marked progress of students during their placements - in both competence and confidence.
- The way in which the needs of individual students were taken into account during the placement was praised (9). This might be simply in relation to the pacing of the work allocated. In certain instances greater flexibility was required to cater for specific learning needs, illness or disability. The ways in which this was done were described as 'considerate' and 'sensitive' and were appreciated by tutors and their institutions, as well as the students.
- Sufficient appropriate challenges had been embedded in the work.
- Assessment and final reports were commended.
- Overall organisation of the placements was generally considered satisfactory.

#### *Negative Comments/Suggestions:*

- Two unavoidable changes in allocation of PT were initially disconcerting to the students involved but in both instances the changeover was handled well and there was no lasting negative impact.
- Early feedback on any difficulties experienced by a student is desirable.
- Contact with PT was not always straightforward (because of other commitments). A method of passing on urgent message is needed to ensure speedy response.
- Two agency-specific problems were noted: one referring to temporary re-location (with obvious knock-on effects) and the other to limitations created by reluctance of potential clients to take up services offered.

## **Section VI: Agency Feedback**

- Student made an excellent contribution to the work of the agency.
- Need for a better match between background/interests of student and the work of the agency – otherwise it is a time-consuming process.