

# Common Core of Skills & Knowledge

## What is the Common Core?

**The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the children's workforce sets out the basic skills and knowledge needed by all people (including volunteers) whose work brings them into regular contact with children and young people.**

## Who is the Common Core for?

The Common Core provides everyone who works with children and young people in a part-time, full-time or voluntary capacity with the essential skills and knowledge they need.

## What are the Common Core skills?

There are six key areas of skills and knowledge in the Common Core. The definitions below were identified by children and young people:

### 1. Effective communication and engagement

Good communication is central to working with children, young people and their families. It involves listening, questioning, understanding and responding to children, young people and those caring for them.

### 2. Child and young person development

Children and young people grow up and develop at different speeds, emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually. It is important to understand how developmental changes can impact on a child or young person's behaviour.

### 3. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child

Anyone who works with children and young people has a duty to safeguard and protect their welfare. This is a big responsibility and requires special care and attention to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people.

### 4. Supporting transitions

Children and young people pass through a number of stages as they grow up and develop. Often they are expected to cope with huge changes such as moving from primary to secondary school or from children to adults' services. These changes are referred to as transitions. The Common Core helps practitioners to support children and young people during these transition periods.

### 5. Multi-agency working

Multi-agency working is about different services working in partnership in order to prevent problems from occurring in the first place. It is most effective when agencies work together with shared aims and goals.

### 6. Sharing information

Sharing information in a timely and accurate way is an essential part of helping to deliver better services. Sometimes it helps save lives. It is important to understand and respect issues and legislation surrounding the control and confidentiality of information.

The Common Core joins up these six areas of skills and knowledge and provides a common platform of understanding across the children's workforce. It reflects a set of common values for practitioners that promotes equality, respects diversity and challenges stereotypes. The Common Core also acknowledges the rights of children, young people and the role parents, carers and families play in helping children and young people. Further information about the six areas of the Common Core is available on the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) website at [www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/common-core](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/common-core)

### How is the Common Core being used?

The Common Core underpins a number of workforce development activities. Local areas have reported embedding the Common Core within:

- multi-agency training, providing common skills across different practitioners.
- recruitment, selection, induction and performance management.
- workforce development strategies
- training needs analyses.

### How does the Common Core link to qualifications in the children's workforce?

The Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF) will be a set of approved qualifications that enables progression, continuing professional development and mobility across the children and young people's workforce.

The Common Core will be reflected in all qualifications on the IQF. This will ensure the Common Core is embedded comprehensively into the training and continuing professional development of the workforce.

This work is part of the government's strategy to build a world-class children's workforce and is a vital tool to support integrated working. Find out more at [www.iqf.org.uk](http://www.iqf.org.uk)

### Common Core and children and young people

In 2008, CWDC worked with six groups of children and young people to explore how the Common Core is impacting on their workers. Each group produced a range of resources which are available to download at [www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/common-core/different-people-same-skills](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/common-core/different-people-same-skills)

### Next steps

In 2008-09 CWDC will be undertaking further work to help raise awareness of the Common Core and its importance across the children's workforce as part of a campaign to promote integrated working.

This factsheet is one of a series of integrated working factsheets. For more information on integrated working and the Common Core visit [www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/common-core](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/common-core) [www.ecm.gov.uk/commoncore](http://www.ecm.gov.uk/commoncore)

