

## CSSSL Qualities

### Personal qualities

- Effective leaders in children's services are open, honest, collaborative, knowledgeable and driven by a strong moral base.
- They have personal resilience, tenacity, humour, a strong sense of self and an openness to possibilities.
- They have both the confidence and humility to seek out and utilise support, neither feeling a pressure to always be the expert nor struggling with 'imposter syndrome'.
- They have an interest and ability to learn continuously.

### Working with colleagues

- Effective leaders in children's services demonstrate a belief in their team and show genuine interest in their work.
- They model expected behaviour and set clear expectations for staff, using a variety of appropriate strategies for this.
- They demonstrate integrity and recognise the impact they have on others.
- They are highly visible, albeit more on the 'balcony' than the 'dance floor'. Nevertheless they stay connected with the wide range of work underway and show value to the contribution that all colleagues make.

### Working with uncertainty and complexity

- Effective leaders in children's services understand the shifting landscape, its key policy drivers and behavioural motivators.
- They can adapt to ever-changing partnerships and are able to take and hold multiple perspectives and see interconnectedness, both internally and externally.
- They can provide leadership through uncertainty and are able to handle complexity, simplifying the agenda onto its core elements.
- They can use nuanced communication skills with different audiences and inspire their team and partners to pull together with common purpose.

### Working with partners

- Effective leaders in children's services understand their role to provide leadership and build partnerships across the system of services and networks.
- They use skills around collaboration and relationship management to create and sustain commitment across a system.
- They forge and develop relationships with services, corporately and with partners, both where they have direct responsibility and accountability, but particularly in the system leadership space where they have to use influence, communication and emotional intelligence to see desired outcomes or results.

### Leading improvement

- Effective leaders in children's services champion a compelling vision and lead improvement that is built upon a passion about children and young people and knowledge about services with a focus on outcomes.
- They can lead a budgetary process and develop a constructive dialectic between the needs of the people who use services and the funding that is available.
- They encourage creativity and innovation in implementing changes and are able to take an organisational and system perspective, recognising mutual interdependencies and the wider political and wellbeing context.

### Political knowledge and judgement.

- Effective leaders in children's services understand political process and know how to operate in a political environment.
- They build successful relationships with elected members, particularly the lead member.
- They are able to present and represent the service and issues, knowing how to give information that politicians sometimes might not want to hear.
- They respect that politicians' bottom line is to act in community and party interest and know how to lead and negotiate effective service delivery within this environment.