


## Step Up to Social Work Candidate Profiles Cohort 6

 <b>Name</b>	<b>Local Authority</b>
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### **Why did you decide to train as a Social Worker on the Step Up to Social Work Programme?**

In 2018 I was working in a primary school when the safeguarding lead told me about the Step up programme. As part of my role within the school I facilitated nurture groups but changes to funding meant that these needed to stop and I was increasingly dissatisfied with my role and started to feel that school was becoming more like a business and data factory and less about the welfare of children.

I missed the application deadline for that Step Up cohort and decided to apply in the next cycle as I had since moved on to working for Solace Women's aid, supporting families and children living in refuges, but felt that I was limited in the meaningful work that could be done.

The Step Up programme appealed to me because not only was it heavily practice based, it was also funded! Which meant I could concentrate on learning and developing my practice without having to worry about meeting my financial commitments through part time employment.

### **What has been your experience on the Step Up to Social Work Programme and what kind of support have you received?**

Step Up is a fast paced programme! Some things you will wish you had more time to digest but you will realise that social work is continual learning, You never stop learning and developing even in practice. Our cohort experienced the Covid-19 pandemic and that definitely had a huge impact on both our studies and our placement. It has longer term implications for social work too, but it has been a real learning curve to face the experience live.

The tutors at university are really positive and want you to pass, they are happy to offer support or direct you to it, but you also need to be proactive in asking for support and ensuring you have what you need to facilitate your learning.

Experts in Practice days are a really useful part of the programme and I have learnt things which I have been able to implement in my practice.

**What have you enjoyed most about training in your borough and what has been your greatest challenge?**

I have really enjoyed working in Haringey, it is a borough with a reputation due to a few high profile cases but there is a lot of excellent work that happens, from dedicated staff, this is sometimes overshadowed by the errors that have taken place previously. To work in Haringey, you have to be prepared to be under constant scrutiny and it is not the kind of place you could work if you are not passionate about your job. There are a lot of staff who have been in Haringey for a number of years who are happy to share their expertise and tips and I have felt well supported by the borough.

On Mondays Haringey Children Services hosts an 'ask the AD session', This is a new programme and everyone even students can access it and ask any questions they have directly to the Assistant Director. It is a fantastic initiative and the AD is very approachable and actually values the frontline staff.

The biggest challenge on placement is not knowing the borough well, having to find out all the resources and services available to support the families you work with sometimes in real time. Not being in the office with all your colleagues due to covid-19 has made this more of a challenge this year.

**What are your hopes for the next steps in your career as a Social Worker?**

I definitely want to practice in Haringey longer term, and I am still open to considering a variety of teams. I have enjoyed and learnt a lot during my two placements but think to broaden my knowledge and skills it would be good to go into a service that I have limited experience.

As I enjoy the frontline work with the families I plan to go for a role where I stay working with people in the community directly.

**What advice would you give to someone who is considering applying for the Step Up to Social Work Programme?**

Read! Read as much as you can, so much of it becomes relevant when in practice. Also query and question things. When on placement ask questions to everyone, usually colleagues are happy to assist and share their own social work journeys with you.

Organisation skills are key, if you are not organised you may become overwhelmed, this is something that I developed whilst on the programme.