

Rochelle Wade is studying for a MSc in Social Work at the University of Huddersfield. She is coming to the end of her 100 day placement in a Child Protection/ Child in Need team at Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council. Rochelle has benefitted from the support provided by a level two Practice Educator and the Teaching Partnership's Practice Educator Consultant, who works across the local authority and the university to support students and Practice Educators and ensure high quality placements that offer comprehensive experience of statutory social work.

I am currently undertaking my final placement in Children Social Care in Calderdale's Child Protection/Child in Need team where I have worked with families in need of help and support. Within this team I have undertaken tasks such as direct work with children, completed a single assessment, taking on the lead professional role in Child in Need cases and co-working a section 7 report.

This experience brought about challenges from the start for me. I was told a few days before my placement was about to start that I was going to be moving placement. I felt mixed emotions about this due to already being prepared to start and not knowing what would lie ahead for me in my new setting. However, this challenge turned into a success, as on reflection I recognise that this was the best thing that could have happened; it gave me the insight into how things in social work can change so quickly and it also showed me how I can adapt my practice at short notice.

Within this team my work includes undertaking direct work with children; working with families; carrying out home visits; facilitating meetings and gathering information; working with multiple agencies and analysing information to make well-balanced recommendations. My day to day activities include, conducting home visits; attending meetings; prioritising workload and recording cases notes. Being in a supportive team has helped me to build positive foundations in my knowledge and skills as a student Social Worker. The pod system at Calderdale has helped me to have more tailored support and the pod reflect session help develop a team culture that supports and helps each other to ensure that you do not feel alone when making professional decisions.

After a bumpy start to my placement, I can honestly say that this experience has been the most rewarding yet during my studies. I have enjoyed working with families who are in need and supporting them to make changes in their lives. I feel that this type of work supports my own personal values in supporting families. I have also enjoyed the support that I have received whilst on placement; being able to reflect on my practice and getting support from more experienced workers.

My first placement in a fostering team was really good as it was my first experience of social work. However as my final placement has progressed I have enjoyed the experience more and more. On reflection I believe this placement is suited to me more, as it links with my own personal values and beliefs around children and families, where possible, being supported to remain together. I have really enjoyed my time within this team and whilst I know I have many more years to go, I do feel that I have been given a good foundation to the start of what will be an amazing and rewarding yet challenging social work career.