

SHIFT

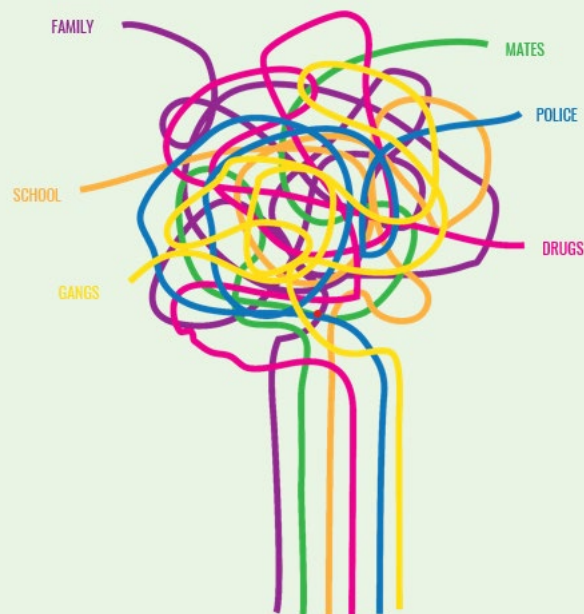
JOIN

OUR

COMMUNITY

OF

CHANGEMAKERS



WE ARE SHiFT

SHiFT exists to break the destructive cycle of children caught up in, or at risk of, crime and associated behaviour. We work with **children and young people up to the age of 25 for whom things are getting worse, not better, and who would benefit most from an intensive, therapeutic relationship.**

SHiFT is a vibrant community of changemakers. Our world centres around the children and young people we support.

Working as highly skilled, multidisciplinary teams of professionals, SHiFT gets alongside young people who are among **the most disadvantaged and vulnerable and causing the most prolific and damaging harm to themselves and others.** We start from wherever a young person is, **working systemically** with them, their family, friends, and community (including all statutory professionals in their lives) to develop **high trust, culturally competent and strengths-driven relationships that catalyse pro-social change.**

We know that change is difficult. We also know that young people in conflict with the law have complex and overlapping education, health, and social care needs. Offending behaviours can mask significant and underlying vulnerabilities. Recognising this, **SHiFT commits to doing whatever it takes** to break destructive cycles of harm and trauma. Unconstrained by age, geographic or professional boundaries, SHiFT starts with aspiration and belief in all young people. We support them with unrivalled intensity, longevity, and ambition - **our work with young people finishes when they are set on a path for success.**

A NEW SHiFT PRACTICE AT BEXLEY

SHiFT has teamed up with the London Borough of Bexley to develop a new SHiFT Practice at Bexley. If you are determined to improve outcomes for children and young people, have a 'can do' attitude, think and work flexibly and creatively, and thrive in a culture of high trust and high expectation, then we'd love you to consider joining us.

We hope this pack provides you with all the information you need to understand what SHiFT at Bexley will achieve and the skills and experiences we're looking for in our new Practice team. If you have any questions though, please do get in touch with us on ella.armstrong@shiftuk.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.

PEOPLE ARE OUR PASSION AND OUR POWER

SHiFT is all about people and relationships. We offer a culture of high trust alongside high expectations. We recruit colleagues who always go the extra mile, who do whatever it takes to enable children and young people to move forward.

Our values inform how we work and relate to young people, colleagues, and our broader communities. These values don't just exist on paper; we practice the daily and they support and challenge us to do our very best work. Every aspect of our work is underpinned by a commitment to equality.

Ambition

We have high aspirations and expectations for ourselves, our partners and colleagues, and, above all, the children and young people we support. We nurture and celebrate strengths. We are conscientious and meticulous, and we follow through on commitments. We trust and empower others.

Courage

We are open, curious, and vulnerable. We think outside the box, listen with humility, and speak up, committed to fairness and ending of discrimination and socio-economic oppression. We lean into discomfort and uncertainty, centring the needs and experiences of young people we support, believing in them until they believe in themselves, and guiding them to success.

Flexibility

Working flexibly is key to supporting our children and young people, our Practices and our work. We're all individuals, we all have different needs, and we all work, think about, and experience things in different ways. At SHiFT, we are responsive, open-minded, and agile. We get alongside and meet each other where we are.

Tenacity

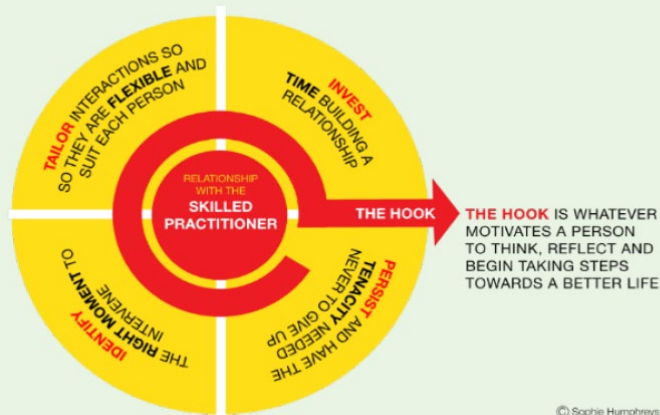
We see the opportunity in obstacles, and we persevere in the face of setbacks. We are optimistic, creative and confident, ready to ask and adjust, act and make ourselves useful. We care more about getting it right than being right. We understand that getting it wrong sometimes and learning from our experiences are part of the process.

BREAKING CYCLES

Central to everything SHiFT is, and everything we do is **'Breaking Cycles'** – a dynamic and evidenced approach to enabling change, created by SHiFT's Chair and Co-Founder, Sophie Humphreys OBE.

Breaking Cycles centres **flexibility and tenacity, tailoring everything to the individual, identifying the right moment to intervene and finding 'hooks' to motivate change.**

BREAKING CYCLES: 'THE CORE INGREDIENTS'



Rather than defining people by issues like addiction or criminality, Breaking Cycles focuses on people as individuals. We get alongside them to understand their hopes and fears, and we support them to develop the strong foundations needed to achieve their aspirations.

THE SHiFT DIFFERENCE

Finding 'hooks' to motivate and support change and building relationships with children and young people is highly skilled work. We think the following four ingredients are essential for that work.

INVEST time building a relationship and overcoming mistrust.

SHiFT expects to spend at least 18 months with each child or young person and each of our Guides works with a maximum of 6 children or young people. Investing time enables us to create trust, build stability and provide consistency. It enables deep, rich and creative systemic working – understanding the individual in the context of their family, friendship and community networks – and the development of genuine care, compassion and interest in the lives of our children and young people.

TAILOR interactions so that they are flexible and designed to suit each person.

Locally embedded services support practitioners to develop intimate knowledge of context and be able to bring the right opportunities and connections around a young person to build on strengths and realise aspirations. Flexibility, based on asking the right questions and listening to the answers, is essential for meeting people's needs and having positive impact.

IDENTIFY the right moment to lean into a challenge or present an opportunity.

Some young people will be most open to the idea of support when they are able to reflect quietly on their lives. Others might be most open to change when they are at their most vulnerable – when they arrive at hospital with knife injuries or after a decision has been made that they need to move into care. Motivating and supporting change requires professionals to understand the importance of timing and be able to identify just the right time to step forward for every individual.

PERSIST and have the tenacity needed to do whatever it takes.

Some young people will have experienced years of transitory and sporadic interventions from public services. They will often mistrust services and expect them to fail. It takes resilience, determination, and patience to keep showing up and to develop the relationships needed to find new ways around difficult, complex, and often painful problems.

THE SHiFT PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

Practices are locally tailored and structured. However, they all share some essential characteristics, and work to SHiFT's Vision, Values and Practice Framework.

Above all, every SHiFT Practice is focused on enabling creative and impactful change with children and young people to break destructive cycles of harmful behaviour. Common features of how SHiFT Practices work to achieve this are:

1. We are committed to overcoming boundaries, bridging gaps and changing systems.

SHiFT Practices occupy a unique position. They **intentionally span services, people and places and are not constrained by thresholds, categories, and boundaries that do not serve the needs of children and young people.** They work deeply and closely within and across agencies while, at the same time, retaining their SHiFT identity and fresh perspective. This unique **insider/outsider approach** creates a powerful dynamic that can drive improvement across the system. But it is challenging and needs to be held intentionally, led courageously, and nourished regularly.

2. We care about outcomes for children and young people above all else.

SHiFT Practices **never replicate existing language, processes or procedures that can unintentionally put the needs of the service ahead of the needs of an individual child or young person.** SHiFT Practices and Host Organisations are committed to explicitly, consciously, and regularly considering any documentation, processes, and procedures that they or the Host Organisation are using and asking what purpose they serve. SHiFT Practices **bring fresh eyes to structural bureaucracy and conventional wisdom** and test all activities against SHiFT's Vision and Values. This is not always easy or comfortable.

3. We are values led and evidence informed.

SHiFT Practices live our Values and hold each other and the whole organisation to account for them. Guides are **committed learners, animated by curiosity and a desire to use the very best existing evidence to inform and enrich practice.** Values, learning, and evidence are prioritised and embedded across all aspects of each Practice's work – from team culture and daily working practices to how Guides show up and support the children and young people in their care.

4. We flatten hierarchies and take personal responsibility for delivering excellence.

SHiFT Practices operate with as flat a hierarchy as possible - we are all leaders in the organisation and have a role to play. We know that traditional structures and systems do not always allow professionals to use their skills and expertise in a truly relational context. Too often, there is over-prescription, over-regulation, and a focus on process at the expense of practice. **SHiFT Practices include as many self-management principles as possible,** allowing Guides to have both the freedom and support to organise and manage their practice. We **expect excellence and flexibility, and we require colleagues to take responsibility.**

5. We build intensive, strengths-based, and therapeutic relationships.

SHiFT Practices **give time – a minimum of 18 months to each child or young person** we support and a maximum of six children or young people for each Guide to work with. Time enables us to build the strong relationships with young people, their families, and their friends that create change. We work to find the 'hook', starting from a position of strengths and working towards the goals and aspirations of each young person we support. SHiFT **Guides seek to support as many of the needs of the children and young people they support as possible,** striving to focus the amount of professional involvement in their lives to **increase clarity, trust, and direction, and reduce 'noise'.**

6. We work systemically.

SHiFT Practices work systemically to develop meaningful and trusted relationships with children and young people, which are essential to building aspiration and creating long-lasting change with children and young people. Working systemically means that **we centre relationships, and understand thinking, behaviour, and experience across micro, meso and macro levels of relevant context**. We work to create growth and change with children and young people alongside the people who mean most to them. Children and their families are resourceful, and we want to support their capacity to change harnessing the power of relationships to achieve that sustainably into the future and without creating an overdependence on services. This reflects our values and belief that with the right investment and support, all children and young people can thrive and realise their potential.

7. We facilitate gradual transitions – no cliff edges or hard endings.

There is not always an easy fit between what children and young people need and how mainstream services and systems are designed or resourced. Too often our children and young people fall through cracks or cross or don't meet thresholds in ways that disqualify them despite evident need. SHiFT seeks to turn this on its head by **centring the needs of children and young people and committing to doing whatever it takes to support them**. This means that SHiFT Guides **go wherever a young person they are supporting goes** – across borough or locality borders, into and out of custody, into homes, and into educational and recreational settings. A young person's needs do not stop or change at a birthday, and so SHiFT's approach also means working with all young people, from birth to adulthood, which we see as around 25. **Transitions are carefully supported - soft, flexible, and promoting confidence to ensure success.**

8. We evaluate our work and implement learning to constantly improve and focus our efforts where we can make most impact.

SHiFT is a **learning organisation**. We embed monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes into our day-to-day work. We capture best practice from within our own organisation and share learning across the board. We build on the best possible evidence to improve our work and share our insights. In SHiFT, this involves **in-depth, child-centred, qualitative research to understand 'the SHiFT difference'** from the perspective of the child and the relationship they have with their Guide. **Standardised quarterly data returns from each Practice** enable us to monitor the progress of children and young people and the work of our Guides, feeding back into our organisation to drive responsive support and improvement. We work with **external evaluators to independently monitor** the implementation and impact of our work.

JOHN'S STORY

John, now 18, is a young person who is subject to a Care Order due to his parents' challenges around keeping him safe. The frequency of John's risky or harmful behaviour escalated drastically within a short period of time, which led him into conflict with the law. John became subject to several court orders. Many breaches of those orders have led to his current imprisonment.

John's Guide was determined that neither his age nor his imprisonment would create a cliff-edge to prevent ongoing support to turn things around. John's Guide saw those transitions instead as 'reachable moments' where she could get alongside John to help him make urgent change.

John's Guide visits John as regularly in prison as she did in the community. She has taken time to understand the root causes of John's present circumstance and to think creatively about how John can continue to identify and build on his strengths. The rapport that has developed between John and his Guide has enabled his Guide to align, simplify and steer the network of professionals in his life with John's 'big picture' needs, hopes and community context in mind.

The strength of their relationship has provided high quality entry-routes for other necessary and quality-relationships. An example of this in action is a recent visit by John's Guide to meet with John in prison with a new employer for whom John aspires to work post release. Because of this visit, and further work John's Guide has done with prison and other colleagues, John now has a clear plan for resettlement work focusing beyond custody and through the gate. Work alongside John's parents, seeking to restore their relationship with their son, is ongoing and will be vital in setting John up for success when he is released.

NOW YOU'RE HOOKED...

To provide the level of support that these children and young people need and deserve, we need the very best people.

We offer a culture of **high trust** alongside **high expectation**.

We expect our staff to live our values: **ambition, courage, flexibility, tenacity**.

We recruit colleagues **who always go the extra mile**, who do whatever it takes to enable the children and young people we support to move forward. This means treating each child as an individual, taking time to understand their drivers and needs and to uncover and build their aspirations. It means working systemically with the whole family, support system and statutory services, regardless of how complicated these systems are, and challenging the status quo to ensure that we get the best outcome for the child. And it involves sticking with each child for the long term, and working flexibly to respond effectively to their needs in each given moment.

The work is challenging and complex. We recognise the skills and demands of working as part of a SHiFT Practice, as an inside/outsider within a large and complex organisation, while providing intensive, therapeutic, flexible work with children and young people who have high levels of complex needs.

We need colleagues who believe wholeheartedly that they can make a difference, who are not jaded or constrained by existing ways of working, and who have the dynamism, creativity and persistence to push through barriers and explore new approaches.

AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

To ensure that we attract the very best talent, we aim to be an employer of choice.

We therefore pay well in recognition of the high levels of responsibility and initiative that we ask of SHiFT team members. As a Bexley Council employee, you will also receive the benefits of working for a Local Authority (further details are included in the application pack).

SHiFT Guides support a maximum of 5-6 children at any one time. This gives you the time and space to ensure that you are able to support each and every child intensively, and over an extended period of at least 18 months.

SHiFT recognises that high quality **learning and development are critical to our success**. Everyone at SHiFT needs to feel equipped to do their very best work. We need to understand what we're doing, why we're doing it, and with what impacts – where things are working well and where we need to improve. And we need to feel confident in situating our work and SHiFT's vision and mission within the big picture context of policy, practice and politics. The world is complex and fast-changing and we must be able to respond in an agile and effective way. **SHiFT therefore invests heavily in your learning and development**. This includes:

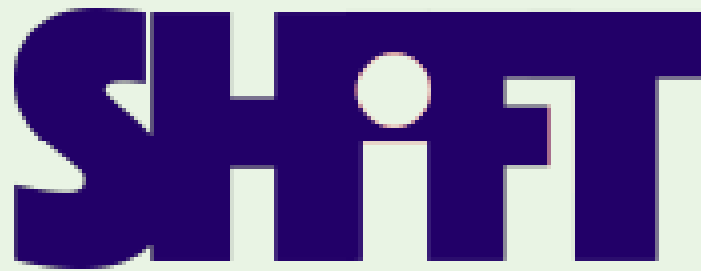
- A comprehensive induction week, involving all members of the national SHiFT team, the Local SHiFT Board and key local stakeholders and partners from within the Bexley Council and beyond. We ensure you start with a thorough understanding of systemic and reflective practice, the SHiFT Practice Framework and Breaking Cycles approach.
- Ongoing, intensive support on a regular basis from our National Practice Lead and Director of Practice, as well as clinical supervision.
- A variety of ongoing learning opportunities including a monthly online reading group, regular team awaydays and practice forums, lunchtime webinars with key leaders in the field, data deep dives and sharing of research, all to ensure you stay at the forefront of excellent practice.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are determined for SHiFT to be a diverse and inclusive organisation that is enriched by a wide range of backgrounds, expertise and experiences. We want to build a workplace that celebrates diversity and where everyone can feel valued, included and involved.

We will work to eradicate discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy and maternity, age, marital status and on the basis of socio-economic circumstances.

As a charity working within youth justice, we are keenly aware of the over-representation of children who are of black and mixed heritage within the youth justice system. Challenging disproportionality is a key priority for SHiFT. In seeking to achieve this, we understand the value and importance of recruiting and retaining a workforce which represents the children we seek to support. We therefore particularly encourage and welcome applications from people of diverse ethnic backgrounds, and we recognise that this group is currently under-represented within our team.



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