**Competency Self-Assessment Checklist for staff**

This self-assessment tool is designed to be used to enable ongoing development, it can be used to support an individual during: supervision, appraisal, job planning, induction, evaluation, or at service level by collating responses to enable workforce planning and review, or as part of governance and audit. It is important, to remain valid, for the tool to be used as a supportive mechanism to genuinely improve staff’s confidence and abilities in their roles, ensuring they are acquiring or developing in required competencies, in order to achieve improved outcomes for children and families, and not seen as punitive or shaming (which could discourage honesty and openness in its completion). This tool should only be used as part of the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Competency Framework which can be found at: [www.scypf.co.uk/leading-change/](http://www.scypf.co.uk/leading-change/)

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| 1. **Strongly Disagree 5. Strongly Agree**
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| **Underpinning Basis and Values** | 1-5 |
| **Aware & Understanding**I am conscious of how my words, actions, and the systems I work in affect others. This includes recognising power dynamics and systemic inequality. I aim to challenge bias, reduce harm, and respond sensitively to what each individual brings. | Rating |
| **Clear Communication**I share information in a way that is open, clear, and developmentally appropriate. I avoid jargon, secrecy, or ambiguity that might cause confusion or distress, and I build understanding and trust through honesty and consistency. | Rating |
| **Collaborative**I work with others across roles, teams, and services to deliver joined-up support. I avoid siloed working, competition between services, or gatekeeping, and instead promote shared goals and integrated partnership working. | Rating |
| **Compassionate**I respond with warmth, care, and understanding — even in difficult moments. I don’t dismiss or minimise distress; instead, I seek to understand and support others with empathy and patience. | Rating |
| **Courageous**I speak up when something isn’t right, challenge injustice, and lean into difficult conversations when needed. I don’t ignore harmful behaviours or avoid hard truths, and I lead with integrity and moral purpose. | Rating |
| **Curious**I approach challenges with interest and a desire to understand, not assumptions. I avoid judgment, and instead ask thoughtful questions to better understand situations, behaviours, and systems. | Rating |
| **Empowering**I support people to make informed choices and have their voices heard. I avoid disempowering behaviours such as controlling decision-making or failing to include those affected by my work. | Rating |
| **Ethical**I act with fairness, integrity, and accountability. I reflect on how to ‘do the right thing’ in complex situations, guided by professional and moral principles. | Rating |
| **Evidence-Informed**I use the best available evidence, balanced with professional judgment and lived experience. I avoid practices that are outdated, harmful, or not supported by research and evaluation. | Rating |
| **Honest & Trustworthy**I build trust by being truthful, transparent, and consistent. I don’t withhold information unnecessarily, and I am reliable in my actions and commitments. | Rating |
| **Inclusive**I create spaces where everyone feels valued, respected, and able to belong. I actively challenge exclusion, discrimination, and microaggressions, and celebrate diversity. | Rating |
| **Learner**I commit to ongoing development and improvement. I reflect on feedback, embrace growth, and acknowledge when I don’t know something — avoiding defensiveness or complacency. | Rating |
| **Listens and Involves Others**I make time to listen and act on what others tell me. I don’t speak for others without understanding their views, and I involve them meaningfully in decisions that affect them. | Rating |
| **Non-Judgemental**I respond with openness, empathy, and acceptance. I avoid making assumptions or allowing personal biases to impact how I view or treat others. | Rating |
| **Reflective**I regularly think about my own behaviours, decisions, and impact. I take responsibility for my actions and mistakes, learn from them, and continuously strive to improve my practice. | Rating |
| **Relational**I build trust-based relationships grounded in safety, connection, and consistency. I avoid impersonal or transactional interactions and instead foster genuine, human connection. | Rating |
| **Respectful**I treat everyone with dignity, recognising their experiences, preferences, and needs. I do not tolerate bullying, exclusion, or belittling behaviour — and challenge it when I see it. | Rating |
| **Safe**I help create environments where people feel emotionally, physically, and psychologically secure. I avoid harmful behaviours such as shaming, blaming, gossiping or creating fear. | Rating |
| **Strengths-Based**I focus on what’s strong, not just what’s wrong. I recognise and build on the strengths, capacities, and resilience of individuals, families, and communities, rather than defining them by challenges or difficulties. | Rating |
| **Transparent**I am open about what I’m doing and why, helping others understand decisions and processes. I avoid secrecy, misleading information, or behaviours that break down trust. | Rating |

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| 1. **No competence** – I have no knowledge or experience in this area.
2. **Basic awareness** – I know what this is and when it might be useful (e.g. I could signpost someone to it).
3. **Supported delivery** – I can help deliver this with guidance or supervision from someone more experienced.
4. **Independent delivery** – I’m fully trained and confident to deliver this on my own.
5. **Supervision/leadership level** – I can teach others to deliver this well, supervise them, and help improve or lead the work.
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| **Foundational Competences for** **Working with Children, Young People and Families** | 1-5 |
| **Child and Family Development**Demonstrates understanding of typical and atypical child development, attachment, and family systems. Able to apply this knowledge to assessment, formulation, and intervention across the age range. | Rating |
| **Children’s Mental Health**Has sound knowledge of common and complex mental health presentations in children and young people. Able to recognise signs and symptoms, understand trajectories, and consider the impact on daily functioning. | Rating |
| **Multi-Agency Integrated Working**Able to work collaboratively with education, social care, health, and voluntary sector partners. Skilled in sharing information appropriately, aligning support, and contributing to joined-up planning around the child or young person. | Rating |
| **Engage and Communicate with CYP across Developmental Stages**Able to adapt communication style, language, and approach to suit different ages and developmental stages. Skilled in using verbal and non-verbal methods to build rapport and ensure understanding. | Rating |
| **Engage and Communicate with Families, Parents/Carers**Able to engage families with empathy and respect, recognising their expertise and role in supporting change. Skilled in managing complex dynamics and maintaining clear, collaborative communication. | Rating |
| **Legal Frameworks, Capacity and Consent, Child Protection and Safeguarding**Understands relevant legal and ethical frameworks, including consent, capacity, and information sharing. Able to identify safeguarding concerns, take appropriate action, and contribute confidently to safeguarding processes. | Rating |

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| **Foundational Therapeutic Competences** | 1-5 |
| **Knowledge of Mental Health Interventions**Demonstrates sound understanding of a range of evidence-based interventions, their theoretical underpinnings, and appropriate use. Able to select and adapt approaches based on presenting difficulties, formulation, and clinical guidelines. | Rating |
| **Establish and Maintain Therapeutic Relationships**Able to build and sustain safe, collaborative, and respectful relationships with children, young people, and families. Skilled in using empathy, consistency, and professional boundaries to support therapeutic engagement and change. | Rating |
| **Emotionally Robust Individual who is Self-Aware and can Self-Regulate**Able to remain emotionally present and composed in challenging situations. Demonstrates insight into personal responses and uses reflective practice to manage impact on therapeutic work. | Rating |
| **Ability to Manage Therapeutic Endings and Avoid Therapeutic Drift**Skilled in planning and facilitating purposeful endings to therapy. Able to maintain focus and direction throughout the intervention, preventing sessions from losing structure or clarity of goal. | Rating |
| **Deliver Group Work**Able to plan, facilitate, and evaluate structured therapeutic groups. Skilled in managing group dynamics, encouraging participation, and adapting content to meet developmental and clinical needs. | Rating |
| **Use Routine Outcome Measures**Confident in selecting, administering, and interpreting outcome measures to inform practice. Able to integrate feedback into ongoing assessment, care planning, and service evaluation. | Rating |
| **Make Good Use of Supervision**Engages proactively in supervision to reflect on practice, manage risk, and ensure safe and effective care. Open to feedback and able to use supervision to support development and clinical decision-making. | Rating |

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| **Assessment and Formulation Competences** | 1-5 |
| **Complete Comprehensive Assessments**Able to conduct in-depth assessments that explore mental health, neurodevelopmental, physical, and social factors. Skilled in using validated tools and clinical interviews to gather a full picture of needs, strengths, and context. | Rating |
| **Ability to Formulate**Skilled in developing biopsychosocial formulations that integrate presenting issues, underlying mechanisms, and contextual influences. Able to use formulation to guide intervention planning and communicate it clearly to others. | Rating |
| **Risk Formulation and Safety Planning**Able to assess and formulate risk across domains (e.g. self-harm, suicide, exploitation, harm to others). Skilled in collaboratively creating safety plans that are specific, realistic, and responsive to changing levels of risk. | Rating |
| **Assess Functioning and Severity across Contexts**Able to evaluate how mental health difficulties impact functioning across home, school, peer, and community settings. Skilled in using clinical judgment and standardised tools to inform level of need and intervention planning. | Rating |
| **Collaboratively Agree and Communicate Care Plan/Next Steps**Able to co-create care plans with children, young people, and families that reflect goals, preferences, and clinical priorities. Skilled in clearly communicating next steps, roles, and expectations across the care team. | Rating |
| **Co-Ordinate Support across Agencies**Skilled in multi-agency working, including sharing information, aligning goals, and coordinating roles. Able to navigate systems to ensure timely, joined-up support that avoids duplication and gaps in care. | Rating |

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| **Specific Intervention or Therapeutic Competences** | 1-5 |
| **Diagnostic Assessment**Able to undertake structured assessments to identify mental health disorders in line with diagnostic frameworks such as DSM-5 or ICD-11. Skilled in gathering and synthesising information from multiple sources, formulating diagnoses, and clearly communicating outcomes and implications to young people, families, and professionals. | Rating |
| **Early Intervention and Promotion (e.g Whole School Approach)**Understands the importance of early help and universal support. Able to design, deliver, and embed mental health promotion and prevention initiatives across settings such as schools and communities. | Rating |
| **Pharmacological Treatment**Thorough understanding of pharmacological interventions in children’s mental health. Able to recommend, initiate, titrate, and monitor medication — including physical health checks — while clearly communicating with the care team, child/young person, and their family. | Rating |
| **CBT**Competent in delivering structured CBT interventions for depression, anxiety, OCD, and PTSD. Able to collaboratively set goals, use evidence-based techniques, and adapt approaches to developmental need. | Rating |
| **IPT-A**Trained in IPT-A for adolescent depression. Able to identify interpersonal problem areas and support young people to build healthier relationships and improve mood through focused, time-limited intervention. | Rating |
| **Psychodynamic Therapy**Skilled in applying psychodynamic principles to explore unconscious processes and relational patterns. Able to work at depth with emotional material and maintain appropriate therapeutic boundaries and containment. | Rating |
| **Systemic Family Therapy**Able to deliver family-based interventions that address relational patterns contributing to distress. Skilled in engaging families, managing dynamics, and supporting change through inclusive, non-blaming approaches. | Rating |
| **Multi-Systemic Therapy**Trained in MST and able to engage intensively with young people at risk and their networks. Skilled in working across systems (home, school, community) to reduce antisocial behaviour and promote sustained change. | Rating |
| **DBT**Able to deliver DBT-informed or full-model interventions for emotional dysregulation and self-harm. Skilled in balancing acceptance and change strategies, including crisis planning and skills coaching. | Rating |
| **TF-CBT**Trained in trauma-focused CBT. Able to provide phased interventions that include psychoeducation, coping skills, and trauma processing, tailored to the developmental stage and needs of the child or young person. For PTSD and/or Complex Developmental Trauma | Rating |
| **EMDR**Qualified to deliver EMDR for children and young people. Skilled in assessment, preparation, and reprocessing phases, with sensitivity to trauma history and developmental needs. | Rating |
| **FT-AN for Anorexia**Trained in Family Therapy for Anorexia Nervosa. Able to support families to take an active role in recovery, provide meal support, and manage eating disorder behaviours in a structured, supportive way. | Rating |
| **CBT-ED for Eating Disorders**Able to deliver CBT-ED for anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating disorder. Skilled in addressing maintaining factors, supporting behavioural change, and promoting body image flexibility and recovery. | Rating |