

Institution: Leeds Beckett University		
Unit of Assessment: 20		
Title: Multi-disciplinary work with vulnerable children and young people		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2005-2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Nick Frost	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2009-2019
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014-20		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? Y		
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Frost's research on multi-disciplinary work with vulnerable children and young people continues to change children's lives and policy and practice. His policy framework of child-centred, multi-agency decision-making has been adopted by North Yorkshire Local Safeguarding Children Board and has improved the work of the agencies involved in it. This policy framework has been adopted by Calderdale and then nationally through the National Children Bureau's new best practice for safeguarding children. Frost's research has changed and improved safeguarding policy in Ireland; and it has led to the creation of the European Family Support Network to spread good practice.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Since 2004 Professor Frost has had an active interest in child welfare and in particular multi-disciplinary work with vulnerable children and young people. This has involved work funded by the ESRC, the MATCh project, 2004-5 and EASI project, 2013-15, and various projects funded by Leeds City Council 2010 – 2016. In this period Frost has worked alone and with others to challenge practice and change policies in local and central government to ensure that children and young people are given better protection in the UK and Ireland (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6). The purpose of the research, then, is to have an impact on professional practice, social work policies and the workers and young people in the system. The research here is multi-disciplinary, combining policy analysis, critical reflection on practice and qualitative research with professionals. He has undertaken a critical appraisal of child protection Serious Case Reviews in England (3.5). He has evaluated the changing nature of social work in the UK (3.2). He has explored what is best practice in interagency working with children and families (3.6). And he has interviewed 14 professionals (including 8 in focus groups) working in Child Sexual Exploitation cases supporting the victims to identify the need for therapeutic support for these case workers (3.1).</p> <p>The key research in this period is 'Developing Multi-Professional Work for Integrated Children's Services' (3.3). The work promotes multi-disciplinary work in order to promote improved outcomes for disadvantaged children and young people. The findings are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept of 'communities of practice' devised by Etienne Wenger can be transferred to work with children and young people • Different professional backgrounds bring their unique skill set to such work but can work together to devise a holistic approach • Professionals can share differing approaches and values and constructively overcome differences with effective leadership • Confidentiality and information sharing are major barriers to shared working and require explicit policies and protocols to overcome barriers 		

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- Co-location of professionals works well in over-coming barriers to effective multi-professional working.

These points were also addressed by the ERSC EASI project which produced practical policies and protocols for frontline professionals. Professor Frost pursued these themes in relation to multi-professional teams and sexually exploited children and young people. This research is a continuation of the work that was submitted by the University in the previous REF. The research in this period has continued to make new contributions to the problem of looking after vulnerable children and young people in the UK and Ireland, and beyond (3.4). The research in this period has continued to evaluate the best ways of supporting workers who look after those vulnerable young children. This research, then, like the previous research, has been about shaping practice and policies so that lives are improved.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. Frost, N. (2018) Providing support and therapy for victims and survivors of Child Sexual Exploitation. *Journal of Public Mental Health*, 18(1), pp.38-45.
2. Frost, N. (2017) "From "silo" to "network" profession – a multi-professional future for social work", *Journal of Children's Services*, Vol. 12 Issue: 2/3, pp.174-183, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCS-05-2017-0019>
3. Frost, N., and Robinson, M.(eds) (2016, 3rd edition) *Developing Multi-Professional Work for Integrated Children's Services*, OUP: London
4. Frost, N. & Dolan, P. (eds) (2017) *Global handbook of child welfare*. London, Routledge
5. Frost, N. (2016) Learning from child protection Serious Case Reviews in England: A critical appraisal. *Social Work & Social Sciences Review* 18(3) pp.12-22
6. Frost, N. (2014, 2nd ed.) 'Interagency working with children and families: what works and what makes a difference?' In Foley and Rixon (eds) *Changing Children's Services: Working and Learning Together*. Bristol: Policy Press.

This is all work of international importance: 1, 2 and 6 are scored by internal audits at 3*; and the others at 2*.

Funded projects:

ESRC 2002-05 New forms of Professional Knowledge and Practice in multi-agency Services, R000239916 £122,061

ESRC 2013-15 Effective and Appropriate Sharing of Information ES/K00557x/1 £36,551

COST, EU (Action CA18123 EuroFam-Net) awarded in 2018, ends 2022: EUR 148,999

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Frost has remained the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for the North Yorkshire area (NYSCB) since the last REF period. The policy framework in 3.6 and 3.3 and their child-centred recommendations have been adopted in NYSCB, ensuring that all the agencies in NYSCB together support and improve the lives of all children brought into their work. That is, the agencies (North Yorkshire County Council [NYCC] Children's Service, Police and local NHS groups), led by NYSCB (also known as North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership: 5.1) have changed their policies and practice on how they work with

children who are at risk, and have intervened to support and improve the lives of hundreds of children. NYCC Children's Service has been assessed by Ofsted in August 2018 as Outstanding (5.2) – up from Good (5.3) - across all areas.

Frost was then appointed as Chair of Calderdale LSCB in September 2017 (5.4) allowing his research's model of best practice (3.3, 3.6) to be adopted by the agencies involved, so that more children were safeguarded by effective multi-agency working. The LCSBs were reformed in 2019 and Frost led a successful bid by Calderdale to become an 'early adopter' of the new arrangements. 17 areas were successful and their initiatives – including Frost's best practice on multi-agency working with vulnerable children - were used by the National Children's Bureau to create national policy on the new arrangements (5.5).

As a result of his published research in the previous REF period Professor Frost acted as research advisor to the Republic of Ireland government (2014-2015) and impacted on its policies working together to save vulnerable children through the creation of formal multi-disciplinary agencies. This led to the publication of Better Outcomes Brighter Future report by TUSLA, the Irish Government's Child and Family Agency (5.6) Frost, then, has directly influenced Irish policy and practice through Ireland embracing his policy framework on child-centred, multi-agency safeguarding (3.3, 3.6). The Republic has been amongst the leaders in developing child-centred, multi-professional working and the practices that evolved in these early stages are now established across the Republic. As reported by UNESCO Professor for Children and Youth and Director of Ireland's largest Children's Research Centre Professor Pat Nolan, National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway, Ireland, who commissioned Frost to work with him for TUSLA (5.7):

Frost provided comprehensive guidance... to the on-going process of Tusla's Family Support methods of service delivery development ensuring better outcomes for children, parents, families and communities who experience adversity. This was most evident in terms of his expert knowledge on the best models for supporting young people and prevention of maltreatment... without his expertise, our advanced policies now implemented and services now in place, would have remained aspirational rather than actual. We are indebted to Professor Frost for this sharing of his expertise, which has impacted very positively indeed in real ways on the lives of young people and families.

Finally, Frost was a founding member of the European Family Support Network (5.8), which was created using the policy recommendations of the research (3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5) to improve the lives of children and families across Europe. Together with Dolan, NUI, Galway, he convened the inaugural meeting at the UNESCO headquarters, Paris. The network now includes representatives from over 20 European countries – the aim is to have a lasting impact on family support policy and practice across the continent by drawing on the recommendations of his research. Frost took a lead on the initial policy statement and the theoretical framework. The Network made a successful COST bid to the EU (Action CA18123 EuroFam-Net) in 2018. Workstreams address policy, research and workforce development, and have an extensive reach across the continent. The work has produced models for workforce development, evaluation practice and good family support practice.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Impact case study (REF3)

- 5.1 – <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/about-us/who-we-are/>
- 5.2 <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50010311>
- 5.3 <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/815>
- 5.4 - <http://news.calderdale.gov.uk/frost-helps-safeguard-calderdale-children/>
- 5.5- <https://www.ncb.org.uk/what-we-do/together-we-deliver-better-childhood/building-integrated-child-centred-health-services-1>
- 5.6- Republic of Ireland government report showing impact:
https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/775847-better-outcomes-brighter-futures/?referrer=/documents/cypp_framework/betteroutcomesbetterfuturereport.pdf/
<https://assets.gov.ie/23796/961bbf5d975f4c88adc01a6fc5b4a7c4.pdf>
- http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/cypp_framework/BetterOutcomesBetterFutureReport.pdf
- 5.7 Letter from Dolan, 05 June 2020
- 5.8 - <https://eurofamnet.eu>