**Protocol between London Boroughs – Pay rates for agency workers in Children’s Services**  
  
This Protocol is intended to give effect to the terms of the Memorandum of Cooperation dated 1st April 2015. The Memorandum is an agreement between London Boroughs to adopt a collaborative and forward-thinking approach to address key workforce issues. Paragraph 6 of the Memorandum of Cooperation contains a number of provisions relating to the management of agency staffing.

This protocol sets out the maximum rates that Boroughs should pay for agency workers who have appropriate qualification, skills and experiences to effectively fulfil the relevant role. The rate to be paid to each worker will be a matter for individual negotiation and agreement by boroughs according to the context of the role, and the skills and experience required to effectively fulfil the relevant role and in recognition of each Council’s remuneration levels (in accordance with the Agency Worker regulations).

Consultation has taken place with managed service providers, key agencies and London Authorities on the level and application of this protocol.

**1.** **Pay rates for new agency staff (inclusive of oncosts, exclusive of agency mark-up)**

In order to disincentivise agency work and control costs, all new assignments are to have a pay ceiling. The rates set out below are maxima. These rates have been arrived at by analysis of data collected and reflect the most common rates applied at present; the vast majority of people are below this ceiling. The rates are as follows:

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| **Role** | **Capped Hourly Rate per hour** |
| **Newly Qualified Social Worker**  **(post ASYE < 2 years’ experience)** | £25 |
| **Social Worker (with 2 years+ PQE)** | £28 |
| **Experienced SW (> 5 years)** | £32 |
| **Senior SW (Senior Practitioner)** | £35 |
| **Specialist / Advanced SW** | £35 |
| **Assistant Team Manager (Practice Manager)** | £38 |
| **Team Manager** | £42 |

*The above rates reflect charges paid to the agency, including WTR and employer costs where relevant but excluding agency mark-up (which may be a fixed pence price, or percentage addition, dependent on local agreements).*

The maximum rate should take effect for agency staff commencing from 1st October 2015, there will be a 3 month transition period during which authorities will complete implementation. These rates will be reviewed annually each March.

**2. Pay rates for existing agency staff (inclusive of oncosts, exclusive of agency mark-up)**

Where the rate for existing agency staff exceed the maxima above, steps should be taken to comply at assignment renewal or as early as possible. The aim will be for all agency staff to be paid bellow the maximum rate by 31st March 2016, or as early as each Authority’s contractual arrangements allow.

**3. Monitoring and reporting arrangements**

Monitoring and reporting of the implementation of these rates will be conducted through survey and feedback of Heads of HR (London) and through the periodic collection of data about the children’s social work workforce and agency assignments.

Where Councils decide to step outside the cap such exceptions need to be closely monitored, justified and recorded.

**4. Review**

The effectiveness of this protocol will be reviewed after 6 months of operation.

**Date Protocol issued: October 2015**