



CASE STUDY · GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ·
2013 TO 2019

Putting culture at the heart of children's services

How cultural competence training helped 300 children's services staff, and then the county's foster carers, understand and record the role culture plays in a child's life.

300

children's services
staff trained in 12
months

97%

rated the children's
services training
excellent

12

foster carer sessions
from 2015 to 2019

100%

of foster carers
surveyed rated the
trainer excellent



This training is a must for anyone who fills in assessments for their clients.

Gloucestershire Support Team
Gloucestershire County Council

The challenge and the programme

Gloucestershire County Council wanted every child's assessment and care plan to reflect who that child really is, including their culture, ethnicity and faith.

In 2013 the council commissioned DiverseCT to train all staff in its Children and Young People Operations teams. The aim: training beyond the basics, so staff could show in their assessments how culture shapes a child's needs and outcomes.

Why cultural competence matters for children



Sense of belonging

Valuing a child's culture helps them feel they belong to their community.



Positive self-view

Recognising a child's background places value on difference.



Mental health

Knowing who you are and where you belong lays the foundation for future wellbeing.



Better outcomes

Meeting each child's specific needs leads to person-centred care.

Who took part

Social workers, family support workers, CAF coordinators, disabled children's workers, fostering and adoption workers, looked-after children staff, community social workers, administrators and the Family Information Service.

Delivered across the county

 Gloucester

 Cheltenham

 Stroud

 Cinderford

 Brockworth

What every participant learned

-  The depth of cultural influence
-  Their own unconscious bias
-  Why culture matters in a child's assessment
-  How to account for culture in assessments
-  The individuality of families within communities
-  How cultural competence works at every level

How the sessions worked



Group work: What culture means to each of us



Real assessments: What a culturally aware assessment looks like



Case studies: Including culture and faith in practice



Action planning: Everyone left with next steps

Results from children's services

300

staff trained over 12 months

95%

said their knowledge grew a great deal or a lot

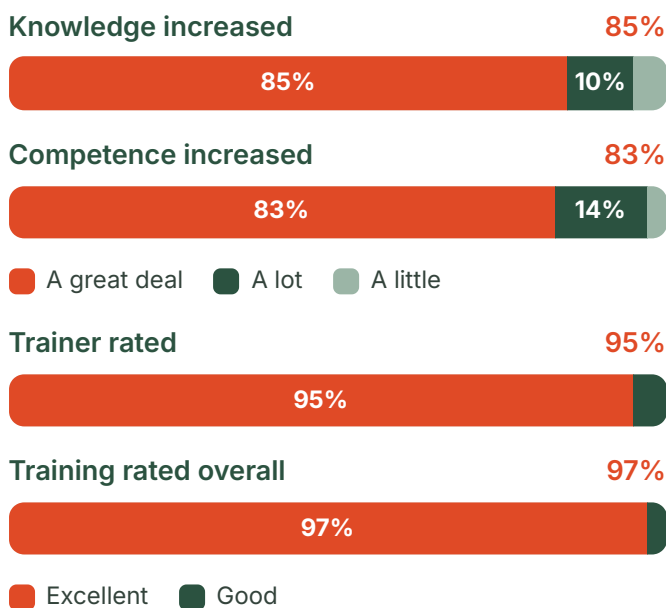
97%

said their competence grew a great deal or a lot

97%

rated the training excellent

What the evaluations showed



In their words

“Best training I have been on.

Social Worker

Gloucestershire County Council

“This has been the best training on cultural diversity that I have attended.

8 to 16 Children in Care Team

Gloucestershire County Council

“Made to feel inclusive, humorous, really enjoyed it. Inspirational trainer. Would highly recommend this course.

Gloucester Adoption Team

Gloucestershire County Council

What the council received



Training recommendations report



Courses delivered across the county



Course handbook for every delegate



Evaluation report for each course



Regular review meetings



Final project report

What happened next

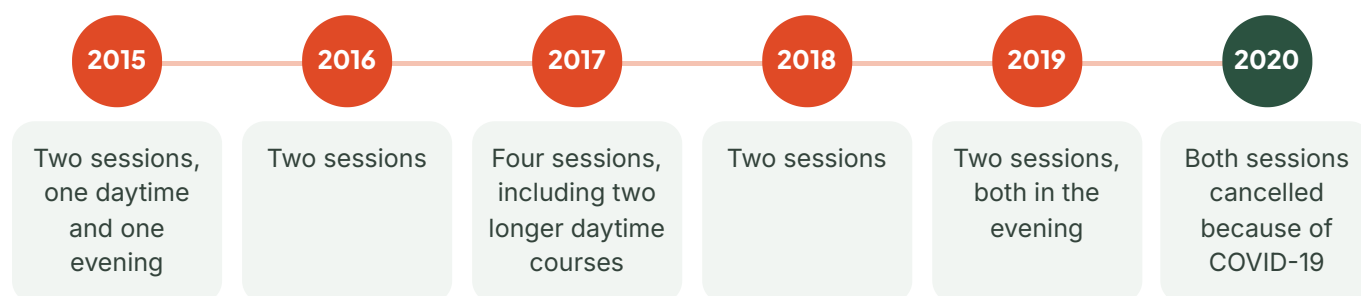


At a review meeting in November 2013, the council and DiverseCT reflected on the programme and agreed next steps. The council went on to commission cultural diversity training for its foster carers, which ran from 2015 to 2019.

Extending the training to foster carers

The council then asked DiverseCT to train its foster carers, the people caring for children from many different backgrounds every day.

"Understanding Cultural Diversity" was a 3-hour course run twice a year at fire stations, community centres and council venues around the county. Evening sessions were added so that working carers could attend. The course covered culture and identity, the language of diversity, racism and human rights.



Popular and well attended



November 2018 evaluation (20 carers)



What foster carers said

“He was fantastic! Engaging and thought-provoking.”

Foster carer
Gloucestershire

“I enjoyed the whole 3 hours. It kept me interested at all times.”

Foster carer
Gloucestershire

“Open conversations between us all, and learning from Sultan's experience and knowledge.”

Foster carer, on the most useful part of the course
Gloucestershire



When asked what they would improve, one carer simply asked for the course to be **longer and more in-depth**.

Lessons for other organisations

Over seven years, Gloucestershire County Council trusted DiverseCT to build cultural competence among the professionals and carers who shape children's lives.



Train the whole team

Training everyone who touches a child's case, from social workers to administrators, built a shared understanding across the service.



Link learning to everyday tasks

Focusing on assessments and care plans made cultural competence practical, not theoretical.



Go to where people are

Running sessions across the county, and in the evenings for carers, made it easy for people to take part.



Build a long-term relationship

Starting with staff and extending to foster carers created consistency around every child.



Sultan was informed, confident and interesting. He gave us valuable content and handouts. Best training I've had for years.

Support Planning Team

Gloucestershire County Council



Sultan is a brilliant trainer. Very dynamic and good at encouraging group discussion.

Co-Chairperson

Early years setting, Gloucestershire

WORK WITH DIVERSECT

Want culturally competent services for your community?

We design and deliver cultural competence training for social care, health, fostering and frontline teams, tailored to your service and your communities.

www.diverse-ct.co.uk · enquiries@diverse-ct.co.uk · 0330 133 1173

Source: DiverseCT course evaluations for Gloucestershire County Council children's services (2013) and foster carers (November 2018), and council attendance records.