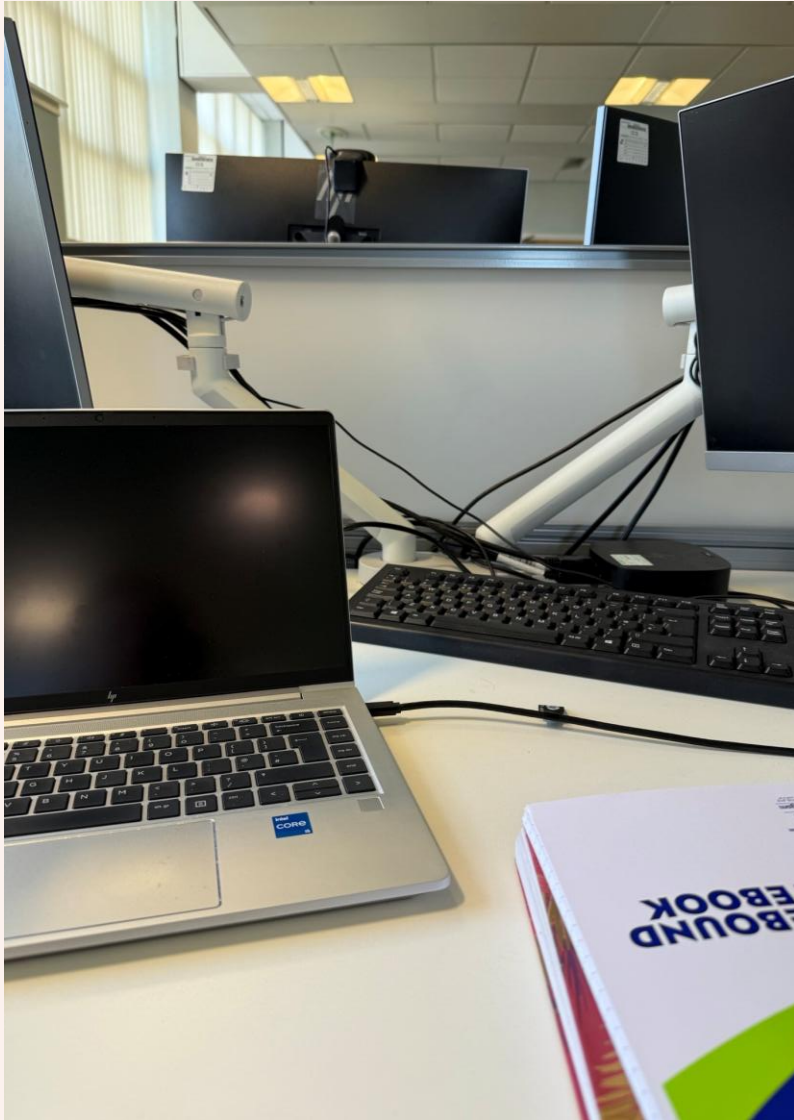
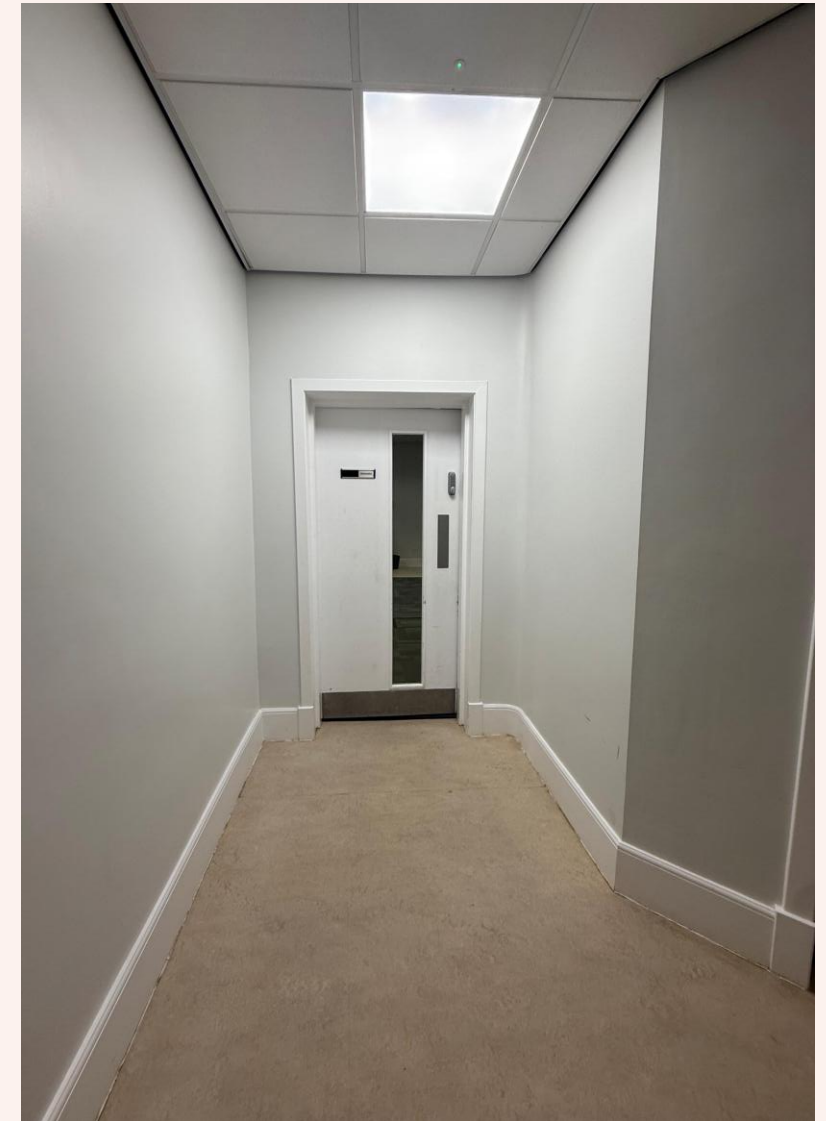


A Day in the Life of a Social Work Student



9am: My day kicks off at 9 AM, often beginning with me arriving, setting up, making a cup of coffee, and getting organized. As a student, I frequently use this time to check in with my link worker or practice educator to see if any new assignments have come in or if there's anything specific, they'd like me to complete. This day was quite hectic. I had a support group meeting, a team around the child meeting (TAC) and supervision with my practice educator, along with various smaller tasks in between, so I stayed thoroughly occupied throughout my day.

10am: At 10am I attended a kinship support session. This was an opportunity for me to meet some of the kinship carers with the locality. As a student this really gave me an insight and perspective of what some will have to give up to care for a child. Even though most happily take care of their kin, many give up their life plans, take early retirement, and need to support a child who has likely experienced trauma in some capacity. This a significant challenge to take on for anyone and it does come with its ups and downs. I was able to see the value of the support group as it allowed the kinship carers to feel less alone in their struggle and allowed them to ask questions to both each other and the social workers present.

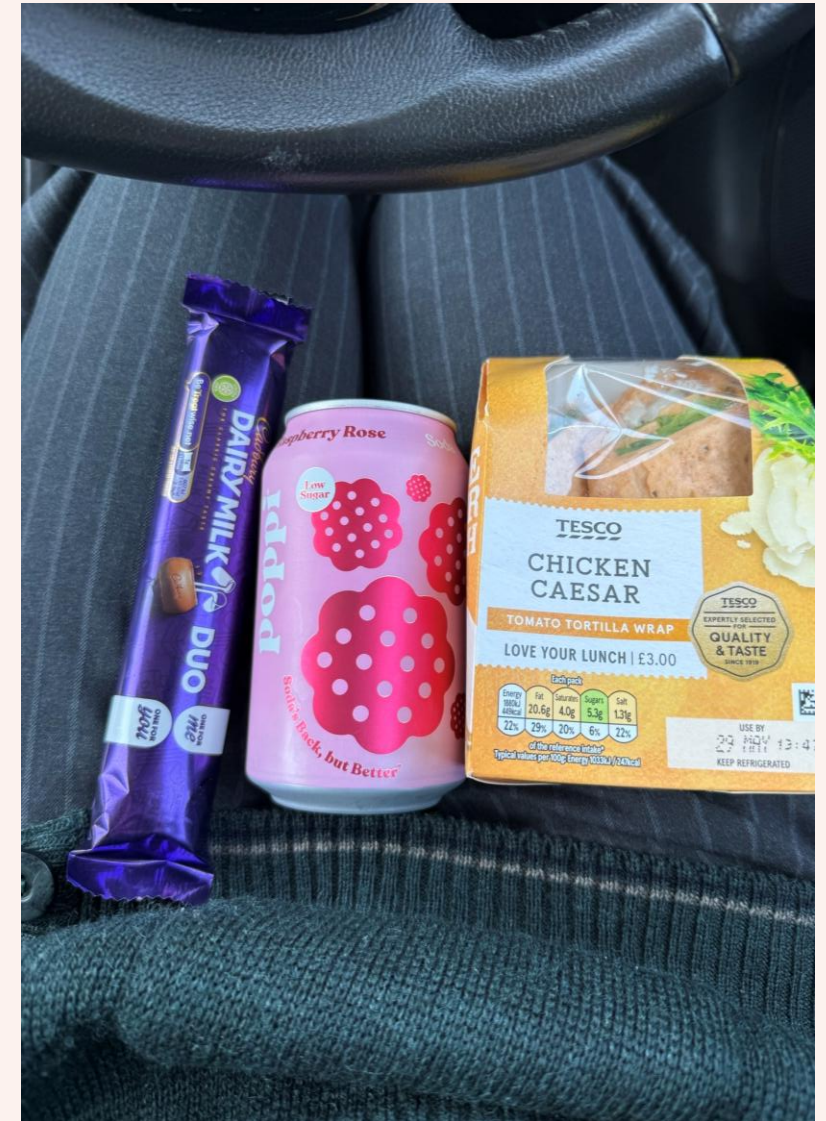


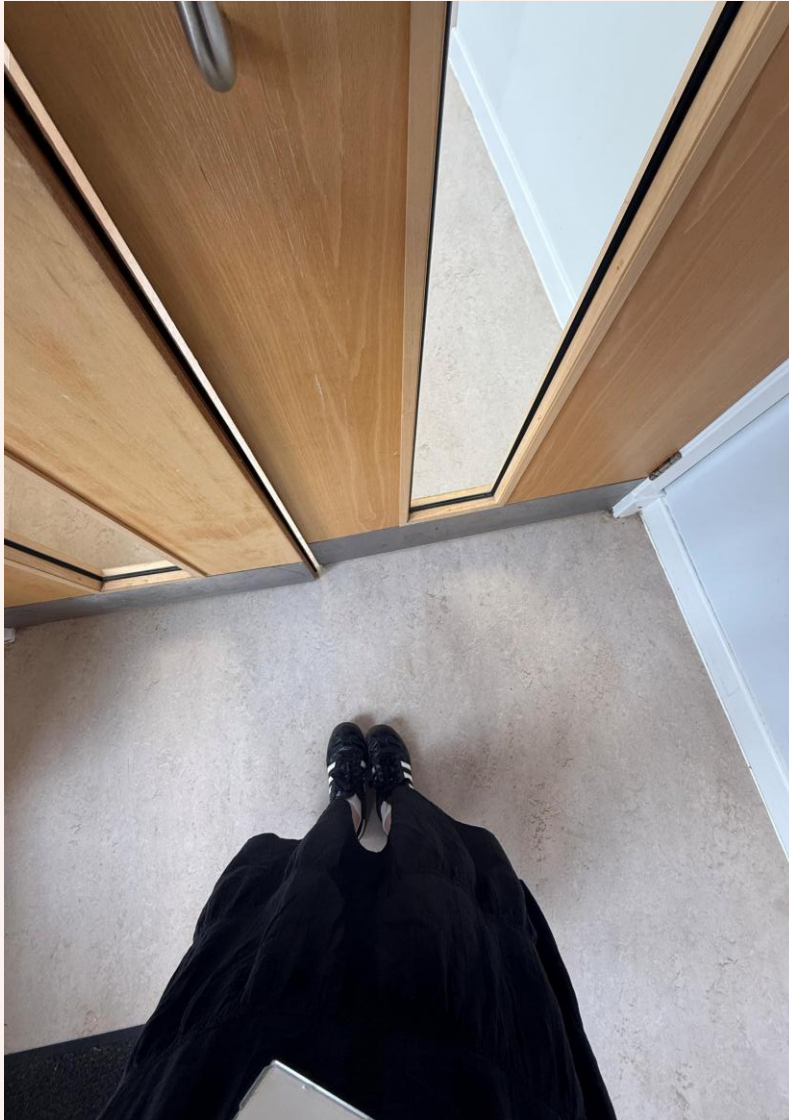


11am: The support group finished at 11.30am. When it ended, my link worker told me she'd missed a call from a kinship carer we recently visited. The carer supports her young nephew and had previously talked about challenges around parenting and balancing family expectations. I returned her call straight away. She explained that the weekend had been really testing but she kept her boundaries in place and felt good about that. I offered kind words and reassurance that she was doing the right thing by her nephew. Her nephew also has a TAC (team around the child meeting) later on in the week so I was also able to reassure her that this would be okay and she did not need to worry about it and the teachers were not here to criticise her parenting but ensure her nephew is getting the support he needs.

12pm: As a student and a future social worker there may be times you feel crammed, overwhelmed, and feel the urge to skip eating or eat chocolate at your desk for quickness, don't!, this does not make you a better social worker. Always prioritise lunch. I recognised that i was going to have a very busy afternoon, so I shot over to my local Tesco and grabbed myself a meal deal to ensure I had the energy for the rest of my day.

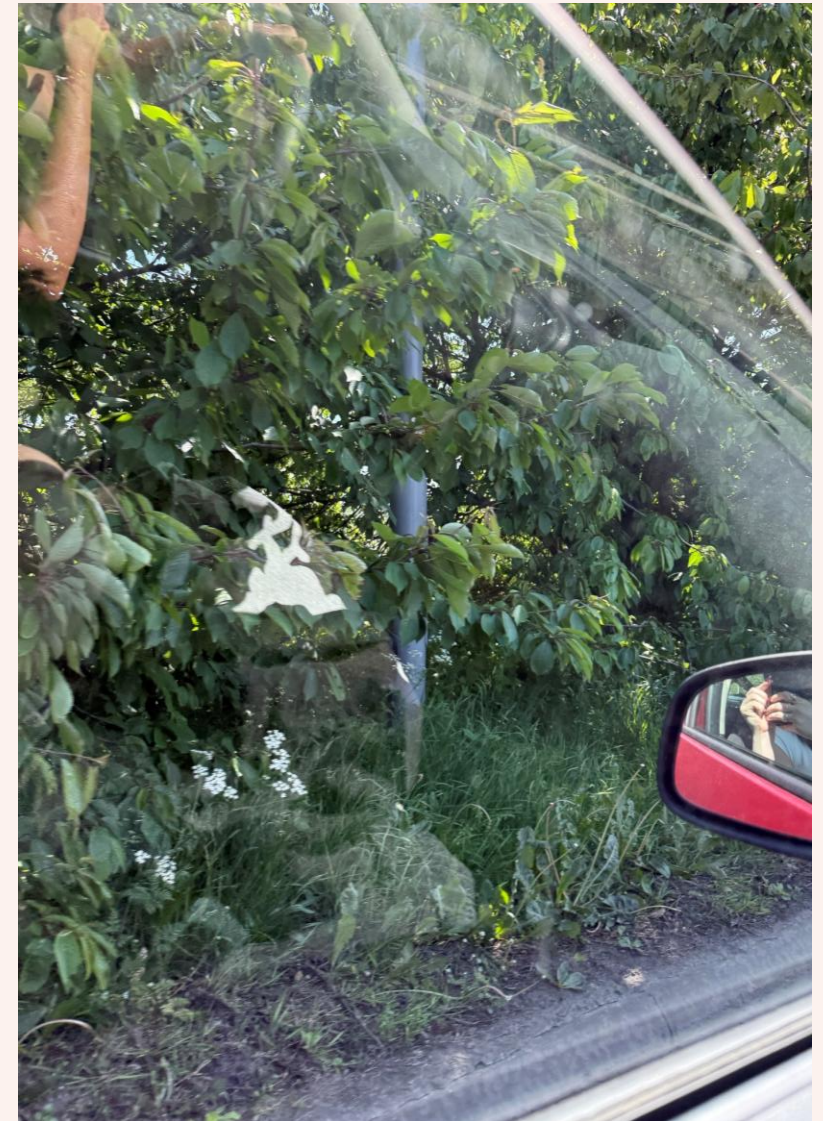
Rate my meal deal 😊





1pm: At 1pm, I attended and shadowed a team around the child meeting (TAC) for a young boy who is living with his aunt and uncle. The young boy was evidently struggling to cope with school and had hurt several of his teachers at times when he was angry. The meeting was to discuss this but also to reflect on new approaches to support this young boy as he moves into primary two. This was helpful for my learning as it highlighted how both education and social work together to support children. The picture depicts me on the way back from this meeting desperate for some cool air as it was 25 degrees and we were crammed into a very small room.

2pm: When I arrived back at the office it was 3pm and time for my supervision with my practice educator. This had been a very busy day for me and by this point I was feeling a tad overwhelmed, which I think my PE could see on my face. I went and grabbed some water and gave myself a couple minutes to come back down so I could be present for my supervision. Supervision should be a safe place for you as a student social worker to share how you are feeling and what isn't working for you as a student.





3–5PM: Slight confession, I forgot to take a picture at 4pm and 5pm, the day got away from me and by the time 5pm hit I was ready to head home and plummet into my bed. During 4pm and 5pm I had supervision with my practice educator. I was able to be reflective about not only my day but my whole week. I left the day feeling tired but also accomplished and feeling like I had a very successful day.

So instead, I have inserted a picture of a canal boat I seen being moved the day after!

A huge thanks to Collette Halliday for sharing her experiences of being a Social Work Student in the Kinship Children & Families Team.

