

Job Title – Senior Social Worker (Childrens)

Evaluated Grade – PO9

Job Description

Job Purpose

- To undertake duties expected of Social Workers in line with the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Work England for an Experienced and Advanced Social Worker.
- This post is a Senior Social Worker with responsibility for delivery of social work interventions with children, young people and families, carers ensuring that outcomes are delivered using a strengths-based approach.
- Assist the Team Manager in providing an effective service that meets the individual needs of children, young people and their families.

The postholder will:

- Practice self-sufficiently (within normal arrangements for management accountability) in the application of relevant legislation, policy, procedures and social work theory.
- Accept full responsibility for managing a caseload which will include more vulnerable service users and those with particularly complex problems where liberty/safety are at stake.
- Take responsibility for the clinical management of other staff, NQSW's, students and Social Workers and assist in the achievement of team/service development.
- Co-work cases with less experienced staff as appropriate.
- Support the Team Leader with the operational delivery of Telford and Wrekin's statutory duties in line with relevant legislation.
- Lead and initiate change within Telford and Wrekin Council and across external organisations to improve quality and outcomes.
- Take a lead role in organisational strategic groups and systems, to include quality assurance activities and forums.

Major Tasks

- To manage a caseload and undertake a range of complex Social Work practice interventions that support the bringing together the right services to deliver our corporate priorities of 'protecting and supporting our most vulnerable children and adults' and 'putting our children and young people first'.
- Work in partnership with relevant Commissioners, Education and Health and Social Care leads to develop strengths-based Social Work interventions to children, young people and families.
- Ensuring the operation and evaluation of common processes and practices and sharing of information in order to promote prevention and community based solutions in the lives of children, young people and families.

- Ensure that consistent Social Work practice undertakes a strengths based and positive risk taking approach to managing risk.
- Promote and implement the Local Authority's statutory responsibilities to promote close and constructive relationships with children, young people and families.
- To contribute to training of staff and other agencies actively promoting the ethos of strengthening families, and families accessing peer and community based support.
- Provide expert professional opinion into the practice of colleagues within their team regarding complex cases and act as a resource base for other staff and students when delivering services to individuals, carers and their families.
- To work to uphold quality standards and cost effectiveness of services, ensuring the most appropriate and cost effective options are considered.
- Work to a range of legal options to support investigations, safeguarding and ensuring a personalised approach to safeguarding children.
- Contribute to reviewing cases, quality assurance, audits and learning outcomes.
- Liaise with colleagues in own and other council services and external agencies in order to gather information relevant to service delivery.
- Contribute to supporting the achievement of key performance indicators and budgetary controls.
- Maintain and update case recording in a timely manner, ensure this ethos is fundamental throughout the team.
- Promote equality as an integral part of the role and treat everyone with fairness and dignity.
- Recognise health and safety is a responsibility of every employee, take reasonable care of self and others and comply with the Telford and Wrekin health and safety policy and any service specific procedures/rules that apply to this role.
- Keep up to date with contemporary Social Work issues and key reforms, keeping ahead of new services relevant to the individuals, families and carers.
- To lead and support team members on the more complex cases held in the team.
- To support the Team Leader in developing the wider team.
- Identify and help to resolve poor performance and promote continuous improvement in practice.
- Undertake clinical management of colleagues in the team.
- Any other duties delegated by the Team Manager commensurate with the grade of the post.

Contacts & Relationships

- Offers expert opinion and professional advice both within the organisation and to others.
- Routinely provides professional social work opinion within a strategic context.
- Ability to establish a network of internal and external colleagues from whom to seek advice and expertise.
- Ability to network and liaise with a wider range of professionals and other colleagues, including at more senior or strategic levels.
- Promote close and constructive relationships with children, young people, their families, and partner agencies.

- Initiate and facilitate effective multi-agency partnership working, to drive improvements in performance and outcomes for people who use services.
- Work in partnership with a range of statutory, independent and voluntary services to develop and implement assessment and planning objectives and outcomes.
- Chair/lead reflective practice group meetings as required.
- Provide expert professional opinion into the practice of colleagues within their team regarding complex cases and act as a resource base for other staff and students when delivering services to children, young people and their families.
- Be a practice supervisor/educator and/or mentor and support newly qualified social workers and or students in the service as required.
Support the Team Manager in developing the practice of the team
- Promote positive working relationships across the organisation, using strategies to support collaboration and a supportive organisational culture.
- Support team members on a daily basis with day to day operational issues, offering professional advice and guidance.

Creativity

- Create and maintain an organisational environment within which critical reflection and analysis take place and are valued and supported and promoted across the wider system.
- Promote and provide critical reflection, challenge and evidence-informed decision-making in complex situations. Support others in developing these capabilities, and in finding their own solutions through reflective supervision.
- Model best practice and reflective supervision skills.
- Take strategic responsibility for the development, maintenance and review of a system of critical analysis and reflective professional supervision at all levels within the organisation, ensuring this is appropriately resourced, in line with the Standards for Employers.
- Be responsible for ensuring that the value of social work professional knowledge and opinion influences good practice, service delivery and organisational strategy.
- Use imagination and creative skills to identify and put in place appropriate and effective arrangements to enable children to stay within their own families or alternate family settings wherever appropriate.
- Lead on writing and support others to write effective and professionally credible complex reports for internal and external use as required.
- Promote up to date standards of excellence.

Decisions

- Frequent and complex professional decision making is required where many factors including managing high levels of risk in a safeguarding context will need to be considered. These decisions will be taken autonomously by the post holder within established local policy and practice guidelines, in consultation with Team Manager as appropriate. These decisions will include both practice and budgetary decisions.
- Provide professional advice, opinion and guidance in a multi-agency setting
- Provide day to day professional advice to front line staff carrying out statutory duties

- Highlight potential changes in policy and procedure to line manager to influence change.
- Provide clear rationale within a legislative context to all decision making.

Management & Supervision

- Undertake clinical management of qualified colleagues in the team
- Supervise unqualified and qualified staff, using relevant policies and procedures applicable to supervision and line management.
- Model good practice and set expectations for others by leading reflective practice groups, co work on specific cases to support practitioner development.
- Provide day to day advice and support in relation to social work practice staff based within the team, as required.
- Act as Practice Supervisor or Practice Educator for students undergoing social work training mentoring and coaching newly qualified social workers within the service as required.
- Cultivate self-care and promote well-being principles within the team.

Supervision Received

- Plan and prioritise own work load, ensuring urgent deadlines are met.
- Monthly supervision with Team Manager.
- Annual APPD sessions.

Complexity

- Demonstrate expert and effective practice in complex situations, assessing and managing significantly high levels of risk.
- Lead, promote and apply a strengths based model of practice.
- Manage a complex workload, offering expert support to child protection conferences and other statutory safeguarding meetings, producing high quality assessments and reports as appropriate.
- Produce high quality assessments and reports including court statements, court reports, assessments.
- Support and clinically manage staff that may be holding a complex, unpredictable and unstable caseload. Able to offer advice, support and ultimately take over the management of the case in consultation with Team Manager if required.
- Support when individuals, carers and families are distressed and angry with Social Work interventions.
- Demonstrate a high level of expertise
- Lead and support social workers in the application of systemic practice to work with children and their families/carers.

Resources

- Responsibility for processing personal sensitive information.
- Maintaining accurate and timely recording on case management information systems.
- Responsibility for financial resources from the occasional direct handling of cash.

- There may be times when the post holder will be required to handle service users' personal possessions to facilitate the need to move a child or families from one setting to another.
- This post will be required to carry mobile ICT equipment i.e. laptop, windows phone.

Impact

To postholder's practice will:

- Impact on the reputation of the council and outcomes of Social Work interventions.
- Be crucial to the service achieving performance targets and best outcomes for individual children and young people, families and carers.
- Always work to deliver the best interests of the child, allowing and advocating for children and young people to remain at home with their families wherever it is safe for them to do so.
- Ensure the council fulfils its statutory duty to children, young people and families in line with relevant legislation
- Ensure their social work practice is legally compliant.
- Use case law to influence practice.
- Demonstrate a reduction of children and young people entering into the local authority care system by promoting positive change for young people and their families, enabling more to remain or return home.

The postholder will:

- Chair Key Performance Indicator (KPI) meetings and take responsibility to discuss with social workers timeframes for the completion of assessments.
- Take responsibility for the mentoring and developing of fellow colleagues through, clinical management, one to one interaction and/or through group settings.

Physical Demands

- A proportion of the work requirement will involve computer activities such as managing emails, reading reports, writing reports, inputting into the electronic case recording system.
- Carrying and using remotely appropriate equipment necessary to be a mobile worker.
- The post holder will be required to work over a number of locations, including people's homes, across the borough in line with the councils mobile working policy
- Promote the use of mobile and agile working to ensure efficiencies with front line staff's time.

Working Environment

- The post holder will be required to travel across the authority to work in multiple locations in order to support service delivery;
- Visits to placements / homes of children, young people and families;
- Commuting to out of area establishments for placement arrangements as necessary;
- Attending appropriate meetings;
- In the main, this post works in the environment equivalent to working in an office in terms of heat, ventilation and lighting;

- The post holder will be required to work alone at majority of times unless a risk is posed which will require pairing up with a colleague.

Emotional Context

- The post holder will regularly have contact with information that is distressing, including information of a child protection nature.
- The post holder will have regular contact with service users, who will often be distressed.
- The post holder will need to manage the emotional strain arising for both the post holder and the service user in having to make decisions/recommendations concerning service users' medium and long term future i.e. being taken into care, being made subject to a child protection plan etc.
- The post will be required to offer substantial support to service users whereby statutory and legal actions are being undertaken – i.e. court work to remove a child
- The post holder will need to manage children and young people's emotional turmoil on a regular basis.
- To take the lead in complex Child Protection Section 47 enquiries with families in acute distress.

Other

The postholder will be expected carry out any other duties as are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job, commensurate with the grade.

The postholder will be expected to actively follow Telford & Wrekin Council policies, including those such as Equal Opportunities, Human Resources, Information Security and Code of Conduct etc.

The postholder will be expected to maintain an awareness and observation of Fire and Health & Safety Regulations.

Person Specification

Criteria	Standard
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Worker (HCPC registered). • Evidence of commitment to continued professional and personal practise development as set out by the HCPC. • Practice Educator Award or ability and commitment to achieve this.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant post-qualifying experience in child care social work including experience in child protection investigation process, assessment and care planning, and the implementation of interventions to improve outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families, including children subject to a Child Protection Plan, Children in Care, and those subject to care proceedings. • Making decisions in respect of complex child care issues with families from a range of cultural backgrounds. • Mentoring less experienced social care staff or supporting social work students either as a Practice educator or as a Placement Supervisor. • Have experience which demonstrates the ability to meet the requirements of the Professional Capabilities Framework <p><i>‘Experienced social workers are more autonomous in their role. They demonstrate expert and effective practice in complex situations, assessing and managing higher levels of risk, striking a balance between support and control, liaising with a wide range of professionals, including more senior levels. They manage complex caseloads, and offer expert opinion within the organisation and to others. They chair a range of meetings, offer expert support to case conferences, and produce high quality assessments and reports for a range of functions. They model good practice, setting expectations for others. They start to take responsibility and be accountable for the practice of others, mentoring newly qualified social workers, and supervising the work of junior staff. They undertake capacity-building with individuals, families, communities, user groups and voluntary organisations, and contribute their views on service provision to commissioners’.</i></p>
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert knowledge of assessment, and care planning for children who may need protection or to become looked after by the Local Authority including assessment for Court. • An understanding of systemic practice and its application to social work with children and families and a commitment to develop that knowledge. • Knowledge of how systemic practice is applied in practice through integrated practice and through multi-disciplinary/agency working. • Detailed understanding of the Children Act and its context.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of other current government policy and legislation and guidance relating to children social work.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level oral and written communication skills including the ability to express complex concepts and information and communicate effectively with children, their families, professionals and others. • High level inter-personal skills, including the ability to develop effective working relationships, promote good customer care, influence, challenge, motivate and enable others. • Skills in multi-agency working • Critically reflective practitioner able to make well balanced professional decisions, working with children and families using a systemic practice approach and able to demonstrate expert and effective practise in complex situations. • Analyse ethical dilemmas and decide appropriate ways forward. • Support others to analyse and reflect on their own practice. • Plan, organise and prioritise a demanding workload, in order to meet deadlines and maintain the delivery of multiple, competing short and long term objectives. • Work as a member of a team and develop collaborative relationships. • Accept responsibility and work on own initiative. • Use information technology effectively, having necessary keyboard skills to use email and update computerised diaries and update and retrieve information from organisational record systems.
Personal style & behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a council employee you will be supported and expected to demonstrate the Councils Core Behaviours. Please note that these may be updated from time to time and are available on the Council's intranet pages. • Relates appropriately to vulnerable children and their families. • Has a partnership/holistic approach to problem solving. • Develops good relationships with others by behaving with integrity, treating people with respect and leading by example. • Committed to promoting diversity, equal opportunities and antidiscriminatory practice. • Willing to work flexibly with some evening and weekend work.
Fluency Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This post has been identified as a customer facing role and therefore the Council is required to fulfil their statutory duty under Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016. As a public body the Council is obliged to ensure member of staff in such roles are able to have a command of spoken English which is sufficient to enable the effective performance of their role. The postholder: • Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer clauses, and recognize implicit meaning.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. • Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices
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We will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that no disabled applicant is placed at a substantial disadvantage. This person specification includes what we believe are fully justifiable essential and desirable selection criteria. Provided that the selection criteria unconnected with the disability are met, we will make ALL reasonable adjustments in order that someone with a disability can undertake the duties involved.

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Type of criminal records checks required for this post	Ticked as required
None	
Basic Disclosure	
Standard Disclosure	
Enhanced Disclosure	
Working with Adults - Regulated Activity	
Working with Children - Regulated Activity	

Information on types of criminal records checks is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check>