

Northumberland County Council

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: Advanced Practitioner	Director/Service/Sector : Children's Services / Children's Social Care / Safeguarding		Office Use
Band: 9	Workplace: Social Work Locality Team Office / Agile		JE ref: 3381
Responsible to: Team Manager	Date: Updated June 2021		
Job Purpose: To carry a workload requiring exemplary practice in situations of high complexity within the area of children's safeguarding, exercising a degree of autonomy. Regular supervision will be in accordance with the departmental supervision policy. If required, to provide direct supervision to staff as directed by the Team Manager. To coach/mentor less experienced team members. To work within relevant current legislation and the procedural framework of Northumberland County Council. To work collaboratively with service users and their families to assess their needs and plan and deliver services in accordance with the social work locality team's service area. Post holders will be required to act as a Practice Educator and be expected to supervise student placements. If required, to chair meetings under Signs of Safety framework, e.g CIN Reviews and Initial Core Groups.			
Resources	Staff	If required, to provide informal supervision, lead on group supervision and workshops as directed by the Team Manager. To coach/mentor less experienced team members through checking of work and where appropriate, on-the-job training.	
	Finance	To support the Team Manager with the management devolved budgets.	
	Physical	Day to day updating and maintenance of complex, sensitive and confidential data, including electronic client data systems.	
	Clients	Substantial contact with those children most vulnerable and families including within their own homes. Lone Working.	
Duties and key result areas:			
1. To work with the Team Manager in ensuring that adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place to promote the welfare, health and development of children and young people. 2. Within the teams use their extensive knowledge and expertise to provide coaching and mentoring to a group of identified social work staff, including experienced social workers and newly qualified social workers and support staff. To ensure that the requirements of the Newly Qualified Social Work Programme are maintained. To ensure that services to children and families are provided in accordance with statutory requirements and Northumberland County Council (NCC) policies and procedures. This needs to be carried out in accordance with agreed priorities and ensure there is a consistent application of thresholds for children in need, including those most vulnerable children in need of protection and in need of Corporate Parenting and Looked After services. 3. To carry an appropriate and often complex caseload, dealing with those most vulnerable children and their families in need of social work intervention appropriate to the qualification and experience of the post holder. In allocated cases, carry out a range of assessments, including child protection investigations and parenting assessments, undertaking child welfare concern risk assessments, drawing up case and care plan, implementing plans, coordinating and reviewing plans as the lead professional, within the framework of The Children Act and Northumberland County Councils agreed standards and priorities. Can critically evaluate and effectively manage risk in complex cases, recognising how bias and evidence influence risk management. Also to include preparing assessments and reports for applications to the court for care proceedings, attending Court as witness for the County Council and presenting written and verbal evidence in Court. 4. To participate in the duty system taking a lead with less experienced workers to manage crisis situations. To set the highest standards of practice and intervention, role modelling to other social workers.			

5. To attend multi agency child protection conferences (for their own cases as well as supporting new staff with their cases) to present reports and assessments for those children deemed to be at risk of significant harm.
6. To chair CIN Reviews and/or Initial Core Groups care team meetings where there are child welfare concerns, making recommendations for actions and interventions to safeguard children.
7. Contribute to the support and development of the team and promote effective multi agency service delivery with partner agencies.
8. To work in conjunction with the Team Manager in utilising the skills within the team to develop and implement programmes of activity, prevention and early intervention in order to support children, young people and families in the community. This will entail fostering effective links with those early intervention agencies within the community, including Children's Centres, health workers and schools.
9. When required provide informal supervision to members of the social work team and develop a professional skills base through the provision of training and development as appropriate. To act as a mentor for newly appointed staff within the social work teams as well as providing group supervision and workshops to develop staff's knowledge.
10. In conjunction with the Team Manager to implement and maintain agency records in line with legal obligations and parent agency policy.
11. To ensure the team work towards achieving key service delivery objectives within the planning processes. In addition, develop and implement systems to ensure satisfactory team performance against key performance indicators/meaningful measures.
12. Ensure that the objectives set out in the Service Plan are reflected in the Social Work Team Plan. That these identified objectives are implemented within the team and that service delivery at a local level is aligned with Health, Children's Centre and Extended Schools Strategies.
13. Supported by senior managers work with the Team Manager in setting up robust systems and processes to ensure the Social Work Team interfaces effectively with other professional groups (i.e. Health, Children's Centre and Extended Schools staff) and facilitate staff work within other teams to promote and deliver effective multi agency services.
14. Supported by the management team, assist the Team Manager in ensuring that specific areas of service delivery are developed and delivered to meet the needs of children, young people and families.
15. To ensure the maintenance of record keeping in accordance with statutory requirements and Council policy and procedures.
16. To participate with the Team Manager in the recruitment, selection, training and development of staff in accordance with the Council's recruitment and selection policies and procedures.
17. To deputise for the Team Manager at meetings, as appropriate this can include Care team meetings/CIN Reviews/LAC Reviews/ICPC/RCPC/Initial Core Groups/Transfer meetings
18. Any other duties consistent with the, level and grade of the post.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Work Arrangements

Physical requirements: Transport requirements	Need to visit (adults and young people) and their families and on occasion attend (educational) and other meetings pertaining to the care of the young people throughout Northumberland.
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Essential	Desirable	Assess by
Knowledge and Qualifications		
A professional qualification relevant to work with children and families e.g. Degree, DipSW, CQSW, CSS. Valid Social work England registration Extensive knowledge of child development and issues around work with children and families. Up to date understanding of the key issues and relevant theoretical background facing professional child care social workers, particularly related to children's safeguarding and looked after children.	Completion of or working towards the Safeguarding Module of the PQ Award. Completion of or working towards Practice Educators Award Evidence of learning through CPD and/or post graduate study, and the application to practice and/or staff supervision/mentoring that meet SWE standards	
Experience		
Significant post qualified experience in working with children in need and their families. Including experience of working with child protection systems and Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. Experience of working within a multi agency setting. Significant Experience of decision making.	Experience of supervising staff or students. Experience in working with SOS Practice model	
Skills and competencies		
Well developed interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate effectively with a variety of people through a variety of mediums . Experience of working with complex families in Child protection arena and competence apply threshold and manage risk. Ability to manage conflict and change. Proven ability to transfer knowledge and skills to colleagues through coaching, mentoring and co-working by: Establishing a professional network that promotes learning and practice development for self and others. To provide critical reflection and challenge in supporting the development of social workers. Highly developed negotiating and organisational skills to communicate complex information to a range of audiences.	Use of IT databases and spreadsheets. Experience of contributing to a process of change.	

Effective IT skills to be able to write reports, produce court documentation and update relevant systems. Able to prioritise conflicting demands and requirements, meet statutory deadlines and timescales. Ability to assess service needs, develop and evaluate programmes and projects/plans to meet those needs. A commitment to equality of opportunity. Ability to work across agency boundaries within a multi professional setting.		
Physical, mental and emotional demands		
To be a resilient practitioner with the ability to manage emotional demands and use supervision effectively. Able to meet the physical demands of the post. Lengthy periods of mental attention and ability to work under pressure in managing competing demands. Ability to prioritise tasks where necessary. To be able to satisfy the mobility requirements of the post which will include regular journeys to children and their families' home. To work agilely in line with the Council policy.		
Other		
This position requires an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check. Commitment to inter-agency working. Commitment to continuous professional development Willingness to work occasional evenings/weekends. Positive attitude towards supervision and training. Open to new challenges and approaches. Positive attitude towards supporting equality and diversity.		

Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g. case studies/visits