

MEDWAY COUNCIL - JOB PROFILE

JOB TITLE	Senior Practitioner
DIRECTORATE	Children and Adults
SERVICE	Children's Services
RESPONSIBLE TO	Team Manager
GRADE	SW3
JOB FAMILY	PSW0251

MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB

Assist the Team Manager in supporting the team in safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people through the provision of high quality social work practice, supporting them to achieve their full potential, living within their family if safe to do so.

Model best practice, sharing learning, and offering a safe reflective space for less experienced practitioners in your team to develop.

Participate in effective partnership working and engagement and work collaboratively with a range of organisations, statutory and voluntary in delivering services to children and young people.

Comply and support others to comply with legislation, statutory guidance and local policies and procedures.

Maintain personal and professional training and development as part of your commitment to continuous professional development, utilising supervision and your annual personal development review plan, to support your growth and development as a practitioner and leader.

As a Senior Practitioner you will be in a leadership role within the team whereby you may be required to deputise for the team manager, supervise staff, lead in an area of specialism and support the team practically and emotionally with oversight and support from the Team Manager.

To comply with Social Work England Professional Standards for social workers.

To be competent in all areas of the PCF-Experienced social worker level and The Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) for approved child and family practitioners.

ACCOUNTABILITIES

Manage a reduced caseload within the appropriate statutory framework to a high standard. Your casework will consist of complex and joint casework with less experienced members in the team, where your role will be to oversee practice and support the development of your team.

Demonstrate expert and effective practice in complex situations that reflects a commitment to relationship and strengths-based practice, assessing and managing higher levels of risk and working collaboratively with children, young people and their families and carers.

Contribute to the learning and development of others in your team, including providing advice and support to less experienced staff on aspects of casework ensuring a high level of practice is demonstrated.

Supervise staff within your team including student social workers, newly qualified social workers, family support workers and/or personal advisors. The Team Manager will retain overall responsibility for the team.

Lead on an area of practice that is relevant to your service and be an expert in this area, within your service, providing training opportunities, consultation and sharing resources. Where available you should be part of a Medway Safeguarding Children's Partnership (MSCP) Champions group for your area of specialism.

Champion Medway's practice model, Signs of Safety, through leading group supervision for your team, providing one to one support to members of your team as well as remaining up to date with training and research in this area.

Consistently demonstrate a high level of practice in relation to your casework and support with the team, ensuring your written work 'brings the child to life' and demonstrates a high quality of analysis and reflection.

Work within statutory timescales and participate in regular supervision to review case work and critically reflect on the work being undertaken. Keep up to date with research findings, theoretical models, and innovative practice within the social work field to promote evidence informed practice and maintain the highest professional standards.

Maintain accurate and up to date records in line with Data Protection legislation (GDPR) and use Medway Council specific recording system's to promote effective case management.

Assist the team manager in –

- the quality assurance of your teams work and case allocation.
- completing joint visits and/or attending court with less experienced members of your team
- contributing to the induction of new starters.
- Contributing to effective communication and leading on team meetings.

Deputise for the Team Manager where necessary and as appropriate. You will be the first point of contact for support and advice for your team and will be required to attend meetings on your managers behalf, for example performance clinic, when they are on leave; this will not include chairing of strategy meetings.

This job description applies to all Senior Practitioner posts within Children's Services. The specific targets, tasks and priorities can be expected to vary between individual teams.

KEY CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITIES

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives/targets

To participate in one to one Performance Development Reviews and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs

To actively promote the Council's Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above

ACCOUNTABILITIES TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The children and young people of Medway have said the following qualities are really important to them:

- ✓ Be a good listener
- ✓ Be non-judgemental
- ✓ Be consistent and Stable
- ✓ Be contactable
- ✓ Understand me
- ✓ Be honest
- ✓ Be Focused
- ✓ Be realistic
- ✓ Be a good timekeeper
- ✓ Be resourceful in your approach

Be ambitious for young people and promote others to share the same drive.

Champion Children and Young People's views and rights in everything you do.

Ensure Children and Young People's voices are listened to and acted upon.

'Do what you say and say what you do'.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

- Degree in Social Work, CQSW/DipSW or equivalent
- Practice Educator Professional Standards (desirable) or commitment to complete.
- Management qualification (desirable)
- Registration with Social Work England

KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge and experience of working with vulnerable children in a statutory setting.
- A thorough knowledge of relevant legislation, statutory guidance, standards and local policies and procedures relevant to working with children and young people
- Demonstrable knowledge required to recognise and evaluate risk to children and young people
- Demonstrable knowledge and experience in the application of relevant theoretical frameworks, practice models and research findings
- Ability to demonstrate awareness of legislation relating to General Data Protection Regulations and Freedom of Information

EXPERIENCE

- Demonstrable experience of working with children and families including child protection and court work (minimum of 3 years)
- Demonstrable supervision/management experience including offering professional supervision to social workers and other staff, as required.
- Proven experience in providing expert advice and support to less experienced staff on aspects of casework and where appropriate act as a Practice Assessor for students on placement.
- Proven experience in the application of 'Signs of Safety'
- Demonstrable experience in relationship and strengths-based practice, working collaboratively with children, young people and their families

- Demonstrable experience of undertaking direct work with children and young people and being able to evidence understanding of the child's lived experience.
- Proven experience in one or more areas of practice i.e. contextual safeguarding, domestic violence, and have a broader knowledge of local and national resource networks

SKILLS

- Demonstrable ability to build sound, productive working relationships with colleagues, partners and employees.
- Demonstrates strong assessment skills and analysis of relevant information and develops multi agency SMART plans to improve outcomes for children and young people using evidence based practice
- Engages effectively with children and families and has experience of using different tools and methodologies to communicate with children and young people
- Ability to maintain accurate and up to date case records.
- Ability to write high quality written reports which are suitable for a variety of professional settings.
- Ability to work independently to analyse and interpret varied and highly complex information, developing strategies and solutions for long term plans
- Ability to use highly developed communication skills to confidently present complex/sensitive information in an understandable way, adapting the style to a range of audiences and stakeholders.
- Competent in the use of Microsoft Office packages as well as an electronic integrated children's system (eg: MOSAIC or similar)
- Ability to practice effectively and competently with an increasing level of autonomy and independence
- Ability to make high quality judgements and sound decisions in situations of increasing complexity, risk, uncertainty and challenge, and be able to effectively explain and justify decisions.
- Proven ability to determine which interventions, knowledge and skills to deploy to effectively respond to different issues

- Ability to carry out tasks which impact on the wellbeing of people, including assessing needs, implementing care/welfare, implementing regulations, providing guidance on internal procedures and interpreting policies and procedures to meet specific circumstances or problems.
- Ability to work under pressure, manage time and workload and dealing with interruptions effectively.
- Ability to work within a court setting and other professional settings.
- Understands and is committed to equality and diversity and treats everyone fairly and with respect
- Ability to demonstrate a commitment to individual and reflective supervision.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality at all times

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Car driver and daily use of a car for business purposes
- Commitment to continuous professional development
- Ability to demonstrate a commitment to individual and reflective supervision
- An understanding of Social Work England's professional standards and a commitment to upholding them in your practice.

ORGANISATION

(i) DESCRIBE HOW AND BY WHOM THE POST IS MANAGED

The post holder will be line managed by the Team Manager

(ii) DESCRIBE THE LEVEL OF INITIATIVE AND/OR INDEPENDENCE EXPECTED OF THE POST HOLDER

Ability to work independently within clear guidelines and regularly uses initiative to make decisions, referring to more senior officers for advice on policy/resource issues.

(iii) DESCRIBE ANY SUPERVISORY/MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The post holder will be required to provide support to social workers and other staff on aspects of casework and where appropriate act as a Practice Assessor for students on placement and/or supervise a newly qualified social worker, family support worker and/or personal advisors.

(iv) JOB CONTEXT - DESCRIBE THE MAIN CONTACTS, BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AND THE PURPOSE OF THOSE CONTACTS

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation, including working with children and families to ensure they are appropriately involved in decisions.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

None; however the post holder must have the ability to understand cost implications of resource allocation, financial packages and make recommendations to managers about efficient and cost effective use of resources.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The post holder will be based in one of Medway Council's establishments.

WORKING STYLE

The workstyle for this role has been assessed as 'Hybrid'. This means the post holder will have a flexible workstyle and be able to work from a variety of locations. There is an expectation that the post holder will be office based for a minimum of 2 days each week.

This post is exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and as such appointment to this post will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure application to the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS)
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