

The Opportunity

JOB TITLE:	Senior Practitioner
SALARY:	M1
REPORTS TO:	Team Manager
DEPARTMENT:	Children's Services
TEAM:	Assessment, Family Safeguarding, Children Looked After

At Hertfordshire County Council we actively encourage and support our staff in developing their careers and achieving their potential. This job outline describes the environment in which you will work; explains the role which you are applying for and details the competencies you will need to demonstrate in your application.

JOB PURPOSE

To carry out our statutory duties and responsibilities to safeguard and achieve good outcomes for the children and young people of Hertfordshire. As a Senior Practitioner in a care group you will take on a consultative role, based on developing skill, experience and expertise. You will use advanced expertise and knowledge to take on management of the most complex cases and to contribute to team development.

KEY AREAS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

To safeguard and promote the health and wellbeing of children, young people and support their families and carers by working with cases appropriate to your assessed experience, skills and knowledge:

- To care manage the most complex cases in the care group
- Plan, carry out review and evaluate social work practice
- To assume responsibility within the care group for research and development, including keeping the team updated, and contributing to the development of service provision/organisation.
- Assess needs thoroughly and to a good standard - analysing risk and developing integrated multi agency safeguarding plans in line with Working Together 2015:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf
- Involve children (age appropriate in a child centred way), young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies in all meetings, which may affect them and listen actively to what they have to say. Signposting for advocacy support if needed or wanted.
- Give children (age appropriate in a child centred way), young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies sufficient time to work with the plan properly
- Continually reassess cases in relation to risk and refer to the Team Manager for direction
- Respect confidentiality and explain when there is a need to share information with others
- Recognise the expertise of individuals, children, families, carers, groups, individuals and

partner agencies about their own circumstances, position and have regard for their wishes and feelings

- Maintain professional standards of contact with children, young people, parents/carers, families, other professionals and voluntary agencies
- Work with individuals, young people, families, carers to develop and/or maintain independence, including involving individuals, children (age appropriate in a child centred way) young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies to support groups and networks and support them in extending their involvement
- Introduce individuals, children (age appropriate in a child centred way) young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies to support groups and networks and support them in extending their involvement
- Be accountable to children (age appropriate in a child centred way), young people, families, carers, groups, individuals and partner agencies for their practice
- To Manage and be accountable with supervision and support for your own social work practice
- To mentor, coach and support other staff, including taking responsibility for induction programmes and initial training.
- Supervise and Performance Manage Children's Practitioners in the care group.
- To lead on specific projects as required.
- To approve care packages within agreed budget limitations under the direction of the line manager.
- To work independently, e.g. to attend case conferences and court without line management presence, or providing consultation in specific areas
- Explain your role and purpose of your involvement, the powers available to you, including legal powers in a way that can be understood by all involved. Give information to children (age appropriate in a child centred way), young people, families, carers, groups, individuals and partner agencies about their rights and entitlements e.g. legal representation
- Keep children (age appropriate in a child centred way), young people, families, carers, groups, individuals and partner agencies about updated about what steps you are going to take
- Inform children (age appropriate in a child centred way), young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies about what is available, beyond their own resources or the brief of their organisation. Signposting or referring individuals to groups and partner agencies to access Universal or Targeted Services and Benefits.
- Build honest relationships based on clear communication and make sure all involved understand what will happen with the information children, young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies give to a social worker.
- Keep ICS case records accurate and up to date, provide reports and carry out other assessments as required
- Welcome and encourage service users' participation and feedback to produce good outcomes for children, young people and families.
- To play an active role with colleagues in peer group supervision and role development sessions.
- Be able to represent children, young people, families, carers, groups, individuals and partner agencies to access services
- Challenge injustice, discrimination and lack of access to services.
- Challenge poor practice
- Work effectively with others, understand what information other parties can offer and

share, to improve services offered to children, young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies

- Work closely with other agencies within the community, both statutory and voluntary in support of preventative strategies.

Key tasks and accountabilities are intended to be a guide to the range and level of work expected of the post-holder. This is not an exhaustive list of all tasks that may fall to the post-holder and employees will be expected to carry out such other reasonable duties which may be required from time to time.

Person Specification

Knowledge, Skill and Experience

- Have an in-depth knowledge of the children, young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies they are working with
- Knowledge of legislation, guidance, policy and procedure
- Knowledge of services relevant to children, young people, families, carers, groups and partner agencies
- Understanding of multi disciplinary or partnership working and impact on delivery of services to families.
- Understanding of Equality and Diversity in Social Work.
- Ability to use research to develop and inform practice and lead on specific projects.
- Ability to present information in a clear and informative way as well as using research and information developing and informing practice and disseminating the information to staff.
- Ability to organise a complex workload and prioritise conflicting demands to meet the needs of the care group.
- Ability to operate within Departmental policies and procedures.
- Ability to monitor the assessment of client needs and evaluate the service being provided.
- Keep up to date with learning, training and personal development with all relevant information and changes to services.
- Demonstrate commitment to continuing professional development to meet the Advance Social Worker, Professional Educator or Manager capabilities.
- Experience in delivering child protection services
- Experience of court work.
- Experience of achieving good outcomes in supervising or mentoring others.
- Demonstrate professional competence in social work practice by using current knowledge and working within agreed standards of best social work practice and carrying out duties in accordance with the HCPC standards of proficiency and PCF: <http://www.hpc-uk.org/publications/standards/index.asp?id=569>

Specific to Assessment and Family Safeguarding

- Ability to undertake child protection investigations and assessments of risk/need, for cases which meet agreed threshold.
- Work closely with adult's specialists to develop creative multi-disciplinary care plans

for children who are subject to child protection or child in need plans.

- Inform the Team Manager when they consider care/PLO proceedings may need to be initiated.
- Undertake assessments and recommend to the practice manager the appropriate level of intervention and service provision.

Specific to Children Looked After

- Experience of working with looked after children and young people and care leavers to improve their health, emotional resilience, educational achievement and ensure they are protected from substance misuse and sexual exploitation.
- Ability to support stable relationships with carers, plan for appropriate placements, support young people to return to families, if/when appropriate and prepare young people for adulthood and independence
- Keep team manager updated about risks to children and young people.

Specific to Children with Disabilities

- Experience and understanding of disability issues and the supports needed to help children and young people live active lives and achieve their potential
- Ability to separate the needs of disabled children from those of their family and keep the child's needs, wishes and feelings at the centre of the work
- Understanding of the protection needs of disabled children and ability to undertake child protection investigations and develop multi-agency protection plans
- Ability to work closely with health and education colleagues to develop high quality ECH plans that maximise young people's independence.

Additional Requirements

- Public Authorities must ensure that all members of staff in customer facing roles, whatever their nationality or origins, are able to communicate the English language fluently with the general public, verbally and in written format.
- As a requirement of this role the post holder will need to have a full UK Driving Licence. You will be required to travel to visit clients in their homes and at other venues, and to attend meetings at sites other than own work base.

Values and Behaviours

- Promote the values and behaviours of Hertfordshire Council County to ensure everyone is working with a common purpose
- Makes the best use of the contributions in the culture, ethnic origin, gender, age and abilities of each person
- Adhere to the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics:
<http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/standards/standardsofconductperformanceandethics/>

Qualifications

- Relevant approved social work degree.
- A professionally qualified, registered social worker adhering to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) standards of proficiency, conduct, performance and ethics and meet the national professional social work capabilities.

Criminal Background Check

Safeguarding children and adults is of utmost importance to Hertfordshire County Council. The Council requires employees to abide by legislation and best practice to enable Hertfordshire to achieve this. This role has been identified as requiring a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check or Basic Disclosure. You must therefore ensure that any relevant criminal record check application is completed and returned as requested by the Council, as this is deemed a contractual requirement of employment. In addition, you consent to allow the Council to retain a copy of the disclosure certificate within your personal file.

It is a contractual obligation to disclose any cautions, reprimands or convictions and to update your manager of any changes to your status whilst in employment. Enhanced DBS roles will be reviewed periodically during employment, by means of DBS Dip Sample or three yearly rechecks. Failure to disclose changes to your status may be detrimental to your employment and you may be subject to disciplinary action.

Please note that additional information referring to the check is in the guidance notes to the application form. If you are invited to interview you will receive more information.

Equality and Diversity

Hertfordshire County Council is determined to take action to ensure that our belief in diversity and equality of opportunity is integral to everything we do. It will inform every area of activity; from the way we provide services to the way we employ our staff. It is a central responsibility of all councillors, managers, staff and partners. The council's equality policy 'Putting People First' is available on hertfordshire.gov.uk, on the internal intranet or from your line manager.

Health and Safety

It will be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the Health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

