



## Job Description

<b>DIRECTORATE</b> People and Communities	<b>BRANCH</b> Integrated Services	<b>SECTION</b> Community Family Service
<b>JOB TITLE</b> Family Support Key Worker	<b>POST NO.</b>	<b>GRADE</b> JG6

### Main Purpose of the Job

**To deliver intensive support to families with multiple problems, risks and chaotic lives.**

As Family Support Key Worker you will work intensively with a small case load of families to identify different family member 'issues', identify solutions and work with the family and partners to support positive change.

Success will be measured by positive outcomes for families such as avoiding care, safeguarding improved, improving parenting, tenancies stabilised, reducing antisocial behaviour, improving school attendance, increasing family activities and employment, and improving health and well being for family members.

A Family Support Key Worker is:

'A dedicated key worker who works intensively with the whole family: they take the lead role for the family and manage or 'grip' the family's problems, co-ordinate the delivery of services, and use a combination of support, rewards and where appropriate alerting the family to the possibility of sanctions to motivate families to change their behaviour. The persistence and assertiveness of the key worker is critical to keeping families engaged and following agreed steps. Key workers may also deliver direct support to families to develop parenting and life skills, self confidence, motivation and set goals. Work is undertaken as part of a team around the family and critically with other external agencies. They may also refer family members to specialist intervention and provide advocacy for family members when dealing with other local services.

Typically, family members may be referred to evidence based parenting programmes, substance misuse treatment, or child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) etc. Small caseloads (up to eight at any one time) enable the key worker to work very intensively with families, on average for eight hours a week, including evenings and weekends where necessary, and stay involved for as long as needed. The average length of involvement could be up to 12 months although more complex cases can take longer. Access to budgets through the key workers line manager is also important to enable key workers to solve small problems for families and help key workers win the families trust'.

## Organisational Context

North Somerset has organised children and young people's services in three geographical areas called Community Family Support Services. Each geographical area has a number of Community Family Service teams which aim to improve co-ordination and integration of a range of universal and targeted services. This post is one of up to 16.5 Family Support Key Worker posts, based across the three areas and will be a key part of each of the Community Family Team's front line services. All work is undertaken within a statutory context and requires professional judgement to be exercised.

Number of children and young people in each area:

- Weston South 8,322
- Weston East 10,460
- Central/North 25,412

Approximately 100 multi-problem families, 45 children subject to child protection plans, and 40 children looked after.

Each team will have up to 8 front line staff and will include Consultant Social Work Practitioners, Social Workers, Family Support Key Workers, Education Welfare, Young Person's Support Workers and Children's Centre Leaders.

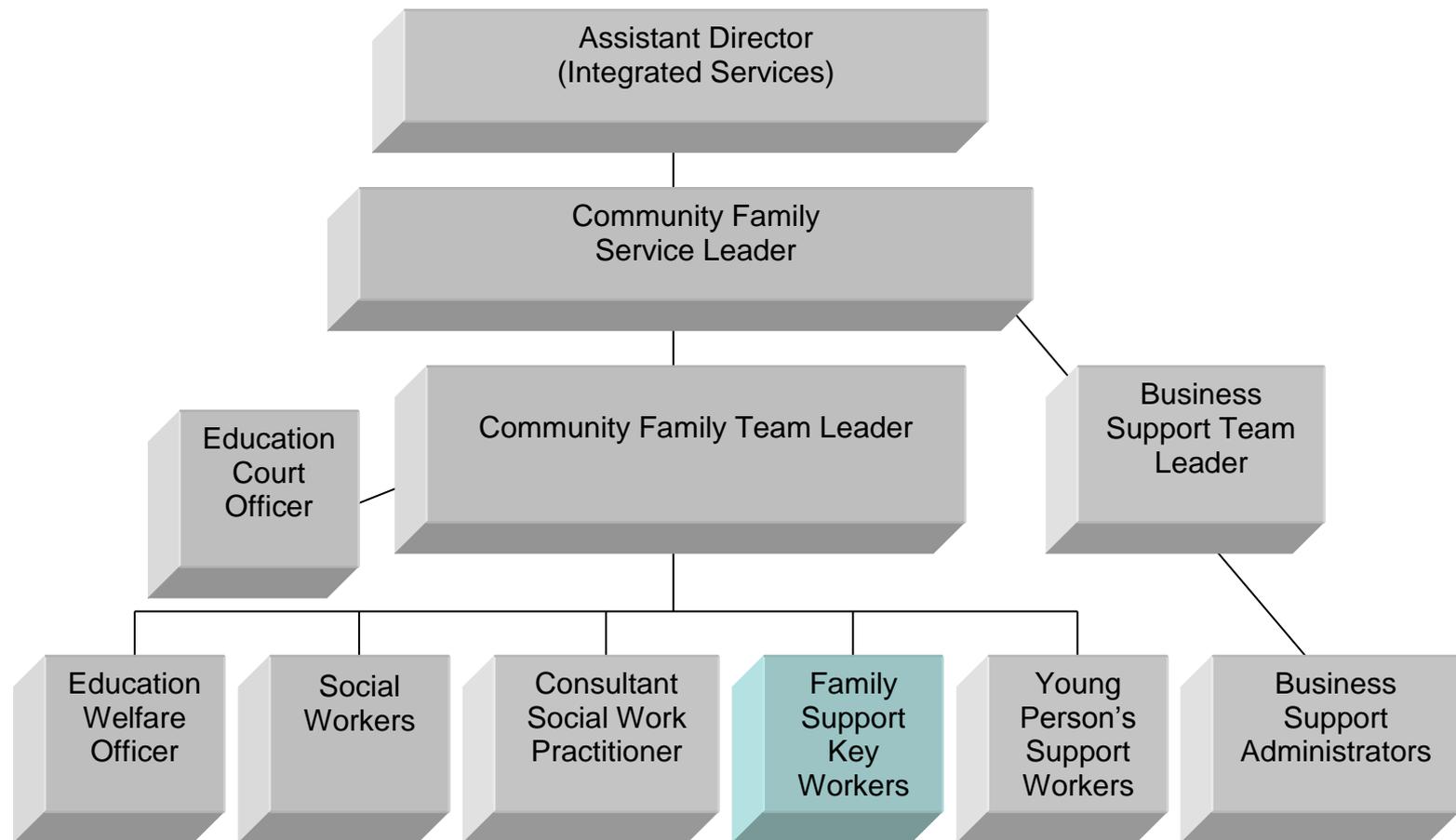
The work of the Community Family Service aims to:

- Protect children from significant harm
- Avoid entry into care
- Reduce placement breakdown
- Reduce drug/alcohol use and misuse
- Reduce offending
- Improve mental health and well being
- Reduce anti social behaviour
- Ensure engagement in learning, employment or training
- Promote the life chances of vulnerable children, reduce inequalities and child poverty

Through holistic assessment and integrated approach with other agencies the work will contribute to:

- Developing emotional and social skills
- Building resilience
- Supporting access to other relevant early intervention team or specialist service
- Addressing relationship, family, and social problems
- Improve behaviour
- Building confidence and self esteem
- Enabling children, young people, and their families to make positive choices, manage change and navigate risk
- Raising aspirations

## Organisational Chart



## Main Competencies and Responsibilities

### As part of the Community Family Service around the total family approach:

- Develop and maintain effective partnership working with parents and families using a strength based approach to help, motivate and encourage behaviour change that is underpinned by a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Agree with families and other agencies the aims and the purpose of your involvement, setting out through an agreement clear outcomes and improvements expected from the intervention
- Work persistently and assertively with families and other agencies to assess, provide or coordinate intensive support to meet identified support needs of families with multiple problems and the children within the context of their family.
- Work with families and other agencies to assess and regularly review the family's interrelated strengths, resources, needs and risks using a whole family or holistic approach.
- Work with families and other agencies to develop and coordinate the delivery of a whole family support plan/contract.
- Act as key worker/ lead professional to named families in a number of cases.

- Run evidence based parenting programmes which will strengthen families capacities to care for their children
- Work with parents to enable them to acknowledge and meet their own and their children's needs, develop life skills and reduce vulnerability.
- Advocate on behalf of parents, families, and children in relation to services and agencies.
- Work in a way which empowers all parents and families.
- Engage with and maintain effective supportive relationships with parents and families.
- Refer parents, families, and children to other services (generic and specialist) with consent where appropriate, and in the context of the assessment process.
- Enable parents, families, and children to independently access and engage with services, social networks and community resources.
- Develop sound working partnerships with other agencies providing support to the family.

**Facilitate and deliver support and interventions which improve parents, children's and young people's skills and self-esteem, promote their potential and support improved family relationships.**

- Enable parents, children and young people to develop ways of handling relationships and behaviour that contribute positively to everyday life for the child, young person, birth family, and their community.
- Develop the involvement of parents, children and young people in the planning and evaluation of services they receive, working in a way which empowers children, young people, parents and families.
- Work flexible hours as befits the needs of the service. This will include working outside of normal office hours, including evening and some weekend work.

**Develop and maintain competent and ethical practice.**

- Operate within legal, ethical and practice boundaries when working with families.
- Develop and maintain skills, knowledge and competence.
- Develop anti discriminatory practice and ensure work is accessible to young people from all minority groups
- Undertake regular supervision and relevant training, to enhance personal skills and professional development
- Be responsible for Health and Safety and Safeguarding of all young people with whom you work.
- Ensure the appropriate recording of allocated work, maintenance of professional and client confidentiality, and the sharing of relevant information with other professionals.

- Comply with legal obligation (**DATA PROTECTION ACT 1984**) not to use or disclose any personal information that comes into their possession in the course of their duties in any unauthorised manner. Duties and obligations under the Act that relate to this particular post will be explained to the post holder upon appointment to this post.
- To be aware of and understand the council's Equality Scheme and ensure at all times that the duties of the post are carried out in accordance with the policy.



## Person Specification

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### Qualifications - Essential:

- Good all round education with possible qualification in work with children or parents at a minimum NVQ Level 3 or 4 (or working towards this suggest this is deleted as we would not employ anyone without NVQ3).
- Experience of practical aspects of child care, domestic routines, health and hygiene.
- Proven experience of working directly with children and families in difficult situations.
- Some experience of acting as a lead professional or key worker for a child or family.
- Experience of managing a case load and experience of working with adults (group work with adults would be desirable).
- Experience of using IT systems (email, word processing & spreadsheet).

### Knowledge: Essential

- Knowledge of child development and safeguarding children.
- Knowledge of working with children and families.
- Knowledge of good enough parenting and the risk factors that poor parenting and adults with multiple problems may present to children.
- Knowledge of universal, statutory and third sector services and their role in promoting the welfare of children, young people and their carers.

### Skills & Abilities: Essential

#### Interpersonal Skills

- Able to resolve confrontational situations in a respectful manner and retain the trust and respect of the people you are working with.
- Able to listen and build consensus with a range of organisations and people.

- Tenacity to achieve against the odds.
- Ability to identify, encourage and facilitate positive improvements within the family.
- Ability to form positive working relationships with other agencies and professionals involved with a family.

### **Practical**

- Effective verbal and written communication skills with range of people and in different styles.
- Ability to practice in a way that safeguards children.
- Ability to prioritise and work under pressure but have the confidence to identify when you need help.
- Ability to work alone whilst ensuring your working practices keep you and your colleagues safe.
- Ability to share and learn from good practice.
- Ability to develop effective plans and review them.
- Ability to fulfil key worker/ lead professional role.
- Ability to deliver a range of evidence based interventions including case work and evidenced based parenting groups

### **Additional Requirements**

- Willingness and ability to work flexibly around the families needs which means some early mornings, evenings, weekends and possibly bank holidays determined by the individual needs of the family.
- Good presentations skills with the ability to design and deliver training sessions to staff.
- Must be willing to travel widely in North Somerset and outside, on occasions you must be able to work outside normal working hours both on a planned basis and at short notice.
- Occasionally transporting children and/or adults.
- Lone working within service users' home and in the community.

### **Other**

- Satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure certificate (relevant applications and checks will be carried out before any job offer is confirmed).

## Principles and values of total family

1. All work with families should reflect the rights of the child set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>4</sup> (1989) ratified by the UK in December 1991.
2. Total Family utilises a persistent, supportive and respectful approach in working with families which necessitates small caseloads, creative approaches, and a clear strategy for using incentives and sanctions to bring about positive change.  
  
The approach is based around a process of strength based whole family assessment.
3. Practitioners need to work respectfully and in partnership with families at all times, encouraging self efficacy and autonomy.
4. Work with families should value and build on their existing strengths, knowledge and experience.
5. Those in a parenting role are acknowledged as having unique knowledge and information about their children and are the primary influence on their child's development.
6. Children are the responsibility of, and make a positive contribution to, the wider society as well as their families.
7. Total Family should place the interests of children and young people at the heart of the work. Practitioners should be committed to working with parents and families so that children and young people have the chance to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and experience economic wellbeing.
8. Total Family should aim to offer a range of appropriate support according to both child and parent level of need, utilising whole family assessment.
9. Total Family utilises effective working partnerships with agencies and individuals in providing support to parents and families. Integrated working and the sharing of approaches across services is a central element of the Family Support Key Worker role.
10. Total Family practitioners should be committed to engaging children, parents and families fully in identifying goals, assessing options, making decisions and reviewing outcomes. They should support child and family involvement in the development and evaluation of services.
11. Respect for difference and the promotion of equality are of fundamental importance to work with families.
12. Discriminatory behaviour of individuals, families, groups and agencies must be challenged.
13. Those working with families should have specific training, qualifications, support and expertise appropriate to the work they are undertaking.
14. Good practice requires reflection, regular and appropriate supervision and support as well as a continuing search for improvement.

15. Total Family should use evidence based approaches where possible to encourage and achieve good outcomes.
16. Total Family requires innovation and creativity to address need.