



Job Description

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| DIRECTORATE People & Communities | BRANCH Children's Support & Safeguarding | SECTION Community Family Service |
| JOB TITLE Social Worker | POST NO. | GRADE JG7 – JM1 |

Main Purpose of the Job

To operate as a social work professional within the Community Family Service team, providing a professional social work service to children and families as part of the Total Family Approach.

Social workers will undertake assessment, planning, intervention and review (APIR) in a range of children in need cases, including child protection, care proceedings and looked after children cases. They will work collaboratively with other professionals, co-ordinating or contributing to the team around the family, in order to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families, particularly safeguarding children and young people.

Social workers will hold approximately 15 total family cases. They act as a link professional, providing advice and consultancy to Children's Centre, schools and other settings, in line with the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Social workers will maintain accurate, up-to-date child records in compliance with the re-launched Integrated Children's System.

Social workers will continuously improve their practice by developing their knowledge and skills through post qualifying training. The post will participate in high quality supervision that achieves an appropriate balance between reflective practice and accountability for performance/standards. They take part in rigorous self evaluation through annual appraisal and half year reviews.

This job description provides the core job description for all children's social workers. Specialism's will be reflected in appropriate addendums.

This post is required to work closely with multi agency partners to ensure that services fit together; avoid duplication and meet the requirements of the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and other relevant statutory legislation. They must be registered to practice with the HCPC under the terms of the code of conduct for social workers.

Organisational context

North Somerset has organised children and young people's services in three geographical areas called Community Family Services. Each geographical area has a number of Community Family Teams which aim to improve co-ordination and integration of a range of universal and targeted services. This post is one of a large number of Social 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 Officers, 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 family approach:

- Undertake the full range of social work tasks with children in need and their families – Assessment, Planning, Intervention and Review (APIR), ensuring a minimum of 50% of time is involved in direct work. As a worker you will be expected to provide a high level of direct work at an agreed local level.

Undertake a range of intervention with children and families including group work, family work and solution focused intervention, parenting work etc jointly, as appropriate, with other staff within the Community Family Service.

- Contribute to undertaking early intervention/preventative work, aiming to take 20% of the case load as preventative work.
- Promote and demonstrate the meaningful participation of children, young people and parents/carers in the process of assessments, planning, intervention and review, and in all aspects of decision making and in shaping service delivery.
- Act as the lead professional key worker in statutory cases that require a qualified social worker, including high-level children in need cases, child protection, care proceedings and looked after children cases.

- Contribute to or bring together and co-ordinate the team around the family to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach in those cases where children subject to safeguarding plans, care proceedings, or admission to accommodation.
- Establish and develop collaborative working with allied health and social care practitioners from children's and adults' services and other agencies such as schools, housing, the police, and voluntary organisations.
- Develop a good understanding of evidence based practice and integrate models of best practice into day to day service delivery.
- Remain up to date with relevant legislation and procedures.
- Participate positively in professional supervision and annual appraisal review, taking personal responsibility for the quality of practice.
- Build professional credibility within the multi-professional partnership by achieving practice standards and meeting performance targets consistently; providing accredited practice teaching as required.
- Actively contribute to the Community Family Service working, supporting colleagues, covering for colleagues in their absence and taking part in team meetings and development events.
- Understand and integrate into practice the key policies of the Council in relation to social care with children and families, especially multi-disciplinary working, integration and whole family approaches.
- Develop professional expertise in at least one of the key risk factors affecting the welfare of children; parental alcohol/substance misuse; parental mental health problems; domestic abuse; learning difficulties; and homelessness and share your experienced and expertise with other members of the team.
- Develop an excellent knowledge base of and collaborative working with preventative and targeted family support services, particularly those provided by the voluntary and community sector.
- Demonstrate a high level of competence and confidence in the use of Council electronic case recording/reporting tool, maintaining accurate and up to date child records.
- Understand, promote and integrate into practice Council policies in relation to valuing diversity and promoting equalities.
- Consider and put forward ideas for improving the efficiency and the effectiveness of Council services to children and families.
- Contribute to the review of Council policies and procedures, particularly guidance and protocols for social workers.
- Enhance and promote the reputation of the Council as a provider of high quality services to children and families.

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 as cases require.

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 your 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.



Person Specification

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Qualifications - Essential:

- Registered as a social worker with the Health Professions Council
- Social Work Qualification, ie Social Work Degree or Diploma in Social Work.
- Achieved or commitment to study for a specialist PQ award or equivalent

Work Related Experience and Associated Vocational Training

Essential:

- Experience of direct work with children in need and their families.

Desirable:

- Experience of statutory childcare work in a local authority setting.

Specialist Knowledge

Desirable:

- Child Protection
- Court work
- Adoption/Fostering
- Looked After Children
- Children with disabilities
- Therapeutic and counselling work
- Legal framework for children, young people and their families
- Child development

Job Related Skills

Essential

- Communicate effectively with children, young people and families to ensure effective outcomes can be achieved.
- Support family cohesions, and empower and support families to manage their own lives.
- Enable, encourage and support children and young people's participation and decisions and activities that affect their lives.
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable children and young people.
- Develop purposeful and productive outcome focused relationships with children, young people, and their parents/carers based upon partnership and mutual respect.
- Provide child-centred social work practice based upon social work value principles enshrined in the HPC code of practice.
- Analyse, interpret and make professional judgements when undertaking assessments.
- Define needs, clarify outcomes and implement strategies that enable outcomes to be achieved.
- Develop, implement, and review plans based upon assessments of children and families/foster or adoptive carers which detail identified needs and intended service outcomes using evidence and best practice.
- Make effective decisions appropriate to the responsibilities of a social worker.
- Communicate effectively verbally and in writing to a range of audiences, including children and young people, courts, multi-agency panels, parents/carers.
- Work as part of a multi-agency team, including acting as a lead professional.
- Make use of technology including relevant computer systems such as ICS.
- Reflect on own practice, the practice of others, and to make effective use of supervision, coaching and training/development opportunities.
- Be creative and empowered to solve problems and find solutions to overcome challenges and barriers.
- Be emotionally resilient.

Special Working Conditions

Essential:

- You will be required to have the ability to travel within the geographical area of North Somerset. The Council encourages the use of public transport where this is appropriate'

- Post holders must be willing to work outside normal working hours, both in a planned basis, and at short notice and, if necessary, to be part of an out of hours telephone support rota for children looked after by the authority.
- Post holders must participate in North Somerset Council's appraisal system, undertaking training and development as required to support their professional development and continued registration with the Health Professions Council.
- To maintain the Council's comprehensive equality policy, race and disability scheme and ensure at all times that the duties of the post are carried out in accordance with these policies.
- To maintain reasonable expected professional standards of behaviour outside of work and ensure that the standing and reputation of the Council is maintained when not in work.

Other

Essential:

- The ability to cope with the duties, responsibilities, and stresses associated with a professional social work role.
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure certificate (relevant applications and checks will be carried out before any job offer is confirmed).
- Registered with the Health Professions Council

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 Child⁴ (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 Social 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.