

Kent County Council

Job Description: *Fostering Social Worker – Placement Stability Team*

Directorate:	Children, Young People and Education
Unit/Section:	Children's Social Work Services
Grade:	Career Grade (KR9)
Responsible to:	Team Manager

Purpose of the Job:

The Placement Stability Team (which includes the Sense of Belonging Service) was established in 2019 and is a county wide service supporting Connected Carers, managing processes for foster carers who offer Sessional support to other carers, alongside establishing and supporting a Hub Family scheme throughout the county.

This is the first time that connected carers in Kent have been brought together as a group and it is the aim of the team to seek to understand and address the specific issues that can face them, whilst enabling them to experiencing working together. The Team also help oversee the Sessional Worker scheme which seeks to match foster carers (and the children placed with them) with who have the time, skills and relevant experience to support them to promote placement stability.

In time the Team hope to play an important role in supporting Hub Families (which again seeks to support placement stability through linking foster families to a main hub carer who would be able to offer respite and support). At the present time this scheme remains in the recruitment process for potential Hub Families, but we are very involved in supporting the wider understanding of this scheme and exploring potential families who may be interested in this.

The Sense of Belonging service, that also sits under the Placement Stability Team, seeks to supports foster carers and professionals through a network approach when placements are at risk of disruption. This includes supporting foster carers in understanding the meaning of their child's behaviour and to consider what might help to both manage the behaviour and sustain the relationship with the foster child. The philosophy of this service is replicated in the overarching ethos of the Placement Stability Team and at times some of the work within the Team can cross over. This requires an ability to support placement stability for children in foster care including the application of a psychologically based understanding of children/young people and their foster carers.

The role of Fostering Social Worker within the Placement Stability Team will require you to demonstrate effective practice in managing a complex and varied caseload. With the support of regular supervision from the Team Manager, manage risk and uncertainty, using assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation skills, contributing to the effective application of resources to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, their families and foster carers.

Be able to support recruitment, training and retention initiatives with and for carers. Identify and develop areas of knowledge and expertise, sharing these with colleagues and other professionals. Take an active role in effective team working and understand the team's relationships with other services.

Maintain a personal awareness of legislation, departmental and corporate policies and procedures, particularly those relating to Children in Care, Children in Need and Child

Protection, acting in line with these to ensure consistency and a high quality of service delivery across the Directorate.

The post holder should be working in line with the Competency Framework.

The post holder must complete the Consolidation Module within 3 years of qualifying as a Social Worker.

Main duties and responsibilities:

- Manage a caseload which will include complex and diverse cases, requiring skills in respect of assessment, analysis, planning and review, to effectively meet the needs of foster carers, the children in their care and their families. This will be in line with the competency standards set out in the Competency Framework and the knowledge and skills statement for approved child and family practitioners. The caseload will be managed within the relevant framework of supervision dependent on the complexity of the case and post qualification experience of the post holder.
- Contribute to and review the development of ongoing initiatives to achieve a more effective use of resources within Children's Social Work Services.
- Initiate and develop close working partnerships with statutory agencies, voluntary and private sector agencies, carers and those with parental responsibility in order to facilitate effective service delivery.
- Inform, advise, counsel, support and assist in the training of carers, individually and in group settings, in order to promote the stability and security of foster placements for children with disabilities.
- Be involved in the Review of foster carers and where appropriate effectively challenge views and practices in order to promote the best outcomes for children with disabilities and their birth families.
- Ensure that information systems, i.e. Liberi, and records are effectively maintained (with an understanding of information security policy) to provide up-to-date and accurate information, upon which decisions affecting service delivery can be made.
- Maintain a personal awareness of legislation, departmental and corporate policies and procedures (particularly those relating to Fostering, Children in Care, Children in Need and Child Protection) acting in line with these to ensure consistency and a high quality of service delivery across the Directorate.
- Be involved in the recruitment, training and assessment of foster carers to ensure that there is a suitable range of placements to meet their needs across the County and to facilitate the fostering process.
- Attend training courses and other development opportunities as agreed with line manager to ensure compliance with Social Work England requirements.
- Supervise and manage foster carers and support recruitment initiatives to ensure that there is a suitable range of placements to meet the needs of children.

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what his/her main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

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Person Specification: *Fostering Social Worker – Placement Stability Team*

The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

	CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS	Degree in Social Work (Dip HE/Degree or Post Grad) and registration as a Social Worker with Social Work England
EXPERIENCE	Relevant experience to demonstrate the competencies required Use of systemic models of practice e.g. Signs of Safety
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	Good interpersonal skills in order to communicate effectively with children, carers and colleagues, both on a one-to-one and when working in groups Ability to prioritise and to work effectively on own initiative as well as within a team Good report-writing skills and the ability to communicate clearly in writing Ability to work within formal settings Computer literate
KNOWLEDGE	A working knowledge of child development and demonstrate an ability to underpin practice with a theoretical base, including attachment theory and the needs of Children in Care/Children in Need/children in the Child Protection system A working knowledge and understanding of relevant legislative, regulations and policy frameworks and impact on service (including Fostering Regulations) A working knowledge of the implications trauma and attachment can present to children, their birth families and their carers A knowledge of family relationships and family court proceedings Working knowledge of Quality Protects and Working Together A working knowledge of County procedures relating to Children in Care/Children in Need/Child Protection Good knowledge of assessment frameworks
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	Good interpersonal skills in order to communicate effectively with clients and colleagues, and when working in groups, develop student placements and other social worker staff

	<p>Ability to prioritise and to work effectively on own initiative as well as within a team</p> <p>Good report-writing skills and the ability to communicate clearly in writing</p> <p>Ability to work within a court setting</p> <p>Interest/desire to lead in training courses</p> <p>Computer literate and familiar with computer systems including word, Microsoft, Liberi</p>
BEHAVIOURS AND KENT VALUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional credibility • Take personal and professional responsibility for your actions and performance • Innovative/flexibility • Leadership skills • Commitment to Equal Opportunities • Act with integrity, honesty and transparency • Be open to challenge • Treat people fairly and with respect <p>Kent Values:</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Invite Contribution and Challenge</p> <p>Accountable</p>
ADDITIONAL	<p>Ability to travel across a wide geographical area in a timely and flexible manner at various times of the day</p>
COMPETENCIES	<p>Competencies are set within the knowledge and skills statements contained in the Social Care Capability Framework</p>