

Kent County Council

Job Description: ***Social Work Assistant - Fostering and Kinship Support Teams***

Directorate: Children, Young People and Education
Unit/Section: Fostering and Kinship Services
Grade: KR7
Responsible to: Senior Practitioner/Team Manager

Purpose of the Job:

Assist Fostering Social Workers in their role of recruiting, supervising and supporting foster carers, special guardians and their families who care for children who are or have been in care (as defined by the Children Act 1989). This role will provide high quality support and training to foster carers, special guardians and their families and will involve working alongside the fostering and kinship support teams to support them across the county.

Assist foster carers and guardians to understand the meaning of their children's behaviour and to consider what might help to both manage the behaviour and sustain the relationship with them and increase placement stability.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Support fostering and guardianship families in practical ways, offering advice on children to meet agreed plans and objectives. This will include working with their social workers where applicable.
- Advise foster carers and guardians on financial issues, health and safety, behaviour management and hygiene, to ensure they continue to meet the fostering national minimum standards and special guardianship regulations.
- Advise on practical childcare and parenting skills, including how to meet the emotional needs of children, e.g. setting consistent boundaries and behaviour management.
- Respond quickly in a time of need to provide specific and intensive support to foster carers, special guardians and their families.
- Offer guidance and support to foster carers and special guardians regarding family time between children and other family members, either in their home or at other locations as agreed by the child's network.
- Help foster carers and special guardians develop personal and interpersonal

skills which will enable them to respond to the needs of the children they care for.

- Keep up to date and accurate records of visits and liaise regularly with fostering social workers and team managers to assist the ongoing development and appraisal of the needs of both foster carer and special guardianship families.
- Produce and collate written reports and contribute to meetings and reviews as required to assist in the planning and review of the needs of children, special guardians and foster carers under the supervision of the senior practitioner and team manager. To attend fostering panels and foster carer reviews as necessary with the fostering social worker.
- Provide observations of the fostering and special guardianship family and produce reports that can be used to identify issues and inform recommendations for both the care plan and the carers' development.
- Develop and nurture good working relationships with families and other key professionals that we interact with. Assist in recruiting, training and supporting foster carers and special guardians alongside facilitating support groups and group meetings.
- Assist Fostering Social Workers with office duties to identify and match children requiring respite care and ensure information is uploaded and recorded within the children's and carers' recording systems.
- Assist with applications to the Adoption Support Fund so that therapeutic support can be offered to children living with a family under a Special Guardianship Order when required.
- Attend regular supervision and staff meeting, and undertake training as required to develop the postholders own skills in helping foster carers and foster 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: *Social Work Assistant (Fostering Support)*

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	Educated to GCSE Level or equivalent or NVQ Level 3 Caring for Children and Young People
Experience	Previous experience of working with children and / or families preferably fostering or local authority.
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication skills including verbal and written using a variety of tools with children, carers and colleagues. • Ability to prioritise and to work effectively on own initiative as well as within a team. • Computer literate, excellent use of IT and software systems including ICS. • Ability to work on own initiative, as part of a team and able to ask for support and guidance at appropriate times. • Willingness to attend and contribute to training opportunities, supervision and team meetings to continuously improve practice. • Ability to travel to meet the requirements of the Service. • Commitment to equalities and the promotion of diversity in all aspects of working
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of child development. • Broad knowledge of processes, systems, law and regulation that impact on children including child in need, child protection, looked after children. • A broad understanding of adoption, fostering, special guardianship and childcare law. • Knowledge of issues that impact on children including CSE, gangs and Prevent agenda. • Awareness of GDPR and confidentiality issues
Kent Values and Cultural Attributes	<p>Kent Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are brave. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge • We are curious to innovate and improve • We are compassionate, understanding and respectful to all • We are strong together by sharing knowledge • We are all responsible for the difference we make <p>Our values enable us to build a culture that is:</p> <p>Flexible/agile - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile</p> <p>Curious - constantly learning and evolving</p> <p>Compassionate and Inclusive - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all</p> <p>Working Together - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent</p> <p>Empowering - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions</p> <p>Externally Focused - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making</p>