

Kent County Council

Job Description: Social Work Professional Standards Officer

Directorate:	Children, Young People and Education
Unit/Section:	Safeguarding, Professional Standards & Quality Assurance
Grade:	KR12
Responsible to:	Practice Development Manager

Purpose of the Job:

Support the research, design and delivery of high-quality integrated children's practice across all of Children's Services and the wider partnership, including new service standards, practices, policies and procedures. Be an active change agent in driving the standards of quality assurance within the children's workforce practice across the County ensuring the effective delivery of services which safeguard children. This will involve actively engaging the voice of Social Work, Children and Families.

Provide practitioners and managers with expert advice on all aspects of practice for children and families. To provide support to practitioners and managers to develop a culture of optimum conditions for high quality practice. Main emphasis will be on driving a high support, high challenge culture. Support and engage with the Senior Management Team to ensure practice remains focused on the child.

Main duties and responsibilities:

- Support implementation of Kent's Quality Assurance Framework across Integrated Children's Services. This will include understanding key performance indicators to explore lines of enquiry, driving the auditing framework to improve Children Young People and Education's (CYPE) skill set in self-diagnosing management and practice needs, driving the practice model consistently across CYPE and leading on producing feedback from service users and multiagency.
- Prepare services for statutory inspection by ensuring the visibility of the practice framework and contributing to the design and development of quality assurance systems. This will promote capturing the voice of the child, family and practitioners to inform practice and assure the council that consistently high-quality safe care is afforded to all children and young people.
- Expert practitioner with recognised impact, status and authority to ensure leading edge research in practice, learning from Ofsted reports, policy and guidance is accessible to all practitioners to underpin child-centred practice. This will involve taking the lead to co-produce policies and guidance with practitioners, managers and multiagency.

- Lead on the development and thematic audit of key themes of social work practice and the implementation of any resulting recommendations. This includes delivering regular surgeries/workshops on identified lead areas to drive and champion best practice within the specialism.
- Responsible for driving the quality of supervision to promote the implementation of the Quality Assurance Framework, addressing professional development and developing a strong learning culture of high support and challenge to provide high quality practice and good outcomes for children and families.
- Identify any areas of learning which may result from serious incidents and deliver practice learning events in partnership with districts, and where appropriate, multi-agency stakeholders. This includes holding an author role to collate CYPE's contribution towards either practice learning events, Domestic Homicide Reviews or Serious Adult Reviews
- Oversee the design and development of Kent's Practice Academy and to implement Social Work England's agenda and standards within KCC to ensure the development of Social Work career pathways, continuing professional development opportunities whilst improving KCC's recruitment and retention.
- Assist in the process for the recruitment and development of Kent's ASYE's, step up students and Social work degree apprenticeship programme. Including providing expertise and integrity to moderate progression work through the career development pathway

Kent County Council

Person Specification: Social Work Professional Standards Officer

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

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

	MINIMUM CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS	<p>Educated to degree level.</p> <p>Social work qualification and be a registered social worker with Social Work England.</p> <p>Evidence of continuous professional development</p>
EXPERIENCE	<p>Significant experience and proven record of accomplishment of working as a Team Manager/Supervisor of social workers including practice teaching.</p> <p>Highly developed specialist knowledge relevant to social work practice in children's services</p> <p>Proven track record of contributing towards successful collaborative working and partnerships in order to improve outcomes for children.</p> <p>Proven track record of contributing towards design and development of strategies that cross service and professional boundaries, which lead to improved outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of contributing towards managing change in the pursuit of strategic objectives.</p> <p>Experience of supporting review and design of policy formulation, implementation and review.</p> <p>Experience of dealing with complaints and conflicts whilst understanding political sensitivity.</p> <p>Experience of contributing towards the review, design, development and implementing service standards in line with latest thinking</p>
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<p>Ability to communicate effectively with Senior Managers across the County Council, Multi-agency partners and people in the Community.</p>

	<p>A probing, questioning ability to challenge systems, procedures, strategy and implement improvements.</p> <p>Ability to produce written material to a high standard which is suitable for a range of different audiences.</p> <p>Presentation skills</p> <p>Proven ability to contribute and influence particularly during change.</p> <p>Ability to work to tight deadlines.</p> <p>Ability to develop and use performance management and quality assurance processes to achieve high quality professional practice.</p> <p>Excellent negotiating and planning skills</p> <p>Computer literacy</p>
KNOWLEDGE	<p>National policies and appreciation of this Authority's approach to procedures, standards and practice, especially those related to Children's Services and Contracting Services, together with related legal requirements.</p> <p>A detailed knowledge of Government legislation relevant to Children's Services.</p> <p>Up to date knowledge of research is essential.</p> <p>Up to date knowledge of social work best practice</p>
BEHAVIOURS AND KENT VALUES	<p>The postholder will demonstrate Kent's values: Open, Invite Contribution and Challenge Accountable.</p> <p>The 8 Kent leadership competencies and associated behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth and judgement • Conversation and compassion • Empowerment and enterprise • People and partnerships • Character and courage • Outcomes and delivery • Radicalism and urgency • Tools and professionalism

Organisational Responsibilities

All corporate directors, directors and senior managers have an explicit responsibility to deliver the collective agenda of the Council. These are fundamental elements of their role not an addition and are summarised as follows:

Whole Council

- Seek to improve the lives of all residents in Kent and economy of Kent.
- Act as corporate parent to the Council's looked after children.
- Take an active role in promoting and ensuring the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding are met.
- Understand, communicate and contribute to the delivery of KCC's strategic aims.
- Meet statutory obligations and promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures and the Council's Code of Conduct (Kent Code).
- Advise elected members and support the democratic process.
- Promote the Council brand and enhance the overall reputation of the Council.
- Understand and monitor the measures of performance, including customer insight, which define successful outcomes for KCC services.
- Maintain and ensure a relentless focus on the customer.
- Act to support the Council-wide need to deliver services within budget, thereby avoiding an overspend that could damage the financial viability of the Council.
- Overcome professional and service silos to achieve the County Council's objectives.

Integration of Services

- Focus resources where they have the biggest impact.
- Deliver services that are flexible and adaptable.
- Integrate services within KCC and work with partner agencies to ensure a seamless customer experience.
- Fully and inclusively engage all staff in the delivery of services, demonstrating the Council's leadership values and competencies.

Embedding Commissioning and Engaging relevant markets

- Establish an outcome focused organisation.
- Meet the financial regulations and standing orders of KCC.
- Challenge the status quo and engage with the market to constantly improve.
- Ensure all services are delivered effectively and efficiently.
- Proactively and continuously seek to improve service delivery.
- Proactively manage risk to avoid inertia whilst not exposing the Council to needless and avoidable challenge or loss.

Managing Change

- Understand and support the Authority's overall change agenda.
- Deliver required outcomes of service specific change on time and to budget.
- Understand the quality of staff, support their development, nurture those with talent.
- Identify the skills for the future and the level of staff through robust workforce planning.
- Identify and deal with underperformance.
- Deliver to agreed budget and income targets.