

Kent County Council

Job Description: *Senior Practitioner*

Directorate: Children, Young People and Education
Unit/Section: Specialist Children's Services
Grade: KR11
Responsible to: Team Manager

Social Care Capability Framework level: Experienced Practitioner

Level Descriptor

Demonstrate expert and effective practice in complex situations, assessing and managing higher levels of risk, striking a balance between support and control, liaising with a wide range of professionals. Manage complex caseloads and offer expert opinion within the organization and to others. Model good practice setting expectations for others, continuing to develop specialisms and act as champions across the services in their area of expertise.

Purpose of the Job:

Manage a caseload of complex and difficult cases involving assessment, planning and implementation and evaluation of appropriate action to ensure resources are utilised effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and their families

Contribute to raising and maintaining standards of professional social work within a social work team, develop areas of specialist practice, offer expert advice to less experienced staff, supervise unqualified staff and act as a Practice Assessor for students/ASYE.

The postholder should be working in line with the relevant standards set out in the Social Care Capability Framework (SCCF).

Main duties and responsibilities:

- Manage a caseload of complex cases involving high levels of risk and needs to a high standard to ensure resources are utilised effectively.
- Provide a high quality resource of professional social work knowledge and expertise to a team of Social Workers, to include student supervision, chairing complex meetings, assisted fieldwork, attendance in court, case audits and reviews etc, to assist the team in ensuring that it carries out its core tasks to a high standard.
- Provide coaching and mentoring support to Social Workers, including those undertaking social work training, to support and further their professional knowledge and development to impact upon the overall quality of practice within teams.
- Attend court, where appropriate, to assist the team in ensuring that key professional input and expertise is provided to high profile and sensitive cases.

- Act as Practice Assessor to support student placements/ASYE.
- Liaise regularly with colleagues throughout the Council to ensure social work staff deliver existing and new practices consistently and to a high standard.
- Contribute to the development of new initiatives through attendance or leadership on working groups, multi-agency forums, training courses etc and acting as lead for identified service initiatives, i.e. planning for permanence and research work, to develop current and new ways of working that meet service requirements.
- Maintain awareness of changes in legislation and related policies and practices and ensure all social work staff are also informed of these changes to enable consistent and timely implementation.

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: Senior Practitioner

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree in Social Work CQSW/DipSW or equivalent and registration as a social worker with the relevant body • Evidence of relevant continuing professional development
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial diverse experience working with children and their families • Experience of family placement, childcare and permanency planning ranging from straight forward to highly complex • Providing consultation, mentoring and developing qualified staff/Social Work Assistants or equivalent • Experience of systemic practice e.g. signs of safety
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a high standard of direct work skills with children and their families • Ability to quality assure through supervision, case audit and review to ensure high standards of practice. • Ability to assess effectively the performance and development needs of social work staff • Communicate skilfully and engage in complex and high-risk situations including effective negotiating. • Identify, attain and maintain high levels of practice • Ability to work within an Equal Opportunities, non - discriminatory framework • Accurately record information distinguishing conflicting views and perspectives. • Ability to travel across a wide geographical area in a timely and flexible manner at various times of the day

KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level working knowledge of relevant legislation and policies and procedures relating to Looked After Children, Children in Need and Children in the Child Protection System • Understand and apply the concepts of child development, attachment, separation, loss, change and resilience • Keep abreast of changing issues and contexts at all levels, including in depth knowledge of social work research, and applying these in practice. • Demonstrate a clear understanding of human rights and choice including mental capacity.
COMPETENCIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competencies are set within the knowledge and skills statements contained in the Social Care Capability Framework.
PERSONAL QUALITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional credibility • Initiative • Innovative/flexibility • Leadership and management skills to support others in developing risk management skills • Commitment to equal opportunities and valuing diversity
BEHAVIOURS AND KENT VALUES	<p>Kent Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Invite contribution and challenge • Accountable