

Kent County Council

Job Description: *Youth Justice Practitioner*

Directorate:	Children, Young People and Education
Unit/Section:	Integrated Adolescent Services, Youth Justice
Grade:	KR8
Responsible to:	Kent Youth Justice Team Manager

Purpose of the Job:

The specialist Transition roles focus on young people in the secure estate, providing high quality intensive support to promote effective resettlement into the community. The roles will focus on Kent & Medway young people who receive a custodial sentence or serving lengthy detention at the remand stage.

The roles will involve:

- Developing a shared case formulation and action plan when young people enter Cookham Wood YOI
- Supporting the young person in custody and then into the community
- Sustaining the trauma-informed work that has begun in Cookham Wood, and ensuring community-based services complement the work from agencies in Cookham Wood
- Supporting the young person if they move from Cookham Wood into the adult prison estate
- Working with young people to create guidance for practitioners on effective strength-based resettlement
- Dependent on case-load and capacity, contribute to the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) and Reparation activity

The roles are county wide, necessitating working across Kent and Medway. Caseloads are expected to be 20-25 young people per FTE worker per year, likely supporting 5-10 young people intensively at one time.

Transition practitioners do not case hold and will not be responsible for completion of assessments or plans on the system but will contribute to these in liaison with the case holder. Transition practitioners must input their interventions with young people, engagement and the impact of these, on the YJ system accurately and in a timely way.

Transitions practitioners need to be available to respond flexibly to young people, and particularly in the first 6 weeks following release from the secure establishment, to be available weekends, evenings and holidays, to provide intensive support.

When Transition Practitioners don't have a full caseload, they will be expected to support Adolescent Service delivery commensurate with their skills and role, particularly delivery of group work (such as Reparation) and 1:1 interventions, and particularly for those programmes which prevent the use of the secure establishment (Intensive Supervision and Surveillance).

Main duties and responsibilities:

Transition practitioners will:

In custody

- Attend planning meetings within Cookham Wood YOI and ensure that case formulation is informed by existing knowledge of the young person, resulting in a shared case formulation being developed and agreed.
- Work closely with Cookham Wood healthcare services to ensure the young people receive the appropriate physical and mental healthcare whilst in custody
- Meet regularly with the young people in custody, and help the young people design a personalised resettlement plan. This will include regular liaison with families, carers or the young person's community-based support. A community-based network of support for the young person will be created as part of this work.
- Work with families and professionals so that trauma-informed restorative conversations can be held which allow those who support the young person to understand the young person's needs and wishes.
- Support family, carers and positive community networks to build and maintain constructive relationships with the young person in custody, including visiting where appropriate
- Identify the community-based services necessary to support effective transition and resettlement in the community. Work with those services to support the young person's identity shift, so that they can become involved in activities which allow others to see the young person in a positive light.
- Work proactively to secure accommodation no less than one month in advance of custody release in order to inform post-custody planning and service engagement

In the community

- Support young people on the day of release to arrive at, and settle into, their accommodation;
- Help young people to be aware of and to attend or engage with community-based services
- Assist young people with their choices and engagement in education, training or employment
- Ensure that the impact of trauma, and any other healthcare issues, is shared with community-based services and any support sustained where necessary
- Be a point of contact for statutory and voluntary services until such time as the young person no longer requires support. This will include providing a rapid response to the young person when required, and supporting young people voluntarily beyond the end of their order/license
- Involve the young person in projects that will help them develop skills and experience to support them progressing into full time training or employment. The projects will allow the young people to see themselves in a positive manner, moving away from an offending identity, and will be focused on positive interaction with the community.
- Transitions practitioners will have access to enhanced Youth Justice budgets to support engaging young people creatively in the community and to overcome obstacles to effective resettlement

- Transitions practitioners will contribute to the delivery of Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) and Reparation activity, prioritising those at risk of entering, or coming out of, the secure estate.

Moves to the Adult Prison Estate

A small number of young people will move from Cookham Wood YOI into the adult prison estate to continue serving the custodial part of their sentence. These young people will be vulnerable at the point of transition and it is important that they are effectively supported so that they can move from the children's to the adult estate.

Transition practitioners will support by ensuring:

- The receiving prison is aware of the needs of the young person and provides the necessary services that promote the young person to settle into their new prison
- The young person can access education, training and healthcare that sustains the work they have begun in Cookham Wood
- The young person's family, professionals who support them and services in the community are kept informed of the young person's progress and can plan for the young person's resettlement

Learning from the Project

In order to sustain the learning from the project, the Transitions practitioners employed will:

- Create a needs profile of Kent young people who have been supported as part of the project. This profile will be informed by a trauma-informed approach and will involve staff from Cookham Wood's SECURE STAIRS programme.
- Use the needs profile to identify the critical areas of support that are required as part of effective resettlement. Young people supported by the project will be asked to contribute to developing this piece of work.
- Identify areas of good practice within Kent and identify challenges or blockages which prevent the young person from sustaining positive change whilst in the community.
- Work with the Kent Youth Justice Participation Apprentices to hear from young people supported by the project, and to utilise these young people as experts to design or redesign services that will meet the needs of young people in custody.

Training

Kent and Medway Youth Offending Services will facilitate a number of shared training events for the trauma-informed resettlement practitioners, custodial resettlement staff and mental healthcare providers from the secure estate and from the community.

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.

Kent County Council

Person Specification: *Youth Justice 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"> A level 3 (diploma) or above qualification in a relevant discipline (e.g. Youth Justice, Social Care, Youth Work) and/or extensive relevant experience of engaging challenging and high-risk young offenders
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive experience of engaging and working effectively with young people and their families within a Social Care, Secure, Youth Justice, Early Help or Youth Work setting Substantial Experience of working jointly with key partners in the statutory, private and voluntary sectors, including Police, Secure Estate, ETE and housing providers Experience of using IT and electronic case management systems
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to build rapport and effective professional relationships with children, young people and their families Resilience, quick thinking and personal skills to deal effectively with difficult and/or sensitive situations Track record of working effectively as part of a unit/team Ability to coordinate multi-agency professionals, including appropriate and effective challenge and escalation, to ensure the provision of effective services to children, young people and their families Excellent negotiation skills and working relationships, with the ability to communicate and collaborate across a wide range of individuals and agencies including community and voluntary sector partners Ability to appropriately handle and express, using professional and trauma-informed language, confidential and sensitive information; verbally, in writing and electronically Ability to communicate and record case notes in an accurate, timely and reflective way

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficiency with electronic systems such as YJAF, CDY, CorePlus, Liberi/EHM • Ability to travel in a timely way on a regular basis across the county (including Medway) • Ability to develop creative approaches to resolve complex problems • Ability to interpret and analyse information and data from a variety of sources, including excellent professional curiosity • Excellent organisational skills and the ability to work to tight deadlines with limited resources and to prioritise workload effectively • Reliability and trust worthiness to work autonomously and on own initiative
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophisticated knowledge of and ability to adopt Trauma-Informed approaches, appropriate language and Case Formulation • Knowledge of relevant legislative and policy frameworks including The Children Act 1989, The Children Act 2004, Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. Insight into how these affect young people in the criminal justice system • Knowledge of policies and procedures relating to MAPPA; Integrated Offender Management; Looked After Children, Children in Need and Children in the Child Protection System (and other procedures relevant to work setting) • Knowledge of recent research and national initiatives impacting on Youth Justice including an understanding of Secure Stairs, National Standards, the Scaled Approach, Resettlement, Desistance, Contextual Safeguarding • Excellent knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding and Risk Management procedures and the ability to implement these • Knowledge of relevant Inspection Frameworks and a commitment to excellence and service improvement • Understanding of child and adolescent development, parenting skills, Youth Justice effective practice. • Knowledge of diversity and equal opportunities issues and a genuine empathy and insight into the experience of young people whose offences are serious or persistent

**BEHAVIOURS AND
KENT VALUES**

Kent Values:

Open

- Act with integrity, honesty and transparency
- Demonstrate healthy attitude to risk
- Welcome and expect change and evolving technology
- Work in new ways
- Be willing to learn
- Work as a whole council
- Treat people fairly and with respect

Invite contribution and challenge

- Work collaboratively to find new solutions
- Innovate
- Put the interests and wellbeing of customers first
- Be open to challenge
- Actively encourage and expect contribution

Accountable

- Do more for yourself
- Take personal and professional responsibility for your actions and performance
- Deliver at pace
- Look for ways to save money
- Look for commercial opportunities
- Focused on outcomes