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|  | JOB DESCRIPTION | FormJD1 |
| JOB TITLE: Placement Officer  | POST NUMBER: 1100EXJ |
| REPORTS TO  | Service Manager / Senior Social Worker  |
| DEPARTMENT: CSES | GRADE 8 |
| JE REF: | 4014B01283 | PANEL DATE: | 26/06/2018 |
| **1.** | **MAIN PURPOSES OF JOB** To work in the role of a Placement Officer within the Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team Duties includes:* Supporting and developing the daily duty role within the team
* Working within an agreed set of priorities and standard operating procedures, to contribute to the fulfilment of a range of statutory obligations guided by legislative requirements.
* To develop and consolidate the current placement finding , commissioning and support processes , working closely with and being supported by Service Manager , Senior Social Worker and the wider team
* To maintain processes related to commissioning and procurement of external placement provision for children and young people in care.
* To liaise with colleagues in the procurement service to ensure compliance with City of York Council procurement objectives.
* To process placements requests from social work teams; to be part of the team who match the needs of the children and young people to the appropriate provision, considering the skills and experience of foster carers and ensuring a prompt response to the request.
* Providing general support and guidance to foster carers who call the duty desk
* To coordinate immediate and appropriate support to foster carers who call the duty desk with placement difficulties.
* To support foster carers, alongside their allocated social worker, to look after children in complex circumstances and to prevent placements from breaking down.
* To offer outreach support in emergency and challenging situations to foster carers and families.
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| **2.** | **CORE RESPONSIBILITIES, TASKS & DUTIES:** |
|  | To provide support and guidance to foster carers who call the duty desk , and with the support of the Senior Social Worker to coordinate appropriate support to carers to help them to look after children in complex circumstances and to prevent placements from breaking down .  |  |
|  | Alongside the senior social worker to support and co-ordinate planning for stay over and holiday requests for children and young people, ensuring social workers are kept up-to-date of all movements of children, including children being matched during a respite period.  |
|  | To gather information from a variety of internal and external sources to update and develop the production of key team resources and materials such as spreadsheets, data bases, quarterly reports and OFSTED submissions.  |
|  | Operating in a daily duty role , work closely with supervising social workers to ensure an efficient and effective service to carers ensuring any concerns around child protection are appropriately reported.A key focus of the role will be on placement finding and matching, Ensuring that all placements have appropriate waivers, Individual placement agreements etc.  |
|  | Contribute to effective MOSAIC statutory planning steps and review processes to ensure compliance , Produce clear and factually accurate records, analysing information and making appropriate recommendations for service improvement .  |
|  | As necessary and within prescribed guidance and/or training, make recommendations to the Service Manager or Senior Social Worker regarding placement availability and the commissioning of appropriate services to meet the needs of children and young people , ensuring the best use of resources. |
|  | Maintain appropriate, accurate and timely computerised records, in line with the City of York Council’s procedures and the Department’s Client Access to Files Policy and the National Policy on Electronic Recording. |
|  | Maintain a high level of customer care at all times, acting with integrity and respecting council policies and procedures in relation to, for example, staff conduct and confidentiality.  |
|  | Attend mandatory training and development opportunities recommended by the line manager, and participate in formal supervision, peer supervision and appraisals as required. |
|  | Promote the development and awareness of the service across a range of internal and external stakeholders.  |
|  | Promote anti-discriminatory practice in service delivery and ensure that the principle of equality is demonstrably practiced. |
| **3.** | **SUPERVISION / MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE*** Number of Direct Reports: 0
* Number of Indirect Reports: 0
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| **4.** | **CREATIVITY & INNOVATION*** A high level of creativity and innovation is required to plan and provide a child-centred service, exploring different ways of meeting complex, individual needs of the carers and children.
* Innovative approaches are frequently required to establish meaningful communication with foster carers and colleagues to elicit information, and achieve a degree of partnership where there is conflict between children, their carers, and the department.
* Routinely use motivational, persuasive and interpersonal skills to overcome challenges in establishing meaningful relationships with foster carers who are resistant to support and intervention. Especially in the face of potential placement disruption
* The ‘tools’ and materials used will be appropriate to the specific needs of the Placement Finding Commissioning and Support team and will accommodate diversity.
* A high level of skill, creativity and knowledge is necessary to engage carers. Detailed knowledge of child development is required to tailor this support in an effective and child centred way. The post holder must be creative in creating an appropriate support plan suitable for the individual situation and sensitive to the carer and child’s needs, and that the challenges and risk factors are accurately described. This may involve the use of new technologies
* Working within a pressured environment the Placement Officer requires high level of creativity and innovation to identify, plan and seek appropriate authorisations for requests for child-centred placements. The post holder needs to have the ability to explore different ways of meeting complex, individual needs within internal and external provision
* A high level of skill, creativity and knowledge is necessary to ensure that the placement request submitted to the PFCS team is representative of the child / young person’s needs and that challenges and risk factors are accurately described.
* The post holder needs skills to ensure that the placement request contains all the relevant information required in line with Fostering Regulations, and to engage with Foster Carers and external providers to identify a suitable match. Detailed knowledge of child development is required to tailor this in an effective and child centred way. The post holder must be creative in identifying a resource suitable for the individual child and be sensitive to their needs. This may involve the use of internal and external secure IT gateways
* The job holder will respond to safeguarding situations in line with CSC policies and procedures and the CYSCB guidelines.
* Innovative approaches are frequently required to establish and sustain meaningful relationships and communication with foster carers and internal and external colleagues and agencies. Creative approaches are needed in order to elicit key information, and to support partnership working, particularly around emergency placement requests.
* The post holder requires IT skill levels to support the creative development of varied and complex new processes and work methods within the PCFS team, to document and record contractual processes, i.e. Out of area placements, IPA, Waiver completions.
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| **5.** | **CONTACTS & RELATIONSHIPS****The job holder will be required to:-**In developing and sustaining effective relationships, the post holder must routinely use sensitivity and tact. Show a high level of professionalism to enable good working relationships to develop in the face of rudeness, unpredictability and/or abuse from service users; Interventions take place in relation to various concerns. The nature of which are likely to be emotive and contentious with high levels of conflict and stress. Defuse conflict, seeking advice where appropriate.**Internal** * The job holder will have regular contact with colleagues within the Children’s Services, Education and Skills Directorate and with other Council Directorates about issues relating to the care of children and their families including Adult Services, health, and education

**External*** The job holder will have regular contact with a range of external agencies, both statutory and voluntary
* Daily contact with customers who call the duty desk to respond to requests for general information, queries and complaints.
* Regular contact with external suppliers who have been commissioned to provide services for CYC
* Regular contact with the voluntary and independent sectors in response to queries for information or in the provision of services and placements.

**Daily contact:*** Foster carers who may have queries or be dealing with complex situations and relationships.
* Professionals involved with the fostering team , including carers, social workers, wider staff in CYC and a range of staff from other agencies
* Independent agencies and residential providers in order to placement find.

**Routinely:*** Procurement Advisors.
* Reviewing officers.
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|  **6.** | **DECISIONS** **Discretion:** **The Job Holder will be required to:-*** Plan and prioritise own workloads and case management on a daily basis to meet need and required timescales.
* Within their job role make appropriate decisions about matching placements for children and young people.
* With support from Senior Social worker, use their initiative within their job role; take the lead in notifying Service Manager and Senior Social worker of any aspect of their role which is likely to fall out of agreed timescales.

**Consequences:*** Failure to manage and prioritise workload may result in missed deadlines where achievement for timely and successful outcomes for children is compromised, sometimes with significant consequences for them.
* Failure to recognise and act appropriately when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm can result in a child suffering further or actual harm, the consequences of which can be significant.
* Failure to adequately record information pertaining to children or to maintain data could have a significant impact upon the achievement of successful outcomes for children and timely decision making when safeguarding them. This may also damage the reputation of the council.
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| **7.** | **RESOURCES – financial & equipment***(Not budget and not including desktop equipment.)* |
| **8.** | **WORK ENVIRONMENT – work demands, physical demands, working conditions & work context**Work demandsThe post is office based at West Offices The job holder:* May be subject to pressure and will manage conflicting demands, frequently changing deadlines and requirements.
* Must be resilient and able to remain calm when responding to emergency situations and to frequent changes in type or level of need presented by the demands of the service

Physical demands* Considerable time spent on a PC

Working conditions* Normal office environment.
* Work undertaken can be challenging and stressful.

Work context* Working within the Placement Finding Commissioning and Support team at West Offices, dealing with Foster carers who call in for support, taking enquiries from and making requests to internal and external colleagues and agencies.
* The post holder will have a key role in managing risk and conflict, particularly in relation to urgent placement requests and placement difficulties.
* The post holder will find themselves in situations where by children and/or family members may have disclosed information that will be challenging and emotionally evocative
* Working with vulnerable children and their families and Foster Carers in sometimes unpredictable and high risk situations . This may involve lone working in the community and/or home visits where there is the potential to encounter physical or verbal abuse and the need to respond to and deal with stressful situations. Direct contact with family members, some of whom have complex needs, mental health issues, drugs and/or alcohol dependency may be involved. Risk Assessments/Health and Safety Procedures will need to be undertaken where appropriate.
* Will be required to manage risk and/or conflict between families and Foster Carers , and have an awareness of the need to protect other service users e.g. when restraining orders are in place, encountering families in conflict or who have a history of violence or sex offences.
* There must be flexibility to work irregular hours to meet the needs of Foster Carers , children and their families, including evening and occasional weekends.
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| **9.** | **KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS****The post holder must have:*** A qualification equivalent to Level 3 (e.g. social care, child care, NVQ in working with parents and children) or a relevant degree (e.g psychology) or be prepared to work towards this .
* A demonstrable commitment to continuing professional development. .
* Experience, of working in a child-centred way, knowledge and skills working with adults and children who are vulnerable/in need of help or protection and an understanding of personal and social circumstances that lead them to receive support and protection services.
* Knowledge of the Children Act 1989 and related guidance.
* Knowledge of the range of agencies and services that provide support to children, young people and their parents across the tiers of assessed need.
* A demonstrable understanding of and a clear commitment to, the delivery of high quality, customer-focused services.
* Knowledge of child development and theory, including an understanding of the developmental stages and changing needs of children and young people, including those with disabilities, sufficient to apply this knowledge to practice.
* An understanding of equal opportunities issues and a strong commitment to delivering anti-discriminatory, non-oppressive services.
* Experience of and an ability to challenge, enthuse, motivate, enable and influence cross agency practice with others involved in the care and support of children, e.g. acute/ community health services, the police, schools and colleges, to achieve excellent outcomes for children and young people.
* An ability to work as part of a team, engendering a positive team spirit , supporting colleagues and working within a culture which embraces a collective responsibility for children who receive services from children’s social care.
* Excellent organisational skills and effective time management.
* Good IT skills to work on spreadsheets, record details of work on an electronic case record system and use an electronic diary.
* Ability to present information, both verbally and in writing, in a clear and concise manner
* An ability to prepare for and make effective use of formal supervision where, working autonomously, and with independent thought, understand the impact of interventions in achieving excellent outcomes for children.
* An ability to work with people in group and community settings, and the potential to develop the necessary skills to undertake more structured forms of group work.
* An understanding of the principles of confidentiality, developed when previously working with children and their families, whilst recognising when and with whom it may be right to share relevant information.

**Ability to converse and provide advice and guidance to members of the public, in spoken English, to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) - level B1** - Threshold or intermediate - Can exploit a wide range of simple language flexibly to express much of what he/she wants **or** Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free productionThis post requires the post holder to undertake an enhanced – child workforce (with barred list check) criminal record check via the Disclosure and Barring Service. |
| **10.** | **POSITION OF JOB IN ORGANISATION STRUCTURE**Practice Manager/ Service ManagePlacement Officer |