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|  | JOB DESCRIPTION | FormJD1 |
| JOB TITLE: Child and Family Support Practitioner | POST NUMBER:  |
| REPORTS TO:  | Practice Manager or Service Manager |
| DEPARTMENT: Children’s Social Care  | GRADE: 8 |
| JE REF: | 142 | PANEL DATE: | 26/10/2021 |
| **1.** | **MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB** The Child and Family Support Practitioner, plans, coordinates and delivers interventions for children, young people and their families who are assessed as needing a service after an early help assessment or a child in need (Section 17 Children Act 89) assessment.The Child and Family Support Practitioner will co-work with a social worker at a CIN level and case hold at an early help level of need. The Child and Family Support Practitioner will work closely with all teams to provide a targeted response to supporting children and families. The Child and Family Support Practitioner will have a local knowledge of available universal and community services and be able to advise others.  |
| **2.** | **CORE RESPONSIBILITIES, TASKS & DUTIES** |
|  | 1. The Child and Family Support Practitioner, will offer practical help and emotional support to families experiencing short or long-term difficulties and provide time specific support with regular review.
2. In line with Local Authority’s statutory duties, to act as co- worker for children at a CIN level. This may include children who are, deemed to be on the ‘edge of care’ or a statutory child protection process.
3. To undertake specific tasks and direct work with children, young people and their families as a secondary worker and or as part of an agreed plan. This may include case holding at an early help level.
4. To deliver or broker appropriate and timely support and interventions, as required.
5. To assess parenting capacity or independent living skills and ensure appropriate and timely support is in place.
6. To provide SMART interventions aimed at achieving specific outcomes for children and young people in need of support or protection. Interventions will be outcome focused, evidenced by clear planning and review.
7. To assist Social Workers in responding to other unplanned and crisis resolution work.
8. To provide practical and emotional support to children, young people and their families. Empowering them to address various challenges, reducing problems and risks and, in some cases, helping to make sure that children can remain with their family.
9. To contribute to risk assessments and other focused assessment work, including the Graded Care Profile and Capacity to Change Assessments to ensure that practice and interventions are evidenced based and responsive to individual need and circumstances. Following completion of training to complete Graded Care Profile Assessments.
10. Undertake (statutory) return home interviews with C&YP who have been reported missing and complete associated paperwork.
11. Provide accurate, factual and evidence based information for planning, including strategy meetings.
12. To write and contribute to court reports and statements, and to attend court when required to give evidence.
13. To facilitate, organise or co-ordinate group work such required, including parenting groups and community based projects.
14. To engage with children, young people and their families to enable them to have a voice in their own service provision and in the development of the Service.
15. To maintain appropriate and timely computerised records, plans and actions taken, in line with Client Access to Files Policy and the National Policy on Electronic Recording.
16. To attend all mandatory training and those recommended by the line manager, and to participate in formal supervision, peer supervision and appraisals.
17. Ensure all policies and procedures regarding exploitation and missing persons are followed.
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| **3.** | **SUPERVISION / MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE**Number of Direct Reports: 0Number of Indirect Reports: 0On occasion provide supervision to local authority volunteers where these have been put in place for children and young people. This would only be in circumstances when a volunteer is introduced as part of the team around the child. |
| **4.** | **CREATIVITY & INNOVATION*** A high level of creativity and innovation is required in providing a child-centred service, exploring different ways of meeting complex, individual needs.
* Innovative approaches are frequently required to establish meaningful communication with the service users e.g. using role plays, drawings and story books, to elicit information, and to achieve a degree of partnership where there is conflict between the children and their families, and the Department.
* The post holder will develop, adapt and coordinate a range of interventions that will motivate, engage and empower parents to make sustained changes and improvements.
* The Child and Family Support Practitioner will respond to safeguarding situations in line with CSC policies and CYSCP procedures and the CYSCP guidelines. Where situations fall outside of predictable or planned work, the post holder will be expected to be resourceful, using their own initiative to respond and/or seek the support needed.
* The post holder will need to be creative and flexible in order to work with families who are difficult to engage. Responses and approaches will need to be adapted, responsive to individual strengths and circumstances and tenacious in approach.
* The level of contact with some families will be high and post holders will require the skill and emotional intelligence required to develop trusting and yet challenging relationships with parents.
* Post holders will be expected to prioritise evidenced based approaches and maintain a focus on research and theory.
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| **5.** | **CONTACTS & RELATIONSHIPS****Internal** The Child and Family Support Practitioner will have regular contact with colleagues within the People Directorate. They will have contact with other Council Directorates about issues relating to the care of children and their families, for example, the Housing Department. **External** The Engagement with partners, including, though not an exhaustive list, contact with the police, the probation service, health professionals, the voluntary sector, and other Local Authorities, when coordinating a multi-agency response to the needs of children and young people. At times the post holder will be required to manage difference in professional perspective. This will require reflection and negotiation, at all times staying focused on the needs and outcomes for the child and family.Due to the nature of the role, the post holder is likely to experience challenge and at times, hostility from families. It is important to remain open and honest with families in order to maintain effective working relationships.The post holder must develop positive and trusting relationships with children, young people, parents and carers in order to promote and achieve positive outcomes for children and young people.The post holder will need to use motivational, persuasive and interpersonal skills in order to overcome barriers in establishing meaningful relationships with service users. |
|  **6.** | **DECISIONS – Discretion:*** Child and Family Support Practitioners plan and prioritise their workload and case management on a day to day basis to meet need and required timescales as directed by their manager.
* Decisions must be taken by the Child and Family Support Practitioner as to when to take action to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, and when they believe that there is cause to suspect that a child may have suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm. This is within the context of locally agreed thresholds and guidance, and in discussion with their line manager.
* Uses professional judgement in assessing and supporting needs and works independently and with the support and supervision of the Practice Manager.

**DECISIONS – Consequences*** Child and Family Support Practitioners will take responsibility for their casework, coordinating services, continuously planning, evaluating and reviewing the impact of their work. The post holder will work to achieving successful outcomes for children, and reduce the likelihood of needs and risks escalating and the need for any further statutory involvement. Once allocated the case, the Practitioner will be a co-worker or the lead worker on a day to day basis and responsible for maintaining timely and quality services.
* The professional and emotional support provided by Child and Family Support Practitioner is rated highly by service users, if done well, and enhances the reputation of the Council as a service provider. It facilitates communication at all levels, improving relationships within families, furnishes new life opportunities, enabling service users to have a better life and to contribute more fully to the community.
* 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 seek advice, make appropriate decisions pertaining to the welfare of children or have a holistic understanding of a child’s world because all reasonable steps are not taken may result in inappropriate or disproportionate management decisions when safeguarding children.
* 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.
* Inappropriate decision making and recommendations can have a detrimental impact upon the credibility of the Council more widely, and could lead to financial claims against the Council.
* 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.
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| **7.** | **RESOURCES – financial & equipment***(Not budget, and not including desktop equipment.)** Responsible for handling s.17 Children Act 1989 money (maximum £100 in cash)
* Mobile phone
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| **8.** | **WORK ENVIRONMENT – work demands, physical demands, working conditions & work context****Work demands*** The Child and Family Support Practitioner is subject to pressure and they will manage conflicting demands, changing deadlines and requirements.
* The Child and Family Support Practitioner must be resilient and be able to remain calm when responding to emergency situations and to frequent changes in type or level of need present by often chaotic family circumstances.
* The Child and Family Support Practitioner must be able to manage a caseload and prioritise work accordingly. They are expected to meet reporting deadlines and manage their case work to a high standard.
* The work by its nature is often unplanned as it responds to the life events and changing needs of young people and the post holder should expect a degree of flexibility within their working week to support this.

Physical demands* The post requires normal physical effort but there will be times in the course of some duties where a greater degree of effort is required, for example, light lifting of equipment and materials when delivering to sites and potentially long periods of standing when delivering group work.
* Must be able to travel between various working locations and service user’s homes on a daily basis.
* The post holder may be required to physically interact with a child to provide practical support to a family, promoting learning and improvements within the family. For example; hold or look after a baby

Working conditions* Normal office environment with some home working in line with hybrid working practice. When not in the office the job holder will be working with families in their homes or local community venues and attending meetings at the premises of partner agencies.
* The council Hot Desk Policy requires all personnel store work related equipment and stationary, as required under data protection legislation.
* Frequent home visits in often-unpleasant domestic circumstances.
* All work undertaken whether it be within a work setting, the community or service user’s home, can be unpredictable, challenging and stressful.

Work context* This post involves working with vulnerable children, young people and their families/carers, and sometimes unpredictable high risk. This may involve lone working 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. The work involves direct contact with all family members known to children, some of whom may have, though not an exhaustive list, complex needs, mental health issues, and issues with a dependency on drugs and/or alcohol. Risk Assessments/Health and Safety Procedures will need to be undertaken where appropriate for both the post holder and their staff.
* The Child and Family Support Practitioner will gather information on a daily basis that may be of a distressing nature for example, relating to abuse of vulnerable children and serious health issues faced by some children.
* There will be requirements to be available to work evenings, bank holidays and weekends as required and agreed.
* Staff will be expected to adhere to lone working and service policies to manage personal safety and well-being.
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| **9.** | **KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS*** Hold a relevant level 3 (QCF framework) qualification e.g. working with children and families.
* The Child and Family Support Practitioner must be able to demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional development.
* Extensive experience, of working in a child-centred way, directly with children and families, who are vulnerable/in need of help or protection, preferably within a statutory service.
* Demonstrable, relevant knowledge and skills of working directly with adults, children, young people and families who are vulnerable/in need of help or protection where excellent, timely outcomes are achieved.
* Proven experience of the assessment, planning and delivery of effective interventions, in partnership with children, their families and agencies and achieving good timely outcomes for children.
* Knowledge of the range of agencies and services that provide support to children, young people and their parents across the tiers of assessed need.
* Knowledge of the Children Act 1989 and associated guidance.
* A demonstrable understanding of, and a clear commitment to, the delivery of high quality, customer-focused services.
* An understanding of the personal and social circumstances that lead families to seek, or otherwise become recipients of, support services including an understanding of alcohol, drug and substance abuse and its impact on mental health.
* 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 of children, e.g. acute/ community health services, the police, schools and colleges, to achieve excellent outcomes for children and young people.
* Experience of and an ability to engage, influence, challenge, enthuse, motivate, enable and communicate effectively and constructively with children and their parents/carers, often in hostile situations, using a solution focussed approach, enabling them to find solution to problem areas which effect change in their lives.
* An ability to work as part of a team, engendering a positive team spirit where you support colleagues and work within a culture which embraces a collective others responsibility for children known to the Department.
* Excellent organisational skills and demonstrable effective time management.
* Good IT skills sufficient to 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
* 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 C1** - Effective operational proficiency or advanced - Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.This 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** |