



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

**CHILDREN SCHOOLS & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Post Title:** Consultant Case Practitioner

**Grade:** ME14

**Division/Section:** Children's Social Care & Youth Justice  
Adolescent & Safeguarding Service

**Location:** Civic Centre, Morden

**Responsible to:** Team Manager

**Responsible for:** Team Support; sessional staff, alternatively qualified practitioners

**Post number:**

**Date:** July 2021

## **1. MAIN PURPOSE**

To contribute to the Youth Justice Service delivering an effective multi-agency response to the prevention and reduction of youth crime in Merton as well as the safeguarding of children and young people in the Borough.

To undertake core YJS tasks through direct work with children and young people subject to court orders / sentenced to a Detention Training Order, engage with their families and consider the needs of victims of youth crime.

## **2. MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. To adhere to the policies and procedures of the Merton YJS, Youth Justice Board and the National standards for the delivery of youth justice services to help meet outcomes of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 Criminal Justice & Immigration Act 2008 / Children Act 2004 including promoting the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people. This will include meeting deadlines for Court Reports, Asset completion, Risk & Vulnerability assessments, regular reviews and closure of case.
2. To liaise and negotiate effectively with colleagues from all professional backgrounds within and outside the YJS to ensure that joint planning arrangements for the safeguarding and protection of young people being supervised by the YJS are arranged and actions in place to address offending and risk behaviour.
3. To engage and intervene directly with young people, their parents / carers and crime victims in order to deliver the full range of YJS services that address diverse needs. This will include home visits and involve work with partner agencies and attendance / participation at Social Care Children in Need Meetings, Strategy meetings & Care Plan pathways.
4. To ensure that young people subject to court orders are supervised in accordance with the National Standards for Youth Justice.
5. To undertake comprehensive assessments and regular reviews on young people having regard to diversity, safeguarding and risk issues relating to harm, vulnerability and offending and victim-related issues within the timescales proscribed by the Youth Justice Board's National Standards.
6. To undertake comprehensive bail assessments and to prepare bail support packages for the court.
7. To prepare effective quality reports for the Youth and Crown Court to ensure custody is reduced as far as possible but address the risk and diverse needs of YP. This will include pre and post sentence reports, specific sentence and progress reports and others as required.
8. To act as Court Duty Officer and Office Duty Officer as required on a rotational basis. This will include the Saturday & Bank Holiday Court Duty Rota.
9. To actively contribute to the development of the YJS in particular leading on any specific project work or specialism to promote team outcomes, improve practice and its effectiveness.

10. Be responsible for defensible decision making, exercising accountability and judgement, operate independently and autonomously in casework, liaising with the line manager in terms of supervision and decision making.
11. Operate at the Advanced Practice level of the Youth Justice Skills Matrix to promote and reinforce effective practice and develop others. Effectively use various intervention approaches including 1:1 work and share successful outcomes
12. Where appropriate and agreed by the Team Manager this role could supervise students and alternatively qualified staff at or below (ME11/12).
13. Provide advice, mentoring and assistance in casework matters for less experienced members of the team, such as the Experienced Case Practitioners and Case Practitioners. Share learning of direct work with YP and families
14. Where appropriate and agreed by the Team or Service Manager, undertake quality assurance and auditing of case practitioner work, including gate keeping of reports.
15. Lead specific responsibilities and work streams within the team and in the Division
16. Lead and participate in the professional learning and development of the team. Delivering workshops; training and disseminating information as identified. Pro-actively participate within team dynamics and activities including the delivery of group work
17. Hold lead responsibility for updating specialist knowledge in some particular areas, developing practice and creating and updating guidance, tools and data systems.
18. Maintain the highest standards in all aspects of casework practice, promoting the drive towards continuous improvement. To maintain excellent analytical and evaluative skills.
19. Demonstrate the full range of evidence-based, social work and probation intervention tools in complex casework with children, young people and their families.
20. Represent the Division in multi-agency fora, evidencing competencies in liaison, communication and presentation skills.
21. Access any relevant specialist training at an 'advanced practitioner' level

22. Assist the Team/Service Managers in the implementation of strategies, policies, processes and practices that support a whole-system approach to service delivery.
23. Be actively involved in partnership working to effect change in YP and families contributing to strategic developments in partnership with local agencies.
24. Contribute to Departmental and local training on practice issues in light of best evidence and research findings and in line with the Divisional learning and development strategy.
25. Be responsible for effective the effective intervention and safety planning for a case load of high risk (harm) / high vulnerability young people. Use a wide range of tools to develop best possible risk practice and implement high level communication skills to identify and assess complex issues and behaviour to develop appropriate interventions.
26. Work with highly complex and vulnerable young people / families (carers) where Social Care engagement (e.g. children in care / care experienced young people / children in need) and joint working (planning & intervention) are required.
27. Provide the key link for MAPPA cases.
28. To help provide positive activities for young people taking into consideration the criteria for the eligibility of projects including best value and cost.
29. To maintain timely and accurate records and case manage a workload, contributing also to the delivery of group work programmes and other interventions.
30. To be involved in Quality Assurance Audits within the Team and be responsible for improving both individual practice and quality and practice within the team. This will help preparation for any announced or unannounced Inspection (e.g. OfSted / HMIP). This may well involve participation in the 'gate keeping' of a colleague's work within the team and / or participation in audits.
31. To cooperate in providing statistical and other information to assess the effectiveness of services and to help the Service achieve strategic outcomes.
32. To support Team Support Worker to provide accurate performance management data on a quarterly basis and when requested by the Team Manager and to take personal responsibility for monitoring their own performance in preparation for supervision and appraisals.

33. To develop, monitor and evaluate programme and service delivery that incorporates current research and best practice.
34. To be supervised in line with YJS practice, using meetings to reflect upon casework, accountability issues and the priority of work as well as identify professional development and training.
35. To prepare for and contribute to the annual appraisal.
36. To use computers and other items of IT in the normal performance of the duties of the post and adhere to any LBM financial regulations in the course of their duties.
37. To attend all team meetings, case manager / Practitioner meetings and other meetings relevant to the role e.g. Risk Management Panel, Custody & Compliance Panels and Offender Management Panel.
38. Represent the YJS, as required by the line manager at Internal, multiagency and public meetings

### **Other Factors**

1. To be aware of and understand Merton Council's equalities and diversity policy and ensure that at all times the duties of the post are carried out in accordance with the policy.
2. To ensure that the corporate, departmental and YJS health and safety policies are implemented at all times and to raise any concerns regarding their operation, or any other health and safety matter with the line manager.
3. To ensure that within the scope of the job purpose, the Council's aims in relation to customer service are achieved and adherence to confidentiality policies and the sharing of information.
4. To undertake such other duties as may be required, provided they fall within the range and scope of the duties of the post as set out in the preceding paragraphs and are commensurate with the grade of the post.
5. **For all Social Work Staff:** All Social Work Staff are required to adhere to the various professional standards, including the Professional Capability Framework and the Social Work England Standards.

**The duties and responsibilities outlined in this job are indicative of the role; however, they are not exhaustive and may be subject to change. In addition, you will be required to undertake other reasonable duties as directed by your manager.**



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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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**Date:** July 2021

**1. Qualifications & Knowledge**

a) Youth Justice Board - Professional Certificate Effective Practice (PCEP) or Youth & Community Work Qualification (JNC) or Post Graduate diploma in related field or equivalent\*.

\*Evidence of substantial experience and training in relevant fields of youth offending, which also demonstrates the required knowledge and skills, will be considered in lieu of the above qualifications.

Or

b) Either differently qualified such as Diploma in Probation Studies or Social Work Qualification (e.g. CQSW / Diploma SW)

c) Social Workers will be required to be and maintain registration with Social Work England.

- a) Evidence of continuing post qualification professional development in areas relevant to Youth Justice
- b) To demonstrate an advanced understanding of the risk and protective factors relating to offending and its reduction.
- c) Knowledge and operational understanding of theoretical approaches and different methods to work with young people and their families
- d) To demonstrate advanced understanding of the principles of effective practice and operational knowledge which demonstrates how effective practice is implemented and evaluated.
- e) Knowledge of equality and diversity practice and the demonstrable evidence of application to assessment and intervention work with young people and their families. Demonstrate an advanced understanding of disproportionality, discrimination and its impact
- f) Advanced knowledge of childcare and criminal justice legislation including Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Criminal Justice & Immigration Act 2008, LASPO Act 2012 and Children Acts 1989 and 2004.
- g) In depth understanding of the underlying causes of vulnerability and effective safeguarding approaches for children and young people from diverse backgrounds
- h) Demonstrable understanding of self and own resources in working with young people within the Criminal Justice System and the work statutory and voluntary agencies can provide to help minimise future offending behaviour and safeguard children and young people.
- i) Expert knowledge in a specialist Youth Justice / Adolescent area that will support development of practice in the team.
- j) In-depth knowledge of the YJS strategies, policies, processes and practices and the skills to be involved in the ongoing development of these.
- k) Knowledge and operational understanding of a wide range of intervention skills, clear understanding of role, the parameters and impact of responsibility and authority on young people, families and others.
- l) Demonstrate a knowledge of multiple intervention approaches including 1:1 work and demonstrable skill in achieving successful outcomes

- m) Demonstrate an in-depth and expert knowledge and understanding of child and adolescent development
- n) Demonstrates expert knowledge and understanding of safeguarding / vulnerability issues, the impact on adolescent development and behaviour and effective evidence-based intervention strategies
- o) Knowledge of quality assurance and audit and how to use this to underpin learning, performance and improvement
- p) Demonstrate an area of professional expertise and identify how this contributes to the positive development of children and young people

## **2. Skills & Experience**

- a) Where appropriate the ability to supervise students, newly appointed or newly qualified social workers and alternatively qualified staff
- b) Be able to take on additional responsibilities within the team.
- c) The ability to teach, train and develop staff knowledge and skills.
- d) Excellent analytical and evaluative skills.
- e) Skills and experience in delivering a full range of evidence-based, social work and probation intervention tools in complex casework with children, young people and their families.
- f) Competent in liaison, communication and presentation skills, to a level of being able to represent the Division in multi-agency fora.
- g) Demonstrated skills and experience as an 'advanced practitioner'
- h) The ability to contribute to strategic developments in partnership with local agencies.
- i) Experience and skills to be able to proactively engage and consult with colleagues in other departments regarding the needs of clients.
- j) Meet the appropriate knowledge and skills criteria on the Social Workers PCF and the Youth Justice Skills Matrix.
- k) An ability to make comprehensive assessments on vulnerable young people including those with diverse needs within the Criminal Justice System and implement subsequent Intervention plans (including vulnerability / risk plans) based upon SMART objectives.
- l) Effective written / verbal communication / presentational skills and basic I.T. & Financial skills



- m) Personal organisation, commitment, creativity and flexibility and the ability to manage a caseload of young people subject to Court Orders.
- n) Ability to display initiative but also to work under direction according to guidance policy and standards.
- o) Able to stay up to date with latest research findings and practice developments, and to incorporate these findings and developments into practice.
- p) Proven ability to work effectively within a team
- q) Able to provide a service that is culturally sensitive and empowering for all service users
- r) Able to prioritise and organise own workload, to meet deadlines and complete tasks.
- s) In depth experience in working with young people and families in the field of offending, education, health or other field related to social deprivation.
- t) Experience and ability to work positively with staff from other agencies and an understanding of and ability to work with different cultures, expectations and priorities.
- u) Experience or willingness to manage sessional support staff and students and delegate tasks appropriately whilst providing support and retaining suitable level of responsibility.
- v) In-depth experience of quality report writing for multiple audiences and corporate / statutory purposes
- w) In-depth experience of undertaking complex, high risk and high profile assessments and developing plans which effectively mitigate risk and address complex needs

### **3. Other Factors**

- a. An openness to improve professional practice, improve quality and a willingness to undertake training.
- b. A willingness to work unsocial hours – including evening work occasional Saturday and Bank Holiday duties
- c. A current valid UK driving licence and use of a car for work purposes.