



LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CHILDREN, SCHOOLS & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT
JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Service Manager

Grade: MGB

DEPARTMENT: Children's Social Care & Youth Justice

Section: All Service Areas

Responsible to: Head of Service

Responsible for: Team Managers
and Children and Young Peoples Participation both on strategic and operational level

Post number:

Date: July 2021

Overall Purpose of the Job

Specific operational and staff responsibilities vary across different service areas and are described in the Appendix.

The role of Service Manager is pivotal in ensuring that families experience skilled, robust and creative relationship-based social work intervention which is consistent with the Council's practice model and effects sustained change.

The Service Manager will lead relationship-based practice which is thoughtful, responsive and creative, all within a fast-paced environment. They will ensure every contact to be a potential for intervention and change and will work to support children and families remaining in their families wherever it's safe enough to do so, with creative and bespoke plans to support them.

The Service Manager will supervise Team Managers and work collaboratively across the system with other managers, guided by our relationship-based practice framework.

The Service Manager is responsible for leading and maintaining a consistent relationship-based social work response and framework to ensure the needs of our community, respect family life and work tirelessly to secure the best outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The post holder will be highly organised, confident in managing risk and uncertainty, have good attention to detail, and be a confident and encouraging leader.

There is lots of scope to shape the role, and to be involved in strategic planning of future service delivery.

The Service Manager provides leadership for a designated service portfolio and will work to ensure the service is effective and of the highest quality. The Service Manager will manage all aspects of the service's work, and hold responsibility for the quality of this work, ensuring performance indicators are met and taking budgetary responsibility.

All Service Managers are expected to demonstrate and role model responses and decisions in the best interests of children, young people and families by using 'role generosity' when considering service / team / practitioner remits.

All Service Managers are expected to be available some evenings and weekends to participate in the out of hours senior manager duty rota as required for which no additional payment will be made.

To provide senior manager operational cover for Service Manager colleagues and deputise for the Head of Service as necessary and appropriate.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. To be responsible for the quality of work and performance with all children, young people and their families within a designated service portfolio.
2. To be responsible for the direct line management of up to 7 direct reports and maintaining oversight of quality and performance across their teams and practitioners.
3. To ensure consistent and high quality implementation of the social work practice model
4. To create the conditions within the service for group supervision; reflective supervision; appreciative inquiry; learning from practice and celebration of achievements

5. To be responsible for ensuring smooth transitions of children and young people to other service areas where necessary.
6. To contribute to, identify and drive forward innovative projects.
7. To take lead responsibility for formulating business plans capable of commanding support, and commitment of resources, from chief officers and members of relevant local agencies. The plan will need to set out high quality services for protecting children at risk of significant harm and intervening to meet the needs of children and young people in a timely manner.
8. To be responsible for undertaking regular service, team and casework reviews of practice to ensure that social work intervention is purposeful, evidence-based and of a high quality.
9. To develop service and action plans to develop and strengthen areas of practice identified for improvement
10. To be responsible for the efficient and effective management of the resources available to the service, from the Council and other sources.
11. To liaise with the relevant partner agencies, and to communicate regularly
12. To advise the Head of Service, Assistant Director Children's Social Care & Youth Justice and the Director of Children's Services on work with families and to draft strategic documents in relation to the work of the service and the planning of services to protect children in London Borough of Merton.
13. To lead and motivate a service area in order for them to achieve the identified service objectives.
14. To establish arrangements and systems for monitoring services to ensure they help protect children and intervention is purposeful and timely.
15. To ensure appropriate financial control of budgets and to contribute timely and accurate data to the Head of Service, Finance officers and the Assistant Director of Children's Social Care & Youth Justice.
16. To establish specifications, contracts and agreements with internal and external service providers, which develop and maintain the delivery of cost effective, high quality services to help protect children.
17. To keep informed of developments including legislation, new policies and best practice elsewhere in relation to child protection and relationship-based social work practice and tools.
18. To develop standards of policy, procedure and practice. To monitor the achievement of these standards and to report as required.

19. Contributing to multi-agency partnership work through Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership; multi-agency audits; individual management reports; task and finish groups; joint protocol development.
 20. To ensure managers comply with the requirements of the personnel policy, procedures and standards of practice of the Council, ensuring that supervision, appraisal, and training and development of team members occurs.
 21. Ensure children and young people's participation both strategically and operationally is integrated into everything that they and their services do.
 22. Contribute to, and include Young People in the effective recruitment selection.
- All Social Work staff are required to adhere to the appropriate professional standards, including those framed by the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework and the Social Work England professional standards for social workers

The duties and responsibilities outlined in this job description 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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Education & Qualifications

- a. Degree in Social Work / Certified Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) / Certificate in Social Service (CSS) / Diploma in Social Work (DiSWSP) / Home Office letter of recognition
- b. Social Work England registration
- c. Hold or willing to complete Post Qualifying award in social work or Children, Young people, Families and Carers (specialist post qualifying award in social work) within 18 months of appointment
- d. Hold or willing complete Practice Educator or Assessor accreditation within 18 months of appointment
- e. Management qualification or evidence of leadership development training
- f. Evidence of Post Qualification learning and development
- g. This post requires satisfactory clearance of an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service disclosure

Experience & Knowledge

- a. Experience of managing statutory social work or youth justice teams / services to children, young people and families

- b. Experience of operating collaboratively within a management team
- c. Experience of financial and budget management
- d. Experience of working with and alongside multi-disciplinary teams
- e. Experience of strategic planning of services
- f. In-depth and advanced knowledge of legislation, guidance and research as it relates to statutory and preventative youth justice and children's social care functions.
- g. In-depth knowledge of the Professional Capabilities Framework and the connection with the Knowledge and Skills Statements.
- h. In depth knowledge about supporting and developing social work students and social workers. Experience of providing the Practice Educator or Assessor role to social work students and newly qualified social workers.
- i. In-depth knowledge and experience of supporting staff development and effectively managing performance and attendance.
- j. In-depth technical and operational knowledge and experience of relationship-based social work practice principles and tools including system social work, signs of safety and solution focused approaches.
- k. In-depth technical and operational knowledge and experience of effective approaches to the identification and mitigation of risk and uncertainty.
- l. In-depth technical and operational knowledge and experience of providing effective reflective group and individual supervision to social workers and managers delivering statutory services using relationship-based social practice principles and system social work approaches
- m. Experience and knowledge of electronic records and data management systems, their effective operation for both effective social work/youth justice practice and performance reporting

Ability & Skills

- a. Excellent written and verbal communication skills including ability to use Word and Excel to produce high quality and attractive reports, carry out correspondence and keep accurate records.
- b. Analytical and strategic skills to understand the requirements of legislation and guidance and translate these into a new service suited to local circumstances
- c. Ability to set objectives and targets and monitor their achievement

- d. Ability to manage services and multi-disciplinary teams
- e. Ability to manage and implement change at a service, team, practice and individual level
- f. Ability to establish, monitor and control operational budgets
- g. Ability to develop and motivate individuals, teams and services to deliver high quality interventions and outstanding outcomes
- h. Ability to establish systems of quality assurance and governance to provide accurate and reliable reassurance to senior and political leaders
- i. Ability to communicate articulately and confidently with a range of people – both in writing and orally
- j. Possession of high levels of analytical, literacy and numeracy skills
- k. Ability to develop and utilise an appropriate data and information systems
- l. Flexibility to work outside normal office hours to participate in the senior management out of hours duty rota alongside the Head of Service and attend occasional evening meetings if required
- m. Commitment to implement the Council's equal opportunities policy
- n. Ability to apply relationship-based social work and systemic ideas and principles to the practice and supervision of individuals, groups and services
- o. Ability to negotiate and commission services from outside agencies

Equal Opportunities

- a. Knowledge, understanding and commitment to implementing the social GRAACCES
- b. Demonstrable commitment to challenging and reflecting on own unconscious and conscious bias and role modelling cultural competence
- c. Demonstrable commitment to challenging structural; societal and institutional discrimination
- d. Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs

Values & Behaviours

- a. Show initiative, drive and determination to get the job done; and continuously improve what you do.

- b. Determine the right course of action through listening to the needs of our children, families, residents and staff
- c. Be accountable for your actions and the decisions you make
- d. Help others to be productive, independent and make informed decisions
- e. Be ambitious in creating new solutions which bring about substantial benefit for children, young people and their families
- f. Challenge yourself to be the best you can be
- g. Take pride in providing public services to our children, families and residents
- h. Work as a team to support one another to be the best we can be for our children, families and residents
- i. Provide local leadership and work with partners collaboratively to jointly develop and deliver services
- j. Listen to one another and respect one another's point of view
- k. Challenge others respectfully and constructively, working together to resolve issues
- l. Treat everyone with courtesy, fairness and transparency
- m. Seek the best deal when looking for ways to improve value for money and reduce cost.
- n. Look for new ways to generate growth, income and maximise commercial potential
- o. Take managed and considered risks to enable us to achieve the best outcomes.

Leadership Behaviours

- a. Role model the Merton's Best Council priorities and values of Children's Social Care & Youth Justice
- b. Demonstrate inclusive leadership
- c. Take the lead in driving initiatives
- d. Be proactive in being forward and outward looking, by regularly investing in own and others development.
- e. Drive forward performance by empowering staff to take the lead.

- f. Set high standards, encouraging improvement and innovation.
- g. Support the service to achieve by adopting a coaching style of management
- h. Have regular employee led conversations to develop our people – creating a safe environment for learning, taking time to understand their strengths and motivations, stretching them and coaching them to achieve.
- i. Manage budgets responsibly – planning, monitoring and adapting budgets to respond to changing priorities.
- j. Deliver Service Plans and appraisals
- k. Work within the democratic framework - understand the democratic process and its role in public organisations, anticipating Member needs and responding to their enquiries and feedback.

Special Requirements/other considerations

1. Able to work outside standard office hours and out of hours on a duty rota alongside the Head of Service colleagues, to respond to the individual needs of the service, teams, children, families and academic study requirements
2. Able to travel inside and out of the borough for the purposes of the role
3. Able to undertake the role in a variety of services and settings as the needs of the service requires.

Service Context and Specific Additional Duties:

The context specific duties and responsibilities outlined in this section are indicative; 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 Head of Service.

Children in Care Service

Statutory social work with children and young people who are looked after by London Borough of Merton and children in care proceedings. Responsibility for:

- Corporate parenting functions relating to children in care, their education and health
- Children in care strategy and delivery of action plan
- Active participation of, and co-production with, children and young people in their own and the wider service planning
- Lead for care proceedings and interface with CAFCASS and Family Justice Board members

- Care and Permanency Planning for children
- Discharge of the Council Adoption Agency functions
- Quality of social work relationships with children in care, direct work and life story work
- Stability of children's care arrangements
- Repair and maintenance of children's relationships with their family network and people significant to them
- Reunification of children in care to their family network

Care Experienced Young Adults Service

Statutory leaving care work with care experienced young adults who have or who are preparing to leave the care of London Borough of Merton. Responsibility for:

- Corporate parenting functions relating to care experienced young adults, their Pathway Plans, education, employment, training, health and suitable accommodation
- Care experienced young adults strategy, action plan and local offer arrangements
- Active participation of, and co-production with, care experienced young adults in their own and the wider service planning
- Preparation of young people in care for adulthood through Pathway Planning and established support networks – including Strategic Lead for Transition planning for young people with SEND
- Quality of personal advisor relationships with and support to care experienced young adults
- Repair and maintenance of care experienced young adults relationships with their family and support network
- Provision of high quality practical support and interventions for care experienced young adults
- Lead for unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people
- Experience of strategic and operational participation of children and young people.

Fostering and Resources Service

Registered Fostering agency and commissioning of placements and specialist resources for children in care and care experienced young adults. Responsibility for:

- Corporate parenting functions relating to fostering agency functions, fostering regulations and national minimum standards
- Fostering recruitment and retention strategy
- Assessment and support of Special Guardians
- Support Allowances and financial means/annual assessments
- Statutory Sufficiency strategy and delivery of action plan
- Identification and commissioning of resources which meet the identified needs of children and young people and comply with the Council's procurement and contract governance requirements

- Oversight, scrutiny and quality assurance of any unregulated provision
- Lead for pan-London, regional and local commissioning partnership arrangements which secure secure outcome and cost benefits for young people and the Council
- Monitoring, management and reporting of the placements budget
- Managing the finance functions for Children's Social Care & Youth Justice

Youth Justice Service

This service provides statutory youth offending functions and interventions. Responsibility for:

- Youth crime, crime prevention and re-offending prevention functions
- Management and intervention with young people subject to Court orders for offending behaviour
- Preparation for HMIP inspections
- Preparation of reports, strategies and plans regarding youth crime and youth crime prevention in the Borough and the effectiveness of the Youth Justice Service
- CSC&YJ Lead for community safety, crime and violence reduction partnership forums, strategies and action plans
- Preparation and administration of the Youth Crime Prevention Executive Board
- Arrangements for reducing and responding to youth crime across the local partnership

Children and Families Hub

This service provides the front door for the Council's Targeted Early Help and statutory social work support and interventions and advice and guidance to the local children's partnership about safeguarding and early help interventions. The multi-agency safeguarding hub is located within this service. Responsibility for:

- Effective systems and arrangements for the timely triage of requests for support, provision of advice and sign-posting
- Application of Merton's Effective Support threshold, Early Help Strategy and London Child protection Procedures
- Lead for developing and maintaining positive and productive operational relationships with local partners to ensure children are appropriately safeguarded
- Developing partnership understanding of safeguarding, early help interventions and appropriate requests for support
- Ensuring and maintaining effective systems and pathways for identifying the appropriate level of support for children and families
- Oversight and management of MASH partners and partnership arrangements
- Chair of Children & Families Hub Strategic Board
- Lead for multi-agency appreciative enquiries and reviews of threshold decisions
- Lead for pan-London MASH managers group
- Lead for thematic partnership forums as agreed with Head of Service

Assessment & Intervention Service

This service undertakes statutory social work assessments under s17 and child protection investigations under s47 Children Act 1989. The service provides social work change intervention under s17 child in need plans for up to 16 weeks. Responsibility for:

- Statutory and pre-birth assessments
- Initial s47 child protection investigations and Initial Child Protection Conference decisions
- Immediate safeguarding and family breakdown responses for children not known / open to the service
- Short-term social work interventions which secure sustained change and reduce involvement of statutory services and repeat referrals
- Lead for step-up and step-down arrangements for targeted and community early help services
- Duty and out of hours social work arrangements
- Lead for thematic partnership forums as agreed with Head of Service

Specialist Intervention Services

This Service comprises the Family Network and Edge of Care and the Contextual Safeguarding teams. Responsibility for:

- Intensive edge of care and crisis interventions alongside frontline social work teams to repair family relationships and prevent family breakdown
- Family Network service across the Division
- Operational lead for edge of care commissioned interventions
- Intensive interventions to reduce contextual safeguarding risks alongside frontline social work teams
- Lead for Children Missing from Home or Care and all other Contextual Harms
- Lead for MOPAC and other adolescent risk reduction organisations and grants
- Maintenance, development and review of strategies, assessment and intervention tools and practitioner guidance relating to Children who go missing and children at risk of contextual harms
- Contextual Safeguarding strategy, action plan delivery and practice development across Children's Social Care & Youth Justice and the local partnership network, including any grant funded/pilots.
- Lead for securing grants and managing innovation projects and pilots
- Lead for thematic partnership forums as agreed with Head of Service

Social Work Academy and Children with Disabilities Service

This Service has a mixed portfolio of the Children with Disabilities Service and the Social Work Academy. The Social Work Academy hosts

student, apprentice and newly qualified social workers and supports them to develop practice skills with work from across the Division. The Academy provide expert support to colleagues across the Division who also host students and new social workers. The Principal Social Worker matrix manages the recruitment and support for students, apprentices and ASYEs. Responsibility for:

- Statutory assessment and interventions under s17, s47 Children Act 1989, Care Act for children with complex and enduring disabilities and their parents and carers
- SEND Champion and Children's Social Care SEND Lead for SEND strategy and action plan
- CSC Lead for SEND partnership forums and special school relationships
- Ensuring arrangements for expert SEND advice to any team across the Division
- Securing and reviewing tripartite funding for children and young people with Education and CHC needs.
- Quality of social work practice and senior operational decision making for children receiving social work intervention from the Academy Teams
- Ensuring clear processes and arrangements for the transfer of work and / or children in and out of the Social Work Academy
- Matrix management of the Social Work Academy functions with the Principal Social Worker
- Lead for thematic partnership forums as agreed with Head of Service

Child and Family Support and Safeguarding Service

This service provides intensive and longer-term social work intervention to effect change for children and families with child in need and child protection plans. The service makes decisions about initiating Public Law Outline and care proceedings for children where safety is not sufficiently increased through intensive social work interventions. Care proceedings transfer to the Children in Care Service by the first Hearing. Responsibility for:

- Intensive social work interventions through programmes of direct work with children and families with children in need and with a child protection plan
- Oversight, tracking and progression of children where the Public Law Outline process has been commenced
- Lead for pre-birth assessments and intensive social work intervention for families with previous children removed
- Ensuring quality social work interventions and safety planning which supports children to remain safely in the care of their family network
- Lead for domestic abuse and MARAC
- Lead for thematic partnership forums as agreed with Head of Service

Reviewing & Insights Service

This service provides the quality assurance functions; statutory and independent chairing and reviewing of children's care, child protection and complex child in need plans. The service provides safeguarding advice to the local partnership network; fulfils the Council's Local Authority Designated Officer functions and provides the Permanency Lead and advice to the Fostering Panel. Responsibility for:

- Provision of statutory independent reviewing functions for children in care, children with child protection plans and LADO functions
- Provision of reviewing function for complex child in need and contextual safeguarding
- Quality Assurance framework, auditing cycle, learning from complaints and SARs support
- Mosaic development
- Fostering Panel functions, Panel advice and quality assurance
- Permanency Lead and Regional Adoption Agency Link
- Lead for quality assurance reporting and partnership learning reviews
- CSC Lead for children and families participation and feedback

Principal Social Worker Service

This service comprises of the learning, practice development and improvement functions. The Principal Social Worker matrix manages the Social Work Academy. Responsibility for:

- Co-ordination and commissioning (internal and external) of the training offer for Children's Social Care
- Lead for the Division's Recruitment and Retention strategy
- Lead for the recruitment and placement of apprentices, social work students and newly qualified social workers
- Lead for the Division's Self-Assessment and Improvement Plan
- Co-ordination and support of social work students and newly qualified social workers in their ASYE
- Lead for Practice weeks
- Lead for the Division's Staff surveys and regular Communications bulletin
- Lead for external teaching and social work development partnerships and networks