**Working in a Child Protection Team**

Information for Potential Applicants



**Introduction by Judith Rayne,**

**Operations Manager, Child Protection**

It’s great that you are thinking about joining one of our Child Protection Teams.

I’m very proud of the committed and talented people who work in these teams. Their expertise helps keep children safe and enables them to thrive. The work is challenging, but also immensely rewarding.

We have designed this document so that you understand more about the work of the team and are able to make a decision about whether working in one the teams is right for you.

If you would like to have an informal discussion about opportunities available in the teams please don’t hesitate to contact me by telephone on 03000 266318, or by e-mail at Judith.Rayne@durham.gov.uk

**What do the child protection teams do?**

The teams do most of their work with children, young people and their families under the Public Law Outline (PLO), either before or during care proceedings.

Social workers either expand on an existing single assessment or undertake a comprehensive family assessment, and facilitate the change required. To do this they undertake direct work with children and young people, ensuring that their voice is heard. They also work closely with parents, members of the extended family, and professionals from a wide range of agencies. The final assessment is evidence based and reflects the voice of the child.

If it is not possible for a child or young person to remain with the birth family, or within the extended family a plan for permanency, which could include adoption outside of family will be progressed. Social workers write the final statement and care plan and give evidence in court.

**Where are the child protection teams?**

We have three child protection teams based in the North (Stanley), South (Spennymoor), and East (Peterlee).

**How will you be supported?**

We understand that social work in our child protection teams is complex. You will be supported by:

* A superb **team** **manager** who will provide **regular supervision** and the leadership needed for excellent social work to flourish.
* A **team co-ordinator** providing **flexible support** to meet the needs of the team.
* A **senior leadership team** that cares about you and your work.
* A **named legal advisor** for the team.
* A **quality framework** which supports practice improvement.
* A **culture** of high expectations, high challenge and high support.
* Access to high quality **professional development** from induction onwards.
* Opportunities for **career progression**.

You can find out more through our social work careers website

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/socialwork>

**What do the children, young people and families, and other professionals we work with say?**

“I just wanna thank you for everything you have done for us! I attended court and won the case my girls are finally back home and settling in well. They have started school and love it! And so do I!! We are getting lets of help with the school councillor. I’ve been going in for coffee mornings and meeting the teachers and other parents in coffee mornings……So just wanted to thank you for all your support and the reports you wrote out and support letters. Everything thankyou xx”

Mum writing to her child protection social worker

“We have worked with [social worker] as the social worker for our little ones for the past 7 months or so, and have found her to be courteous and professional at all times. Her high levels of commitment are a benchmark for others in her craft, and her dedication to those in her care is unquestionably one of her greatest attributes. Her communication about our little ones has always been timely, effective and informative. She demonstrates the highest level of passion for her work”

Foster carers writing about a child protection social worker

“the local authority did a considerable amount of work with the parents. What is presented today is a happy outcome……the local authority has provided support, the parents have worked with the local authority, which has enabled the family to stay together. It is apparent that there has been a team effort between the social worker and the parents to make sure that as far as [the child] is concerned, everything has been done to for her to remain in their care. It is a credit to the parents that they have recognised that they have needed help. Credit to [the social worker] that he has been able to assist the parents. This is the way the system should work.”

Judge in her summing up of a child protection case

**What will you need to succeed?**

To succeed in a child protection team you will need to:

* Be passionate about achieving the best for children and young people in Durham, and ensuring that their voice is heard.
* Be able to support parents to change.
* Be able to work effectively with professionals from a wide range of agencies.
* Have an interest in care planning for children and young people.
* Have strong written skills.
* Be organised and resilient
* Be able to remain calm and focused in challenging situations.