1. **POST TITLE:** Enhanced Social Work Practitioner
2. **GRADE:** Grade 12 (Plus £2,500 temporary recruitment/retention allowance in Families First Teams)

Job Evaluation Ref No: N10183

1. **LOCATION:** The post will be peripatetic, moving with the newly qualified social workers it supports to meet the needs of the Service.

**4. RELEVANT TO THIS POST:**

Flexible working:Subject to service needs the Council’s flexible working policy is applicable to this post

Protection of vulnerable groups:This post is subject to enhanceddisclosure with barred list checks

1. **ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:**

The post holder will be accountable to a Team Manager within Children’s Services.

1. **DESCRIPTION OF ROLE:**

Social workers in Children’s Services work with our most vulnerable children, young people and families. Their expertise supports families, helps keep children safe and enables them both to thrive.

The Enhanced Social Work Practitioner will play a really important role in supporting two Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs) within a social work team. They will consistently model good and outstanding social work practice and skill, and provide ongoing support and guidance to the NQSWs on their cases. They will also work closely with the Practice Leads in the Social Work Academy and the Team Manager to ensure that the NQSWs have appropriate caseloads in terms of number and complexity, and that their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) progresses well.

1. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES *SPECIFIC* TO THIS POST:**

Listed below are the expectations of an Enhanced Social Work Practitioner in Children’s Services. These link to the Knowledge and Skills Statements for Child and Family Social Work.

* 1. Support 2 NQSWs working towards their ASYE:
* Provide support to the NQSWs to help them build their confidence.
* Lead weekly meetings which: incorporate thinking using the Signs of Safety model about cases, encourage the NQSWs to hold multiple hypotheses, encourage peer challenge and critical reflection in decision making.
* Provide ongoing support and guidance to the NQSWs on their cases, co-working more complex cases.
* Work closely with the Practice Leads in the Social Work Academy and the Team Manager to ensure that the NQSWs have appropriate caseloads in terms of number and complexity, and that their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) progresses well.
  1. Communicate clearly and sensitively, building effective relationships with children, young people and families and other professionals. Listen to their views and enable their full participation in assessment, planning, and review.
  2. Build and maintain high quality and appropriate professional relationships with children, young people and families to enable positive change to take place. Support children, young people and families even they are angry, hostile and resistant to change. Manage tensions between parents, carers and family members, in ways that show persistence, determination and professional confidence.
  3. Promote optimal child development and be alert to signs that may indicate that the child is not meeting key developmental milestones, has been harmed or is at risk of harm.
  4. Identify the impact of adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, physical ill health and disability on family functioning, social circumstances and child development.
  5. Carry out in-depth and ongoing family assessment of social need and risk to children, with particular emphasis on parental capacity and capability to change. Ensure that the voice of the child is heard, and that families and partner agencies contribute in a meaningful way to the assessment.
  6. Make realistic, child centred, plans within a review timeline, which will manage and reduce identified risks and meet the needs of the child. Ensure that children, young people and families, and partner agencies participate fully.
  7. Produce well argued, focused, and jargon free case notes, plans and reports e.g. single assessments and court reports. Present a clear analysis and a sound rationale for actions and conclusions.
  8. Evaluate and review the development and progress of children, young people and their families against the agreed plan, monitor their changing needs and evaluate impact. Amend plans as and when necessary.
  9. Social workers working in Families First, Disability services and Looked After Services will also lead the investigation of allegations of significant harm to children in consultation with other professionals and practice supervisors.
  10. Use the law, regulatory and statutory guidance to inform practice decisions. Make use of the best evidence from research to inform the complex judgements and decisions needed to support families and protect children.
  11. Be accountable for, and review own practice using supervision and reflective practice. Seek advice from a range of sources. Discuss, debate, reflect upon and test hypotheses.
  12. Maintain personal and professional credibility through effective working relationships with peers, managers and leaders both within the profession, throughout multi-agency partnerships and public bodies, including the family courts.
  13. Participate in developments to improve the quality of the service and improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
  14. Share learning with colleagues by mentoring, coaching, and reflective discussion.
  15. Maintain registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and adhere to the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics, and standards for continuing professional development.

Note: The postholder will be required to work flexibly to meet the needs of children, young people and their families which may include the need for some weekend working.

The above outlines the duties required at the time of writing but this is not comprehensive or exclusive list and duties may be varied from time to time. This does not change the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed.

**8. COMMON DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

8.1 **Quality Assurance**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team performance and service quality so that the user and the Service’s requirements are met and that the highest standards are maintained.

To establish and monitor appropriate procedures to ensure that quality data are reported and used in decision making processes and to demonstrate through behaviour and actions a firm commitment to data security and confidentiality as appropriate.

8.2 **Communication**

To establish and manage the team communications systems ensuring that the Service’s procedures, policies, strategies and objectives are effectively communicated to all team members.

8.3 **Professional Practice**

To ensure that professional practice in the team is carried out to the highest standards and developed in line with the Service’s stated objectives of continual improvement in quality of its service to internal and external customers.

8.4 **Health and Safety**

Manage health and safety in their area of responsibility in accordance with the relevant section(s) of the Corporate/Service Health and Safety Policy and to ensure that the Health and Safety policy, organisation arrangements and procedures as they relate to areas, activities and personnel under your control are understood, implemented and monitored.

8.5 **General Management (where applicable)**

To provide vision and leadership to staff within a specialist team, ensuring that effective systems are in place for workload allocation and management, the application of the Authority’s and the Service’s policies and procedures, including those relating to equality, supervision and appraisal and all aspects of their performance, personal development, health and welfare.

8.6 **Financial Management (where applicable)**

To manage a designated budget (as required) ensuring that the Service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring and control of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

8.7 **Appraisal**

All members of staff will receive appraisals and it is the responsibility of each member of staff to follow guidance on the appraisal process.

8.8 **Equality and Diversity**

As an organisation we are committed to promoting a just society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination and prejudice. To ensure our commitment is put into practice we are developing policies, which will seek to remove any barriers to equality of opportunity and to eliminate unfair and unlawful discrimination.

These policies apply to all employees of Durham County Council.

8.9 **Confidentiality**

All members of staff are required to undertake that they will not divulge to anyone personal and/or confidential information to which they may have access during the course of their work.

All members of staff must be aware that they have explicit responsibility for the confidentiality and security of information received and imported in the course of work and using Council information assets. The Council has a Personal Information Security Policy in place.

8.10 **Induction**

The Council has in place an induction programme designed to help new employees to become effective in their roles and to find their way in the organisation.

**Person Specification – Enhanced Social Work Practitioner**

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|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Method of Assessment** |
| **Qualification** | * Degree in social work **or** equivalent social work qualification, e.g. Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work (PDDipSW) Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW), Diploma in Social Work (DipSW), Certificate in Social Services (CSS)   **AND**   * Current HCPC Registration | * Relevant and accredited management qualification * Post qualification modules in social work e.g. Consolidation Module * Staff development qualification e.g. Practice Educator, Coaching, Mentoring, Certificate in Education | Application form  Pre-employment checks |
| **Experience** | * Significant experience of social work with children young people and their families * Significant experience of identifying and responding to need * Risk Management * Using evidence to devise effective interventions * Explaining and championing high quality practice to practitioners other professionals, children, young people and families * Building and maintaining respectful partnerships with practitioners and partner agencies * Developing innovative practices to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families | * Supporting staff/students to ensure practice achieves the best long term outcomes for children, young people and families * Supporting practitioners to make decisions based on evidence, and taking account of the wishes and feelings of children * Recognising where relationships between professionals are likely to compromise the welfare of families and the safety of children, taking immediate and corrective action * Supporting practitioners to achieve quality work | Application form  Selection Process  References |
| **Knowledge** | * Legislation and national standards relevant to the post * Range of Social Work Theories relevant to the role * Evidence based methods and tools * Best practice within national and local contexts | * Understanding of performance management * Knowledge of research relevant to the post | Application form  Selection Process |

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| **Skills** | * Able to use excellent communication skills to confidently provide analytical, constructive feedback to others to develop their practice * Recognise harm and the risk indicators of different forms of harm to children * Use the law, regulatory and statutory guidance to inform practice decisions * Undertake analysis and make realistic, child centred, plans within timescales which will manage and reduce identified risks and provide support which meets the needs of the child * Ability to empower children, young people and their families in make long term positive changes for their future. | * Ability to identify relevant research and apply to practice | Application form  Selection Process  References |
| **Personal Qualities** | * Demonstrate confidence in having your own practice observed and scrutinised by others * Self-reflective, aware of strengths and areas for development, and able to use critical feedback to improve own performance, taking responsibility for own professional development * Organised and manages time effectively, planning ahead systematically well in advance * Persistence, determination and professional confidence * Commitment and enthusiasm to achieving positive long term outcomes and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people * Commitment to shaping the learning of others. * Anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice and non-judgemental stance * Able to work well under pressure * Ability to work flexible hours, including some evenings and weekends * Hold a current driving licence and have access to a car (social workers with a disability must have access to a means of mobility support) * Commitment to Continuous Professional Development |  | Application form  Selection Process  Reference |