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| **Job Description** |
| **Post title** | Early Help Practitioner |
| **JE Reference No** | N9850 |
| **Grade** | Grade 6 |
| **Service** | Children and Young People’s Service |
| **Service Area** | Early Help Inc & Vnble Children, One Point & Think Family Service |
| **Reporting to** | The postholder will report to the Family Centre Team Manager. |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be any Family Centre, but you may be required to work at any Council workplace within County Durham. |
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| **DBS** | This post is subject to an enhanced disclosure. |
| **Flexitime** | Subject to service needs, this post is eligible for flexitime. |
| **Politically restricted** | This post is not designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the requirements of Section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State. |

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| **Description of role** |

The Family Centre will deliver a 0 – 19 years ‘Local Family Offer’ whilst retaining a clear focus on early years. This will be in line with the ‘best start’ in life and will provide a broader range of support services for family support in local communities.

Some families in County Durham experience a range of factors assessed at level 2 of the Durham Staircase of Need, which have a negative impact on outcomes for their children including poverty and worklessness.

The aim of the Early Help Practitioner is to provide direct help to empower families to access a range of support networks within their local communities and those delivered in and through the Community Family Hub, with the aim of building resilience and sustained change.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

* Provide direct help and interventions to families that contribute to meaningful positive change. This may include supporting families to make and attend appointments, modelling appropriate actions and behaviours and assisting the necessary day to day activities that enable families to progress and maintain positive outcomes.
* Develop and use a range of approaches to engage and build an effective working relationship with parents and families to enable positive change to take place.
* To work with vulnerable parents to enable them to identify, acknowledge and meet their own and their children’s needs, develop life skills, make and sustain effective change and reduce vulnerability.
* To work using an agreed Early Help Assessment and supporting family plan, utilising where required TAF processes to understand the family’s needs and offer a range of interventions to support sustained change.
* To participate in and adhere to Safeguarding procedure as defined by the Local Children’s Safeguarding Boards Policy and Procedures.
* To work in partnership with children, young people, and their families in contributing to family plans which focus upon strengths and wishes.
* To facilitate targeted group work sessions with children and/or young people in order to address a range of identified issues and improve outcomes.
* To monitor and review progress against agreed goals and challenge where appropriate.
* To contribute to a planned and timely exit strategy for the family including the appropriate use of Community and Voluntary organisations.
* To advocate and mediate on behalf of the family, individuals and partner agencies.
* Work with parents and families to develop confidence to engage with services and other support from the statutory, voluntary and the independent sector.
* To plan and deliver innovative support and evidence-based intervention packages to children, young people, parents and carers including facilitating parenting programmes to support parents to develop their parenting skills and aspirations.
* Providing opportunities for adults to participate in activities that improve their personal skills, education and employability.
* Enhancing parents’ understanding of their responsibilities for their children’s safety and well-being.
* To ensure that accurate records are maintained which reflect decision making, is evidence based and to agreed standards.
* To ensure that children, young people, their families and carers views are at the centre of the service and promote their participation in all aspects of service delivery.
* Be accountable for and review own practice using supervision, reflective practice and other opportunities for continuous professional development.
* To work flexibly to meet the needs of children and families, including some evening weekend working.

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| **Organisational responsibilities** |

* **Values and behaviours**

To demonstrate and be a role model for the council’s values and behaviours to promote and encourage positive behaviours, enhancing the quality and integrity of the services we provide.

* **Smarter working, transformation and design principles**

To seek new and innovative ideas to work smarter, irrespective of job role, and to be creative, innovative and empowered. Understand the operational impact of transformational change and service design principles to support new ways of working and to meet customer needs.

* **Communication**

To communicate effectively with our customers, managers, peers and partners and to work collaboratively to provide the best possible public service. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to our public.

* **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

To take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety Policy and procedures.

* **Equality and diversity**

To promote a society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live, free from discrimination and prejudice and ensure our commitment is put into practice. All employees are responsible for eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination in everything that they do.

* **Confidentiality**

To work in a way that does not divulge personal and/or confidential information during the course of their work and follow the council’s policies and procedures in relation to data protection and security of information.

* **Climate Change**

To contribute to our corporate responsibility in relation to climate change by considering and limiting the carbon impact of activities during the course of your work, wherever possible.

* **Performance management**

To promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. Contribute to the council’s Performance and Development Review processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

* **Quality assurance (for applicable posts)**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and service level so that the highest standards of service are delivered and maintained. Use data, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of service provision and support decision making processes.

* **Management and leadership (for applicable posts)**

To provide vision and leadership to inspire and empower all employees so they can reach their full potential and contribute to the council’s values and behaviours. Managers and leaders must engage in personal development to ensure they are equipped to lead transformational change; always searching for better ways to do things differently to meet organisational changes and service priorities.

* **Financial management (for applicable posts)**

To manage a designated budget, ensuring that the service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

*The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.*

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| Person specification |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * Level 3 qualification in a relevant children’s services field
* Evidence of continuous professional development.
 | * Level 4 or higher qualification in Early Years/Childcare/Education/ Social Care/Community Engagement or Health
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| Experience | * Recent experience of working and supporting vulnerable children and families in the home and community settings
* Experience of delivering planned interventions using evidence-based practice leading to improved outcomes
* Experience of working as part of a multi-disciplinary team
* Experience of partnership working to achieve desired results
* Experience of responding effectively to safeguarding issues and concerns
* Experience of group facilitation
* Experience of working with a range of professionals, external partner agencies and service providers
 | * Experience of delivering and reporting on outcomes.
* Experience of evidence-based parenting interventions and programmes
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| Skills & Knowledge | * Knowledge of the physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs of children and families
* Integrated multi agency working processes and practices for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults
* Values and principles underpinning whole family intervention
* Persistent and proactive approaches in engaging families
* Understand the nature of effective relationships.
* Establishing and maintaining professional boundaries
* Understand information sharing, consent and confidentiality
* Goal planning, monitoring and review processes
* Problem solving skills – ability to be innovative and find creative solutions to implement change
* The range of evidence-based programmes, interventions, services, networks and community resources available, and how to access them
* Child, young person and adult development
* Change theory
* Strategies to build parental self-confidence, capacity and resilience
* Family inclusive practice
* Ability to manage time effectively, prioritise, co-ordinate tasks and meet deadlines
* Knowledge of Safeguarding
* Proven verbal and written communication skills
* Negotiation and mediation skills
* Effective interpersonal skills including ability to work effectively as part of a team and in partnership with a range of external agencies
* To be able to demonstrate at all times the requirement to focus on the needs of the child and family
* The ability to reflect and evaluate to improve working practice
 | * A sound understanding of statutory and voluntary provision for children and families at a local level
* Ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key policies affecting families and children
* Experience of working in an outcomes focused environment
* IT literate – Microsoft packages (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, email)
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| Personal Qualities | * The ability to work flexibly to meet the needs of the Service
* Non-confrontational approach to problem solving
* Open, honest and assertive manner
* Supportive and challenging
* Ability to respect confidentiality
* Commitment to high quality service delivery
* Good team player
* Enthusiastic
* Persistence
* Empathy and positive regard
* Warm, respectful and sensitive
* Reliable
* Strong sense of Self
* Capable of independent travel to meet the requirements of the post
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