

Job Description

Job Title:	Social Worker/Senior Social Worker (Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce)
Team / Service:	Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST)
Salary Grade:	Grade 7/8
Reports to:	APST Manager
Number of Reports:	None
Location:	Alternative Provision Settings and any Company recognised location.

About us

Established in 2017, Together for Children Sunderland is on a mission to improve services in social care, early help and education and engage the whole community in giving children and young people in Sunderland the best possible opportunity to thrive.

Our dedicated workforce strives to make a difference, irrespective of our work vocation or specialism.

We value diversity and actively seek candidates from all backgrounds, including various ages, disabilities, neurodiverse individuals, gender identities, sexual orientations, religions, beliefs, races, and cultural backgrounds. Our inclusive workplace culture fosters collaboration and excellence.

Find out more: [Find out more - Together for Children](#)

About the role

The Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST) is a brand new multi-disciplinary team established to improve outcomes for children and young people accessing Alternative Provision across Sunderland. The Taskforce brings specialist professionals together to provide integrated, child-centred support, strengthen inclusion, improve attendance and engagement, reduce risks associated with exclusion, exploitation and serious violence, and support successful reintegration into mainstream education, training and employment.

The role forms part of a co-located multi-disciplinary team including a Youth Justice Worker, Family Help Worker, Reintegration Officer, Educational Psychologist and other specialists

The Social Worker will provide specialist social care expertise within the APST. The post is not intended to deliver statutory social work functions or hold statutory case responsibility. Instead, the role will work alongside existing social workers, schools, families and partner agencies to strengthen planning, assessment and intervention for children who are vulnerable, excluded, at risk of exclusion, involved in Alternative Provision, or at risk of serious violence and exploitation.

The postholder will help identify and address the underlying factors affecting a child's engagement with education, supporting earlier intervention and better coordinated multi-agency responses.

You would do this in line with the relevant policies and procedures in place within Together for Children and Sunderland Safeguarding Children's Partnership which support us to keep children and young people safe.

This role is exempt from the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974 and therefore requires a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check.

The APST is externally funded until March 2029. The successful candidate will be appointed permanently and, when this funding ends, will transfer to one of our statutory social work teams.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide specialist social work advice to Alternative Provision settings, schools, APST colleagues and partner agencies on safeguarding, vulnerability, family circumstances and risks affecting engagement in education.
- Work directly with children, young people and families to improve outcomes, overcome barriers to learning and strengthen protective factors.
- Contribute to multidisciplinary assessments and coordinated intervention plans for children supported by the Taskforce.
- Support children at risk of exclusion, persistent absence, exploitation, offending or disengagement from education.
- Work with families to strengthen engagement with education, improve attendance and build positive relationships between home, school and wider services.
- Provide social care expertise during weekly multidisciplinary discussions, case reviews and intervention planning.
- Act as the professional link between the Taskforce and social care services, supporting effective communication, information sharing and coordinated support.

- Offer consultation and reflective practice support to Alternative Provision staff and partner agencies, building confidence in responding to complex family and safeguarding issues.
- Support reintegration planning for children moving from Alternative Provision to mainstream education, specialist provision, employment or post-16 destinations.
- Monitor outcomes, evaluate impact and contribute to performance reporting to demonstrate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Maintain accurate, timely records in line with approved case management and information governance procedures.
- Engage children directly, using age-appropriate methods to understand their wishes, feelings and experiences, and ensure their voice informs all assessments, reports and recommendations.
- Assess the impact of parental conflict, domestic abuse and other risks on children's wellbeing, complete safeguarding checks with partner agencies, and escalate concerns in line with safeguarding procedures.
- Work collaboratively with schools, health professionals, voluntary organisations and other partners to plan and deliver coordinated support, sharing information appropriately in line with safeguarding and data protection requirements.
- Work constructively with parents and carers to strengthen their understanding of children's needs.
- Work in accordance with the Signs of Safety practice model.
- Act as the APST Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL.)

Key Outcomes

- Improved educational engagement and attendance.
- Reduced risk of exclusion and repeat placement breakdowns.
- Improved family engagement and resilience.
- Enhanced multi-agency coordination.
- Improved safeguarding outcomes.
- Increased successful reintegration into mainstream education.
- Reduced risks associated with serious violence, exploitation and offending behaviour.

Our Expectations

You must undertake this role in accordance with the requirements set out below:

- Comply with Together for Children's Code of Conduct, People policies and procedures, Health and Safety Policy and EDI Statement.
- Uphold all relevant professional policies, standards and legislative requirements

- Adhere to the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR principles in relation to the management and handling of personal and/or sensitive information and respect the privacy of personal information managed by Together for Children Sunderland.
- Comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This job description is a guide to the duties you will be expected to perform. It is not an exhaustive list, and you may be required to undertake other tasks and duties not listed that are reasonably commensurate with the job role and grade of the post. Where a fundamental change to the job description is needed this will be discussed with the postholder prior to any changes being made

**Person Specification - Social Worker/Senior Social Worker
(Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce)**

Essential Requirements	
Qualifications • Social Work qualification recognised by Social Work England. • Registration with Social Work England. • Current driving licence and access to a car or means to mobility support • Evidence of continuous professional development. • Completion of ASYE	Application Form
Knowledge and Understanding • Social care legislation, with current safeguarding policies and procedures. • Children Act 1989 and 2004.	Application Form
Skills and Abilities • At least one year's post-qualifying experience. • Experience of statutory social work with children and families. • Experience of applying childcare legislation relating to child protection, children in care and children in need. • Experience of working with children, young people and families within the relevant Children Act framework. • Experience of working collaboratively with professionals supporting children and families. • Ability to undertake child protection enquiries and manage work within statutory timescales. • Ability to plan, prioritise and manage an allocated workload effectively. • Ability to manage challenging situations calmly and sensitively, with a clear focus on children's safety. • Experience of supporting children, young people and families with complex needs. • Strong knowledge of safeguarding law, child protection practice and contextual safeguarding. • Experience of effective multi-agency working. • Ability to complete assessments and develop evidence-based intervention plans. • Excellent communication and relationship-building skills. • Ability to engage vulnerable children and families who may be reluctant to access support. • Strong analytical, recording and report-writing skills.	Interview

• Commitment to inclusive, restorative and child-centred practice. • Experience in education, youth justice, early help or Alternative Provision. • Knowledge of attendance, exclusion and inclusion procedures. • Understanding of SEND and trauma-informed practice. • Experience of supporting children vulnerable to exploitation, serious violence or offending. • Experience of providing professional consultation, training or reflective practice.	
Other Requirements • Commitment to Equal Opportunities • Access to transport and ability to travel throughout Sunderland.	Interview

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