

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE:	Social Worker
GRADE	10
DIVISION / UNIT	Children and Adults Service
DEPARTMENT	Children's Services
REPORTS TO:	Team Manager

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

To provide a comprehensive, effective, integrated, systemically-informed social work service, within Southwark's practice framework. To deliver excellent social work practice, assessing complex need, and planning and working purposefully with families. To support networks and other professionals to manage risk, safeguard children and promote positive outcomes. To provide a social work service which is both relationship-based and which responds in a timely manner within statutory guidelines, working collaboratively with the team.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

Responsibilities (in line with Knowledge and Skills Statements for Children's Social Workers)

Relationships and effective direct work

1. Work directly with children, young people and families to provide focused and purposeful systemically-informed social work within Southwark's practice framework, with explicit aims and objectives about desired outcomes which are proportionate to each child's identified risk and need.
2. Establish rapport, build and maintain professional, respectful, and honest relationships with children, young people their families, and professional networks, to develop trust and assist in safeguarding children, resolving conflict and promoting positive and timely outcomes.
3. Deliver social work practice which is informed by statutory guidance, best evidence, and research knowledge.

Communication

4. Present complex information in writing and in person in a range of settings, including professional input at meetings such as child protection conferences, Looked After Child reviews, fostering or adoption panels, youth justice panels,

and representing the Council at Court.

5. Maintain case records and management information on appropriate systems, ensuring that case files are organised and up to date.
6. Manage and organise complex information, producing comprehensive, analytic, high quality reports which evaluate the most appropriate interventions and make cogent arguments based on evidence.

Child development

7. Observe and talk with children and young people in their various environments to help understand their physical and emotional worlds and patterns of development, taking account of typical development over time, including the quality of child and parent/carer interaction.

Adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, physical ill health and disability

8. Identify the impact on children of adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, physical ill health and disability, including those that may indicate risk. Access the help of other professionals to ensure children's best interests are prioritised whilst vulnerable adults are safeguarded.

Abuse and neglect of children

9. Lead investigations of concerns about significant harm, in consultation with managers and other professionals. Devise, implement and review care plans, including the development and management of protection plans within a child protection framework.

Child and family assessment

10. Carry out in-depth ongoing evidence-based assessment of social need and risk to children, in line with statutory guidance, working directly with children and young people and all key family members, and gathering information from other agencies. Use professional curiosity and authority, maintaining a position of partnership, whilst recognising when there is a need for immediate action.

Analysis, decision-making, planning and review

11. Manage a varied caseload, planning work activities, prioritising tasks and responsibilities, testing multiple hypotheses, balancing risks and family strengths, using evidence and professional judgement to ensure positive and timely outcomes.
12. Work purposefully with other practitioners to devise and implement child-centred written plans of work with children and their families, in various settings including family homes, applying twin and triple track planning to minimise delay. Provide advice and support to less experienced social work staff, and chair professional meetings when required.

13. Ensure multi-disciplinary input at all stages, negotiate with other agencies to promote positive outcomes and ensure an integrated approach on complex issues.

The law and the family and youth justice systems

14. Ensure that statutory duties are met for vulnerable children and families with complex problems, including taking responsibility for child protection processes in emergency situations.
15. Use the law and statutory guidance, seeking advice as required, to inform practice decisions, support families, protect children, look after children in public care, or support young people within a youth justice setting, preparing and presenting evidence to court when necessary.

The role of supervision

16. Work with a degree of independence without the need for close supervision, whilst recognising when and how to seek advice from managers and senior colleagues. Use supervision to identify strategies to build professional resilience and balance the potential for bias in decision-making.
17. Contribute experience and expertise to group supervision processes, to support evidence-informed judgements.

Organisational context

18. Deliver services flexibly across different parts the service and within homes, schools or community settings. Contribute to organisational development, helping to sustain a learning culture, and in multi- agency liaison processes where required.

Grade/Conditions of Service

The employment is subject to a probationary period of twenty six weeks from your start date of employment with Southwark Council, during which time you will be required to demonstrate to the council's satisfaction your suitability for the position in which you are employed.

A satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at an enhanced level is required.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification is a picture of skills, knowledge and experience required to carry out the job.

Knowledge, including educational qualifications:	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	How assessed (S/ I/ T)
1. Knowledge of childcare legislation, statutory guidance and the London Child Protection Procedures	E	I, T
2. Knowledge and understanding of child development, parenting capacity, environmental factors and risk and protective factors	E	S
3. Knowledge and understanding of current issues in children's social work practice, particularly in relation to child protection and planning of interventions	E	S
4. Knowledge of roles and responsibilities of key children's agencies	E	I
5. Knowledge of best practice for assessment and care planning, and some understanding of and commitment to the approaches within Southwark's practice framework: systemic practices including Signs of Safety, restorative practices, and trauma/attachment-informed approaches including Secure Base	E	I, T
Experience:		
6. Experience of direct social work with children and their families (including a recognised Social Work qualification and current registration with Social Work England).	E	S, I
7. Experience of working effectively as part of a team and balancing personal workload	E	I
8. Experience of preparing reports and presenting these within formal settings, such as court proceedings, fostering or adoption panels, youth justice panels, or other formal settings	E	S

Aptitudes, Skills & Competencies:		
9. Ability to collate and analyse complex information, and produce good quality written information that is easily understood by others	E	T
10. Commitment to the principles of openness, transparency and accountability and to the principles in Southwark's practice framework (child/young person-centred, family minded, strengths-based, evidence informed, relationship based, outcome-focused, fair and reflective)	E	I, T
11. Ability to formulate and implement effective social work interventions	E	S, I
12. Ability to produce high quality reports with clear recommendations	E	S
13. Ability to develop professional relationships with children and their families	E	T
14. Ability to manage own workload and be accountable for work with children and families	E	I
15. Computer literacy skills at a level to maintain case records within information management systems.	E	T
16. Knowledge and awareness of issues relating to communities from diverse backgrounds	E	I, T
Special Conditions of Recruitment:		
Must hold a recognised social work qualification		
Must have a current registration with Social Work England		
Must be able to provide evidence of continuing professional development in line with the Professional Capability Framework for Social Workers, to include either successful completion of ASYE year, or at least two years recent experience in a social work role within a statutory setting, working with children and families, and attendance to appropriate training.		
A satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at an enhanced level is required.		
Comply with and promote the Council's Equal opportunities policy		
Occasional requirements to work evenings and weekend		

Key:

D	Desirable	S	Shortlisting criteria
E	Essential	I	Evaluated at interview
		T	Subject to test