

Job Title	Consultant Social Worker	Job Reference	CSC0000342
Department	Children's Services	Grade	
Reports to	Principal Social Worker	Team / Service	PSQA - Workforce Development Academy

Purpose of this Job

In line with our Signs of Safety practice model, it is expected you will have previous training and/or experience working with a solution focused approach. You will help support the development and learning of this model with other practitioners and managers across the service to help embed the approach into practice. The model highlights the importance of respectful and collaborative working relationships with families and professionals in order to bring about improved safety, success and outcomes for the children we serve. You will recognise both areas of strength and safety, as well as worries which will then help inform the next steps in a child's safety or support plan.

At the heart of the model is the bottom-line expectation that family led decision making is primary to practice. This is in line with the Families First Partnership and you will support the roll out and embedding of the social work reforms.

You will work closely with the Principal Social Worker and fellow colleagues by proactively identifying the learning needs of practitioners and managers across the workforce and help develop and deliver training and learning opportunities for continual professional development with respect to the Signs of Safety model.

You will contribute to a comprehensive quality assurance framework across the service, by undertaking a range of auditing activity, analysing and distributing findings to develop the learning culture in Bexley Children's Social Care.

You will contribute to the strategic oversight and development of the service. This will involve making contributions and giving feedback in management meetings on performance as well as promoting and implementing any agreed service or strategic improvement plans.

You will have a proficient ability to communicate in English and be able to influence others in an effort to help coordinate services and supports in the best way possible to keep children as safe and well cared for as possible and support the vision and values of the department.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Working as part of a small team the post holder will help to support the alignment of the Signs of Safety practice and procedures, promoting a culture of learning and reflection, ensure good practice is shared across teams, maintaining and extending their knowledge.
- Contribute fully to the implementation and embedding of the adoption of the Signs of Safety approach, attending regional and national events as required. Work with others locally to help create depth of practice and work to align all systems and processes reducing duplication and bureaucracy.
- Work collaboratively with practitioners and team managers to build practice confidence via observations, co-working, mentoring and coaching to enhance Signs of Safety skills.

- Work in tandem with management in delivering operational priorities in the implementation of Signs of Safety, in line with Bexley's deliverables.
- Contribute to the development of internal Signs of Safety training and learning opportunities and deliver training on Signs of Safety to practitioners and managers.
- Support practitioners to develop their skills and confidence in the use of family finding techniques via training and support. The post holder will also be the link for support with family network meeting and will co facilitate meetings where required.
- To engage in a range of projects, quality assurance, analysis of performance information and research activities to identify gaps and strengths in practice and make recommendations for improvement.
- Provide appropriate challenge to practitioners and managers within Children's Services to ensure that all services are delivered in accordance with appropriate standards, procedures, and statutory requirements for safeguarding children.
- Promote continuous professional development by creating and delivering individual and group training to social worker professionals and partner agencies, providing mentoring, coaching, and facilitating group supervision/casework reflection sessions and develop creative ways to deliver learning.
- To provide expert professional advice and support in relation to casework ensuring that children's services are delivered in accordance with agreed standards and thresholds and are fully compliant with the law.
- To contribute to the development and maintenance of up to date policies, procedures and practice guidance promoting their application to practice to ensure that managers and social workers are clear about casework processes, their roles and responsibilities.
- To engage in a range of projects, quality assurance, analysis of performance information and research activities to identify gaps and strengths in practice and make recommendations for improvement.
- Ensuring that findings from performance data and all quality assurance activity is distributed and used to improve practice, drive up standards and secure the best outcomes for children and young people in the Borough.
- To assist in ensuring performance information is accurate, by supporting practitioner's effective use of the Liquid Logic ICS and contributing to the review and re-design of the system to best support practice and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy.
- To contribute to the Borough's response to the recommendations of the Munro report; the implementation of the National Social Work Improvement agenda; and the Council's vision, strategies and plans to improve services for children and their families.
- To anticipate and positively model solution focused problem solving approaches and work with change in the social work environment to ensure practitioners are aware of changing trends and national policy that impact on staff and the children and families we serve.
- To demonstrate the standards of proficiency as required by the social work regulator, Social Work UK, in order to maintain registration.
- Through modelling and your personal example show a commitment and value towards the diversity of the children and families we work with so that our assessments of need and delivery of services are provided in a non-judgemental and bespoke manner.
- To develop and influence internal and external working relationships with professionals that promote strategies for ongoing learning, collaboration and service delivery with children and families.
- This role allows for considerable autonomy for the CSW; the ability to work independently and be well organised is essential.
- To ensure that working practices and processes are developed that maximise the use of new technology that promotes the most efficient and effective delivery of services to the children and families we work with.

- To keep apprised of the changing contexts, research, practice theories and statutory procedures that govern child protection work at the local and national level and to implement these within the team and across the service.
- To work within the Council's policies, procedures, values, and code of conduct at all times and to reflect these when carrying out professional responsibilities with members of the public.
- To help support and quality assure that practice and management oversight of all work and performance in the team is compliant with relevant laws, statutory guidance, and local procedures that govern children's safeguarding, adult safeguarding, the social work profession, health and safety, employment law, human rights, and data protection.
- Other duties as required necessary to carry out the smooth functioning of the service and to meet our responsibilities towards good professional learning, practice, and development of the workforce.

Learning and Development

- To regularly review and reflect on professional practice along with colleagues and your line manager to identify areas of further professional learning and development.
- To enrol and engage in regular training and learning opportunities, both internally and externally, in order to promote further professional development and practice.
- To identify and engage in opportunities to share professional practice and experience with other colleagues, students and professionals to promote an ongoing learning environment.
- To be receptive to respectful challenge and reflection on practice in order to identify areas of good practice as well as identify new learning and development needs.

Person Specification			
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Department	Children's Services	Team / Service	PSQA - Workforce Development Academy

All applicants will be assessed against the following criteria and performance indicators throughout the recruitment process.

E = Essential

D = Desirable A = Application

I = Interview

T = Test

Selection Criteria	Council Value	Level of Need	How Assessed
Candidates should be able to demonstrate competent experience and capabilities in the following areas: <u>Promote and Govern Excellent Practice</u> Ensure that the safety, welfare and best interest of the child is central to the work undertaken by any practitioner jointly working with the CSW. Promote and support the use of the Signs of Safety solution focused practice principles in all work undertaken within the team and across the service. You will have direct experience of using the Signs of Safety approach with children and families or experience of working with other solution focused relational practice models. Promote and maintain a high standard of evidenced based professional practice through modelling good practice, sharing latest research and learning, and motivating others to perform at their best. Promote and share useful research and professional practice theories and approaches within the team and with other practitioners across the service to help inform the assessments and work undertaken with children and families. A working familiarity with relevant laws, statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures, or internal policies and procedures that govern the work that we do with children and families. Where this is not always known, a	Innovation, Leadership, Innovation, Leadership Collaboration Innovation, Collaboration Innovation, Leadership Leadership	E D E E E	AIT AIT AIT AIT A

Selection Criteria	Council Value	Level of Need	How Assessed
demonstrated ability to seek out advice and guidance on where to find the relevant procedures.			A
Extensive knowledge and experience of child development and what are typical age related physical, cognitive, social, emotional and behavioural expectations for children and young people and how health, environmental, or genetic factors can influence them.	Innovation, Impact	E	AI
Possess a more comprehensive understanding of theories and research relating to child development, including attachment theory and resilience in children.	Innovation, Impact	E	AI
Extensive experience working with and understanding the impact of adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse and physical ill health or disability can impact a parent's capacity to care for their child. Comprehensive understanding of more complex issues therein, such as the cycle of power and control in domestic abuse.	Innovation, Impact Innovation, Impact	E	AIT
Possess a relevant social work qualification (ie: DipSW or CQSW or degree in social work).		E	A
Are registered with the professional regulator for social work (Social Work UK).		E	A
Have a good understanding of and ability to use IT systems, such as case recording systems (ie: Liquid Logic), word processing (ie: Microsoft Word), Email and Calendars (ie: Microsoft Outlook), Powerpoint, Internet search engines (ie: Google or Bing), computers, mobile phones, and secure remote working systems (ie: Wifi, Citrix or Cisco VPN systems).	Innovation, Leadership, Impact	E	AIT
<u>Developing Excellent Practitioners</u>			
Have extensive experience working in a statutory child protection setting (ie: child protection, children looked after).	Innovation, Leadership, Impact	E	AIT
Models and supports a continual learning environment that promotes the sharing of good practice, challenges weak practice, draws upon latest research or guidance, and creates a respectful culture of professional challenge.	Leadership, Listen & Respond	E	AI

Selection Criteria	Council Value	Level of Need	How Assessed
Explores creative ways practitioners can learn from one another in the team and promote ways for sharing these learning experiences (ie: shadowing, reflective team supervision).	Leadership, Listen & Respond, Impact	E	AI
Consistently identifies and recognises areas of good practice in supervision or when it occurs, not assuming this will always be known or appreciated.	Listen & Respond, Impact	E	AI
Encourages practitioners to stretch themselves and their abilities through seeing their potential for further development and supporting this through regular feedback or learning opportunities.	Innovation, Listen & Respond, Open & Accessible	E	AIT
Considers the importance of the child and family's diverse cultures, faith, abilities, identities, and experiences in helping to understand the situation from their perspective to inform the best practice approach and support for the child and family.	Innovation, Listen & Respond, Open & Accessible	E	AIT
<u>Shaping and Influencing the Practice System</u>			
Promotes the use of Signs of Safety practice principles by creating an environment where workers feel valued, respected, and motivated, and translate these same values into their work with children and families.	Listen & Respond, Collaboration, Open & Accessible	E	AI
Uses feedback received from children, families, professionals, and social workers on where things can be improved, reinforce what we do well, and encourage the team to work together to bring about positive service improvements and professional capability.	Innovation, Leadership, Impact	E	AI
Contributes to the shaping, implementation, and review of relevant policies and statutory guidance whenever possible to help reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and promote professional judgement and good working practice.	Collaboration, Listen & Respond	E	AIT
Ability to develop and sustain multi-agency networks that help coordinate a diversity of support and understanding around the challenges children and families may face and how to best approach and support improved outcomes for them.	Leadership, Open & Accessible	E	AIT

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<u>Effective Use of Power and Authority</u> Models a professional approach that promotes respectful challenge, allows others to admit mistakes, recognises good practice, and supports continual learning and development environment within the team and across the service. Working collaboratively with practitioners and managers on identifying practice, learning or caseload issues in order to ensure an appropriate level of cases, complexity and learning takes place in practice.	Leadership, Collaboration	E	AI
<u>Confident Analysis and Decision-Making</u> Develop project plans and risk logs and consult with key stakeholders regarding strategic implementation across the directorate. Using a Signs of Safety analysis to support defensible decision making (ie: exploring the worries, what's working well, and what needs to change for a child in justifying decisions made) that practitioners recommend and make. Able to recognise which decisions are within the remit of the Project Lead to make, and when decisions are within the remit of the senior leadership team. Using a Signs of Safety analysis to support defensible decision making (ie: exploring the worries, what's working well, and what needs to change for a child in justifying decisions made) that practitioners recommend and make. Understanding and supporting the importance of contingency planning or the "what if" scenario is always explored with children and families and accounted for in children's plans, including when things may get bad enough to warrant statutory intervention (ie: care proceedings).	Leadership, Listen & Respond, Open & Accessible Innovation, Leadership Leadership, Collaboration, Impact	E E	AI AIT
<u>Purposeful and Effective Social Work</u> Ensure practitioners are consistently using of solution focused questioning and a Signs of Safety approach in all areas of work, from face	Leadership, Collaboration Innovation, Listen & Respond Innovation, Listen & Respond, Impact	E E	AI AI

Selection Criteria	Council Value	Level of Need	How Assessed
to face engagement with families to assessments and plans for children.			
Encourage practitioners to consistently review assessments and plans in light of any progress or change of circumstances and be receptive to changing professional views and plans according to the changing needs of the child.	Collaboration, Listen & Respond, Open & Accessible	E	AI
Exploring the feedback from the children, families, and professionals we work with and being receptive to their views, acknowledging mistakes, and learning ways to continually improve practice and make things right.	Leadership, Open & Accessible, Impact	E	AI
Ensuring students practitioners include all relevant family members (including fathers) and professionals in their work and that their views are listened to when working together in order to provide the best outcome for children.	Innovation, Leadership, Impact	E	AI
Support practitioners in the use of solution focused outcomes within children's plans that are SMART, identify clear timescales and those responsible, and use of scaling questions to gauge the progress and effectiveness of support being offered.	Collaboration, Listen & Respond	E	AIT
Ability to work autonomously, using appropriate initiative as well as working as part of a team on joint projects or initiatives.	Innovation, Leadership	E	AI
Have proficient English communication skills and an ability to influence and develop strong working relations with practitioners and managers across the service.	Leadership, Innovation, Open & Accessible	E	AI
	Innovation, Leadership, Listen & Respond	E	AI
<u>Emotionally Intelligent Practice Supervision</u>			
Able to demonstrate a high level of resilience in stressful or crisis situations to be available to support students and ASYE practitioners with empathetic listening and guidance on how to best deal with the impact.			
Be receptive to and identify areas of unnecessary bureaucracy or hierarchical pressures that unduly frustrate or impede good	Innovation, Leadership, Open & Accessible	E	AI

Selection Criteria	Council Value	Level of Need	How Assessed
practice from taking place and help create strategies to reduce or remove these.			
<u>Performance Management and Improvement</u>	Innovation, Impact	E	AI
Supporting performance management through regular audits, review of Signs of Safety reports and plans, and use of performance indicators.	Innovation, Collaboration, Impact	E	AI
Assisting with regular Signs of Safety reports highlighting areas of good practice, areas of weak practice, and progress on next steps in order to bring and maintain all areas of practice within the team and service to a good standard.	Innovation, Leadership, Impact	E	AI
Demonstrated ability to deliver high quality training and learning opportunities to practitioners and multi-agency partners.		D	AI
An understanding and experience with applying project management skills to work development and delivery.			

This position is exempt from the main provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means the Act permits the disclosure of any “spent” or “unspent” convictions, cautions or reprimands that are not “protected” as defined under the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013). This is due to this position is working with vulnerable children and adults and is thus deemed a “regulated activity” as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. This means checks will also be made against barring lists related to working with vulnerable children and adults.

We recognise the contribution that ex-offenders can make as employees and volunteers and welcome applications from them. A person’s criminal record will not, in itself, prohibit that person from being appointed to this post. Any information given will be treated in the strictest confidence. Suitable applicants will not be refused posts because of offences which are not relevant to, and do not place them at or make them a risk in, the role for which they are applying.

All cases will be examined on an individual basis and will take the following into consideration:

- Whether the conviction is relevant to the position applied for.
- The seriousness of any offence revealed.
- The age of the applicant at the time of the offence(s).
- The length of time since the offence(s) occurred.
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour.
- The circumstances surrounding the offence(s), and the explanation(s) offered by the person concerned.
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour.

We will not undertake a DBS check unless an offer of employment is made. It is important that applicants understand that failure to disclose any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings

that are not “protected” could result in withdrawing an employment offer, or later disciplinary proceedings or dismissal. For further information on which disclosures are considered “protected” and thus may be “filtered” from a disclosure, please visit

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance/dbs-filtering-guide>