

Job Description and Person Specification Profile



Social Work Senior Practitioner

Service:	Children's Social Care
Salary & Grade:	Grade I. Scale 35 to Scale 39 with a professional bar at Scale 37
Job ID:	JH09
Responsible to:	Team Manager
Contract Basis:	Permanent
Hours Per Week:	36

What's the post, and what are we looking for?

Purpose of the Role

The post holder will provide effective, high-quality professional social work services within the Fostering Supervision and Support Team, in accordance with relevant legislation, statutory guidance, fostering regulations, national minimum standards, policies and procedures. The primary focus of the role is to support foster carers to provide safe, stable and nurturing homes for children and young people, ensuring positive outcomes and promoting placement stability.

As a Senior Social Worker, the post holder will undertake complex pieces of work, including fostering assessments, standards of care investigations, allegation management, placement disruption work and complex support planning. They will provide professional support, mentoring, coaching and guidance to colleagues, contributing to the development of high-quality fostering practice across the service.

The post holder will support the leadership and management of the service by contributing to quality assurance, service development, workforce development and continuous improvement, taking account of the views of children, young people, foster carers and partners.

Key Accountabilities

Understand the Needs of Children, Young People and Foster Families

The post holder will be responsible for developing and maintaining effective professional relationships with foster carers, children and young people, enabling their full participation in assessment, support planning, review processes and decision-making.

The post holder will utilise knowledge of child development, attachment theory, trauma-informed practice and fostering best practice to inform assessments, support plans and interventions. They

will demonstrate an understanding of the impact of trauma, loss, separation, identity, diversity and cultural influences on children's development and well-being.

The post holder will work collaboratively with partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in foster care.

The post holder will undertake complex assessments and investigations, including:

- Connected Persons and foster carer assessments where required.
- Allegations against foster carers.
- Standards of Care investigations.
- Placement stability and disruption meetings.
- Foster carer review processes.
- Complex matching and support planning.
- Assessments relating to foster carers' continued suitability to foster.

They will analyse information, assess risk and protective factors, and make evidence-based recommendations to support decision-making and planning.

The post holder will attend and, where appropriate, chair or lead a range of meetings including foster carer reviews, fostering panels, disruption meetings, standards of care meetings, allegation strategy meetings, professionals' meetings and departmental meetings, contributing professionally and confidently to discussions and decision-making.

Provide Effective Support to Foster Carers and Children

The post holder will demonstrate strong interpersonal and relationship-based practice skills to engage, motivate and support foster carers in meeting the needs of children and young people placed with them.

They will provide high-quality supervision and support to foster carers, identifying strengths, promoting resilience and supporting carers through changing and often challenging circumstances.

The post holder will draw upon research, evidence-informed practice and relevant theory to support foster carers in understanding children's experiences and developing effective strategies to meet their emotional, behavioural and developmental needs.

The post holder will contribute to the delivery of foster carer training, support groups and development opportunities to enhance carers' skills and confidence.

Undertake Fostering Assessments Demonstrating Effective Analysis, Decision Making, Planning and Review

The post holder will undertake and oversee complex assessments and reviews, demonstrating a high level of professional analysis and critical thinking.

They will prepare reports of a high professional standard for a range of purposes including:

- Fostering Panel.

- Foster Carer Annual Reviews.
- Standards of Care investigations.
- Allegation investigations.
- Placement disruption reports.
- Internal management reviews.
- Court proceedings where required.

The post holder will demonstrate the ability to evaluate risk, identify strengths and make balanced recommendations that promote children's welfare and placement stability.

They will maintain accurate, timely and high-quality records in accordance with service requirements and statutory expectations.

Understand the Law, Regulations and Fostering Standards

The post holder will demonstrate a thorough understanding of fostering legislation, regulations, statutory guidance and National Minimum Standards and ensure these inform all aspects of practice.

They will undertake their duties in accordance with confidentiality requirements, data protection legislation and organisational policies and procedures.

The post holder will maintain up-to-date knowledge of developments within fostering practice, legislation and research and support colleagues to apply learning to practice.

They will promote a culture of reflective practice and encourage professional discussion, challenge and learning within the team.

Demonstrate Professional Ethics and Values

The post holder will champion the rights, welfare and voice of children and young people, ensuring that diversity, equality and inclusion are embedded throughout practice.

They will demonstrate professional curiosity, integrity and accountability in all aspects of their work, ensuring that children, young people and foster carers are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

Deliver Practice Excellence, Performance and Service Improvement

The post holder will support the Team Manager in maintaining high standards of practice across the fostering service through mentoring, coaching and providing practice guidance to colleagues.

They will:

- Support less experienced social workers through co-working, mentoring and case consultation.

- Lead on complex pieces of work and provide professional advice and challenge where required.
- Assist with the induction and development of new staff.
- Support the supervision and development of student social workers and newly qualified social workers where appropriate.
- Contribute to quality assurance activities, including audits and practice reviews.
- Promote high standards in assessments, recording, report writing and statutory compliance.
- Facilitate reflective discussions, workshops and learning opportunities across the team.
- Identify, model and promote good practice and support the implementation of service improvements.
- Contribute to policy development, service reviews and working groups to improve fostering services.
- Support the use of feedback from children, young people and foster carers to inform service development and improvement.

The post holder will contribute to the maintenance and development of an efficient, effective and supportive team culture and will undertake training and continuing professional development appropriate to the responsibilities of the role.

Personal requirements of a successful post holder	Category
Technical Requirements	
Social Work Degree/DipSW, CQSW, CSS or equivalent	E
Social Work England registration	E
Full driving licence essential unless precluded by disability when reasonable adjustments will be considered.	E
Skills, Knowledge and Experience	
Significant post qualifying experience of providing effective and high quality social work to children and their families.	E
Knowledge and understanding of key legislation, national, regional and local statutory guidance, policies and procedures to safeguard and improve outcomes for children and families.	E
Experience of case management including undertaking assessments with children and families to identify need and develop multi-agency action plans in partnership with families and partner agencies.	E
Ability to communicate effectively and transfer key and complex information to all levels of staff, adapting the style of communication as necessary to ensure that this information is understood.	E
Ability to plan and manage a complex workload, progressing various tasks concurrently.	E
Demonstrate the ability to apply analytical and logical thinking to gathering and analysing information and formulating plans.	E
Contribute to making informed and timely decisions.	E
Ability to use IT systems to retrieve, record and update information and willingness to learn to use new systems.	E
Personal Qualities	
Ability to demonstrate leadership	E
Ability to exert positive influence over the performance of others, promoting others' self-esteem, inspiring trust and fostering confidence in others' ability to achieve high standards.	E
To operate with integrity and have the ability to be open and honest, whilst maintaining high standards of personal behaviour and display strong moral principles in the work that you undertake with families.	E

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| • Demonstrate a willingness to be accountable for your actions and decisions, and to understand the consequences of your practice. | E |
| • Be able to demonstrate a willingness to share information and good practice with other people in the interest of supporting children and families. | E |
| • Possess a strong desire to treat people with care and dignity, always being aware of the rights of other people, and always seeking to help and support others where you can. | E |
| • Ability to manage stress and to work under pressure. | E |
| • Take a flexible approach to work. | E |
| • Ability to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence through the medium of English | E |

Our employees' skills, experience and knowledge are essential to our success along with their happiness, commitment, enthusiasm and motivation to be the best they can be.

What can you expect from us?

- A fair salary and benefits
- Opportunities for good health and wellbeing
- Help you to grow, develop and to do your best
- Enable you to be creative and innovative
- Fully involve you in changes that affect you and your work
- Listen, and act on your ideas and feedback

Working together, we are proud to work for Tameside

Our **STRIVE** values underpin our practice and behaviours and are at the heart of everything that we do:

