Advanced Practitioner – Children’s Social Care

Role Profile: Advanced Practitioner
Grade: Grade 12
Accountable to: Group Manager (Operational Delivery) and by matrix to Service Development Manager (Workforce, Skills and Capacity)
Accountable for: None

Role Context & Purpose

This role will support the Management Team across Children’s Social Care in delivering a high quality Social Care Service to clients across the County as the recognised subject matter expert and exemplar in Social Care practice and theories.

Providing constructive and reflective challenge they will enhance social work practice, procedures and policies, promote innovation, and introduce new ways of working from recognised sites of excellence.

Liaising closely with Senior Management colleagues to ensure that issues, comments and feedback on the service provided are directed to the appropriate manager.

They will contribute to the development of knowledge and promotion of excellence in Social Care using evidence-informed practice. They will make use of sophisticated, critical reasoning and both model and facilitate reflective and evidence informed practice, applying a range to tools to provide innovative and appropriate solutions.

They continue to work directly with people who use services, and those who care for them, as well as families and communities by providing and supporting effective interventions.

Key Accountabilities

The specific accountabilities of this flexible role may alter from time to time in order to meet the needs of the client, but accountabilities will include (or be equivalent in nature to) those listed below:

- To deliver a professional and best practice social care subject matter expertise service with a specific team and the wider Practice and Workforce Development Team.

- Through the application of a broad and deep knowledge of Social Care theory and practice, to accurately diagnose highly complex client problems. Research the issues & produce a range of possible solutions by applying the right concepts and tools which are appropriate for situation discussing with management, clients or colleagues as appropriate such as: supporting colleagues with complex cases undertaking case reviews or audits of practice.
Job Category: CSC
Sub Category: Specialist Occupation
JE Code: LA80

• To undertake medium and long term practice development projects which require developed interpretation and analysis skills and partnership working with both colleagues and clients, in order to deliver solutions to a complex range of issues. Identifying practice changes, resource implications and training required implications for the unit as whole e.g. to undertake thematic audits as part of a systemic audit programme, taking responsibility for the learning from these audits to be disseminated. Including liaising with external stakeholders where necessary and the development and delivery of training if required.

• To contribute to, or lead as appropriate, new policy proposals by providing information about practical application and required practice changes.

• To be responsible for persuading, and coaching colleagues or clients to undertake appropriate courses of action though effective developed communication skills by providing in-depth specialist advice and information in a range of formats as appropriate.

• As a practice educator, provide specific practice support to students and newly qualified social workers in their Assessed and Supported Year of Employment and other colleagues to ensure that their practice is excellent, developed and embedded.

• To quickly establish, develop and maintain good working relationships with clients, and colleagues supporting them to use Solution Focused Practice and other social work models/theories as appropriate.

• To supervise (through matrix management) a small, but changing, group of colleagues in order to improve practice, and providing development and coaching as required.

• Responsible for handling small amounts of cash, or processing cheques, invoices or equivalent, such as processing invoices. Additionally to cost solutions and recommendations in order to ensure financial viability of options that could have significant budgetary implications e.g. placements for children looked after.

• Act on any allegation or suspicions of abuse or potential abuse of a vulnerable person. Follow County Council procedures and contribute and lead on Safeguarding Investigations and child protection planning where appropriate. Ensure the accurate and timely reporting of issues and ensure correct procedures are followed.

• Responsible for the care of, accuracy, confidentiality, security and maintenance of all individuals’ records and related manual and/or computerised information, including highly sensitive and confidential adult/child protection issues.

• Remain up to date and compliant with all relevant legislation and adhere to organisational procedures, policies and professional codes of conduct in order to uphold a high quality seamless service. Identify own continuing professional development needs and strive to meet these.

• Equalities - Supports equality and diversity and respects anyone in contact with, working for and using the services provided by West Sussex County Council regardless of gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or ethnic origin.
Role Demands

• The role requires the postholder to undertake lengthy periods of concentrated mental attention over a range of activities, e.g. in order to analyse information and data collected as a part of diagnostic work, or developing a suite of coaching initiatives to meet a specific practice or case need.

• Initiative – Anticipates problems and makes frequent informed decisions, particularly in relation to service provision, complex casework, partnership building and safeguarding investigations.

• The work will involve regular exposure to people who access or need the service and/or subject matter which may place significant emotional demands on the postholder for example significant work involving dealing with highly complex social work cases and leading on safeguarding investigations.

• The role will also involve exposure to challenging behaviour from people who access or need the service.

• There may be some requirement to work flexibly out of office hours to assist colleagues, customers, carers and families.

Advanced Practitioner
Person Specification

This section outlines the key criteria that must be addressed when submitting an application for employment or registering with West Sussex Futures as shortlisting for interview will be based on information supplied here.

Level of Knowledge

• Relevant advanced theoretical Social Work concepts and practices and detailed organisational knowledge relating to the provision of a professional Social Work service dealing with very complex issues e.g. attachment, impact of developmental trauma, child development.

• Detailed knowledge of the wider Social Work legislation, organisational policies practices and procedures. In depth knowledge of the specialist area of child development and social care practice, techniques, models and systems as appropriate.

• Breadth of understanding of the therapeutic interventions that can be used and (e.g. solution focused, systemic and evidence based approaches to practice).

• An excellent understanding of the partnership agencies including health, housing, learning, statutory, voluntary and independent sector

• Knowledge of management strategies in order to confidently manage internal and external issues.

• Sound and accurate IT knowledge, such as Word and Excel (or equivalent packages).
Qualifications and Professional Membership

- A recognised professional Social Work Qualification e.g. Degree in Social Work, DipSW, CQSW or equivalent as recognised by the Health and Care Professions Council.

- A recognised post qualifying award in Social Work or demonstrable evidence of continuous professional development at a similar level.

- Current Health and Care Professions Council Registration and responsibility for maintaining registration with the Health & Care Professions Council.

- Demonstrate a willingness to achieve Full Practice Educator qualification at stage two. (Hold Full Practice Educator qualification at Stage two. Desirable)

- Valid, full driving licence

Experience

- Demonstrable evidence of providing focused, timely, sound and accurate advice and guidance and working through very complex casework, including managing levels of risk within a caseload of complex safeguarding cases.

- Experience of making a significant contribution to delivering and implementing change.

- Demonstrable experience of dealing with a wide breath of issues and complex situations and using highly developed analytical skills to provide solution focussed and resource efficient options.

- Evidence of good assessment skills, including the ability to ensure regular reviews and risk management with a variety of individuals, carers or families. Evidence of effectively prioritising work and meeting deadlines.

- Experience of maintaining and developing effective working relationships within a multi-agency/multidisciplinary setting including effective partnership working with those who access or need the service and maintaining a focus on the needs of the individual.

- Experience of effectively managing, supervising or coaching others.

- Experience of delivering training, presentations and development work relating to social work practice. Desirable

Skills

**Key Skill 1**

Ability to create and maintain an environment where critical reflection and analysis is valued, staff are supported their find own solutions and practice capability is developed, including the ability to role model, promote exemplary practice and provide expertise in specialist assessment and intervention, and act as a resource to others within the organisation, supporting social workers to develop.
**Key Skill 2**
Ability to engage directly with children, young people and families, employing therapeutic approaches and a range of interventions to facilitate behavioural change, that can be evidenced, evaluated, linking theory to practice.

**Key skill 3**
Outcome focused with the ability to assess and analyse risk within a context of complexity and uncertainty, providing forward thinking strategies and solutions that consider a variety of possible options to achieve desired outcomes.

**Key skill 4**
Able to manage self, is self-aware and understands impact of work on self and others and responds constructively to situations. Understanding the need for emotional intelligence/resilience, specifically in relation to risk, ensuring that there is a positive balance between perceived risk and protection from harm where necessary. Ability to respond calmly and appropriately to situations where others are in a stressful or anxious situation.

**Key skill 5**
Highly developed communication skills in order to influence in a multi-disciplinary setting and communicate clearly and effectively to explain complicated information to a wide range of people and negotiate and persuade others to adopt a particular course of action that they may not otherwise wish to take.

**Key skill 6**
Ability to diagnose, research, analyse and interpret highly complex or technical information to make effective and robust judgements and write reports, to use evidence gained to inform good practice and maintain a focus on positive outcomes for service users, families, carers and communities

Able to promote and encourage the participation and engagement of children, young people and families in their care and service delivery

Able to reflect on practice and learn from experience and feedback, taking responsibility for own performance and being proactive in relation to own work and professional development

Ability to engage in and facilitate research and evaluation of practice and work with other service professionals to share best practice, knowledge and learning to create a community of best practice

Ability to work proactively as a member of the team including working together with others internally or in external multiagency settings. Understanding others priorities and is able to negotiate, influence, deal with conflict and resolve difficulties.

Ability to maintain clear, accurate records of all work undertaken and produce case reports and correspondence for a variety of audiences including meetings, conferences, Court panels and other agencies.

Sound and accurate ICT and keyboard skills.

Ability to be proactive in having up-to-date knowledge and understanding of changes in legislation, white papers, current research and best practice developments.
West Sussex Behaviours

This section will be assessed when a candidate is successful at securing an interview, and for continued development at Performance and Development Reviews. (The West Sussex Behaviours are not required to be addressed at application.)

We expect everyone in the Council to demonstrate the West Sussex Behaviours, regardless of grade, level or role. They describe how we work with our customers, colleagues and partners.

Further information on the West Sussex Behaviours can be found on the West Sussex County Council website.