| Role Structure | Role Details |
| --- | --- |
| Directorate: | Children & Young People |
| Grade: | HC08 |
| Location: | Hereford |
| Responsible to: | Team Manager |

# Job Description

# Social Worker

**Fostering**

## Main purpose of the role

* To recruit, assess, train, supervise & support, and review a range of mainstream foster carers,

Supported Lodgings Providers and alternative to care nominated family and friends (connected people)

to provide placements for children; in care, being discharged from care; and requiring short breaks or respite services.

* To ensure that national Childcare Legislation, fostering standards (2002 and 2011), regulations, schedules, formal notifications to Ofsted are , adhered to in respect of the provision of Fostering

Services, Private Fostering, short breaks, Family and Friends (connected persons)

* To manage a mixed caseload of foster carers, family and friends arrangements, ensuring an effective

and efficient deployment of services and resources to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in care and in alternative arrangements.

* Work in partnership with a range of services, HIPSS, Adoption , Safeguarding, Case Management, Placements, LAC - Children in Care team , CAMHS, LAC Nurse, Education Services, Youth Offending , NHS, Housing, Benefits agency, Leisure and fun, Safeguarding Advisory service to ensure that the placement needs and outcomes of children placed within Fostering, SLP, family and friends arrangements.

| Key Duties and Responsibilities | Frequency of Task |
| --- | --- |
| * To manage a mixed caseload of foster carers involved with mainstream fostering, kinship foster carers, and Supported Lodging Providers to meet the placement needs and outcomes for children placed in their care. | * Ongoing |
| * To undertake a range of assessments of prospective and existing foster carers (mainstream fostering, kinship care and supported lodging). | * As required |
| * To work in partnership with Case managers and Team Leaders and key professionals to ensure that: * Children and young people in need of protection and statutory intervention can safely have their needs addressed whilst remaining with their parents, families and friends and carers; * That carers protect children and young people who are in need of protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation or significant harm and they are kept safe * That foster carers and children cared for in alternative arrangements receive personalised support that improves outcomes for specific children and young people where statutory requirements and powers have been used to place the child/young person * That foster carers, SLP placements and carers of children and young people place in alternative arrangements provide sustained and improved outcomes for the children, young people, where there is a plan for rehabilitation home with their families or carers * There are improved outcomes for children and young people who are the subject of Child Protection Plans, Care Proceedings and Children in Care | * Ongoing |
| * To work with a range of partner agencies to reduce risk of harm and provide advice and support to children, young people and families | * As required |
| * To promote close and constructive relationships with children, young people, their carers and their families, and partner agencies | * Ongoing |
| * To implement, monitor and review foster carer’s agreements, placement agreements and support plans | * As required |
| * To effectively assess and manage risk and ensure that safe care plans for each child or young person are in place and reviewed according to the needs of the child or young person | * As required |
| * To promote standards which achieve equality of opportunity | * Daily |
| * To ensure personal adherence to all relevant Policies & Procedures, and guides to foster carers | * Daily |
| * To accurately record and keep up-to-date information using the appropriate IT and Information systems in accordance with the Council’s Policy and Procedures | * Ongoing |
| * To undertake duty tasks as part of the Fostering Service rota as directed by the Team Manager and Senior Practitioner | * As required |
| * **Recruitment and Assessment of Foster Carers** | |
| * To participate in campaigns to recruit foster carers and Supported Lodgings Providers | * As required |
| * To respond to enquiries from the public in relation to becoming a foster carers | * As required |
| * To attend and participate in recruitment campaigns for foster carers on a planned rota basis through the year on evening and weekends | * As required |
| * To visit prospective foster carers | * As required |
| * To directly participate in the planning and delivery of training to prospective foster carers on a planned rota basis, evenings and weekends as required | * As required |
| **Consultation, Support , Feedback, Complaints & Representations** | |
| * To contribute to, participate in the planning and delivery of support groups for a range of foster carers and alterative carers | * As required |
| * To directly contribute to the planning and delivery of major fostering events eg, Annual Foster carers conference | * As required |
| * To support consultation processes with Foster carer and children placed in foster carers and other alternative care arrangements | * As required |
| * To provide information to respond to complaints and representations and where appropriate to attend specific meetings eg. Mediation, complaints interviews, formal attendance to IRM panels | * As required |
| * To contribute to and directly maintain and improve service quality, maintenance of all records to ensure that Fostering Standards and regulations are complied with in relation to service audits and inspection | * As required |
| * To directly contribute to the development and production of service information to foster carers eg. Foster carers Newsletter, Website, Publicity material to promote fostering information packs etc | * As required |
| **Creative work** | |
| * Draft effective and professionally credible complex reports for internal and external use as required | * As required |
| * Have knowledge of existing Policies and Procedures and their application | * Ongoing |
| * Keep up to date with service specific legislation, guidance, good practice and other developments within social work | * As required |
| * Develop training workshops and project work to enhance service delivery to users | * As required |
| **Decisions made** | |
| * The post holder will report emergency child protection and crises situations involving foster carers, alternative carers to their Team Leader and/or service manager and to the case manager for the child/children in placement and work in partnership with case managers, Team Leaders to ensure that Safeguarding and Fostering Policies and procedures are followed –ensuring that advice and decisions made by Team Leaders, Strategy discussions and meetings are followed | * Ongoing |
| * The post holder will be responsible for professional decision making in relation to the supervision, support needs training, provision of information to foster carers, and carers involved in alternative care arrangements | * Ongoing |
| * The post holder will be responsible for the foster carers agreement, placement agreement and risk assessments, safe care agreements for foster carers on their caseload and ensure that risks and safe care factors are reviewed and updated depending upon the needs of the child/children in placement with the carers under the supervision of their Team Leader | * Ongoing |
| * The post holder will be required to make decision in consultation with their Team Leader, case managers and other Team Leaders in relation to initial notification of allegations made against foster carers and will work with key Service Managers to establish strategy meetings and discussions to respond to allegations against foster carers | * Ongoing |
| **Supervisory responsibility** |  |
| * The postholder will be directly responsible for the supervision of Mainstream foster carers, SLP and Kinship Carers on their case load and may be asked to assist in the supervision of other foster carers on a temporary basis | * As required |
| * **Supervision received** | |
| * Monthly supervision is the norm to be identified by the Team Manager and/or Senior Practitioner. In some cases supervision may increase in response to complex cases, additional support and Induction | * As required |
| * **Complexity** | |
| * To manage a mixed case load of Foster carers | * Ongoing |
| * To co-ordinate and take responsibility for the assessment of a range of foster carers and alternative carers for children in need and children in care within timescales | * Ongoing |
| * To undertake all necessary checks and inquiries to inform the suitability of prospective and existing foster carers and alternative carers | * As required |
| * To ensure all assessment reports contain critical analysis of the suitability of prospective and existing carers, undertake multi-agency Assessments, liaising with partner agencies as appropriate and implementing, monitoring and reviewing the child’s care plan | * Ongoing |
| * Draft effective and professionally credible reports for internal and external use as required, and which could be used within care proceedings under the direct supervision of the Team Manager | * As required |

**Person Specification**

| **Requirements** | **Essential or Desirable** | **Identified by**  **A – Application I – Interview** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Qualifications and Training** | | |
| * Social Work Degree, DipSW, CQSW, CSS or equivalent | Essential | A |
| * Ability to travel around the County | Essential | A |
| * HCPC registration | Essential | A |
| * Commitment to continuing professional development | Essential | A |
| **Experience & Knowledge** | | |
| * Experience of working with children, young people and their families | Essential | A, I |
| * Knowledge of the child protection process and assessment process | Essential | A, I |
| * Understanding of the Children Act and its context | Essential | A, I |
| * Knowledge of Fostering Standards, regulations and Schedules | Essential | A, I |
| * General understanding of other relevant legislation and guidance relating to children services | Essential | A, I |
| * Knowledge of policy and procedures in relation to the care and protection of children | Essential | A, I |
| * Knowledge of policy and procedures in relation to Children in Care | Essential | A, I |
| **Skills and Abilities** | | |
| * Oral and written communication skills i.e. ability to express complex concepts and information | Essential | A, I |
| * Ability to use IT systems effectively, ensure regulatory standards are met and performance standards maintained | Essential | A, I |
| * Understanding of child care and child protection legislation and procedures | Essential | A, I |
| * Ability to plan, organise and prioritise a demanding workload, in order to maintain the delivery of multiple, competing short and long term objectives within timescales | Essential | A, I |
| * Ability to communicate effectively | Essential | A, I |
| **Other Factors** | | |
| * Ability to work as a member of a team | Essential | A, I |
| * Good organisational skills, including effective time management, reliability, decision making, motivating and enabling others | Essential | A, I |
| * Ability to develop collaborative relationships | Essential | A, I |
| * A partnership/holistic approach to problem solving | Essential | A, I |
| * Develops good relationships with others by behaving with integrity, treating people with respect and leading by example | Essential | A, I |
| * Commitment to personal and professional development and ability to deliver training to others | Essential | A, I |
| * A flexible approach - willing to accept responsibility and work on own initiative | Essential | A, I |
| * Commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice | Essential | A, I |
| * The duties of this post requires the post holder to work evening and weekends on a planned rota basis to deliver recruitment, training and evening visits | Essential | A, I |
| * Holder of current and valid driving licence, and day to day access to a car | Essential | A, I |
| * To work a flexible 37 hour week with children young people and their families to identify and support their complex needs, this may include working, evenings, weekends and bank holidays | Essential | A, I |

All council staff have a duty to promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults with care and support needs at risk of abuse and neglect who cannot take steps to protect themselves. Ensuring you attend mandated safeguarding children and safeguarding adults training to enable you to recognise the concerning behavior, know how to talk about it, and consent/duty to share information effectively. You will also learn about the legalities and procedures the social care staff can take.

## Our Values and Behaviours

The council’s THRIVE core values are our guiding principles and beliefs that shape our culture and behaviour within the council. ​They help us to achieve our Council Plan vision “do our best for Herefordshire” acting as our DNA and the “way that we do things around here”. We expect all colleagues to act as a role model by living our values and setting an example for others. ​Our values strive to promote a thriving workforce by fostering a culture of trust, being honest and responsible, inclusive, valuing people and resources and leading with empathy.

**Trust -** Developing and maintaining relationships based on a culture of transparency and open communication. Supported by integrity and the confidence that you are reliable and fulfil commitments.

**Honesty -** Demonstrating truthfulness, integrity, and transparency in all communications, decisions, and relationships. Being trustworthy, reliable, and accountable for your actions. Acting with sincerity and fairness, even in challenging situations.

**Responsibility -** Taking ownership of individual and collective actions, decisions, and delivering on commitments. Being reliable, fulfilling obligations and being accountable for outcomes and results. Proactively contributing to the achievement of your own, the team and council goals.

**Inclusivity -** Embracing diversity, equity and inclusion by recognising and valuing the unique perspectives, backgrounds and experiences of our staff, customers and residents. Creating an environment where every individual is valued, respected and can belong.

**Value -** Upholding high standards, ethics and integrity to guide our actions and decisions. Demonstrating commitment to creating and delivering value in our work by recognising and appreciating each other, our resources, processes, customers, community and environment.

**Empathy -** Demonstrating a genuine and caring understanding of others' feelings, perspectives, and experiences. Listening attentively, acting with compassion, supporting with respect and kindness and considering the impact of our actions on others.