

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Senior Social Work Assistant - Fostering		
Directorate	Children's Commissioning		
Reporting to	Team Manager - Fostering		
Grade	13		
Evaluation ref:	AG1051	Job Family ref:	
Role Purpose			
The Family Assessment and Support Team (FA&ST) is a unique team, working independently from childcare social workers undertaking dedicated parenting assessments of parents in placement or in the community, independent of the child's social worker. The team consists of assessing social workers, supervising social workers, senior social work assistant's and foster carers who provide parent and child foster placements for Somerset Council. We work closely together providing parents with a high level of support to develop their parenting skills and reduce risk. We have an excellent reputation within Somerset Council and continue to develop our knowledge and practice in relation to parent and child fostering and parenting assessments. This the role supports foster carers and undertakes observations and direct work with parents to inform the assessment of their parenting. As a Senior Social Work Assistant (SSWA) you will undertake targeted work with parents on topics including (but not exclusively); child development, stimulation, substance misuse, healthy relationships and their support network alongside an assessing social worker and you will be required to provide detailed and accurate recordings. You will also be required to support foster carers, including arranging support and ensuring safety standards are maintained. You do not require a social work qualification for this role, but a good knowledge of undertaking direct work with parents and foster carers, and good transferable skills will be considered.			
Accountabilities			
Complete home visits to approved foster carers or new carers being assessed, including their birth children to develop relationships. Mentor and share information with carers assisting them with their learning and development, empowering and enabling them to meet the complex needs of children who are looked after.			

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Work directly with allocated foster carers and their families, children, young people and their families using a range of interventions and activities which are underpinned by evidence-based practice to help improve outcomes for children.

Assist with completing statutory checks, e.g. health and safety inspections, DBS checks, Safe Care Policies, pet assessments for prospective foster carers and plan and facilitate recruitment events and information sessions.

Review and monitor foster carers progress, sharing information with the wider fostering service as required.

Participate in and arrange meetings to support the work of the fostering service, e.g. social events for foster carers, birth children events, or other meetings with carers.

Provide support and assistance to professionals within the service including being part of the duty system, responding to carer enquiries or difficulties, or in the absence of their allocated social worker.

Work with practitioners, carers, children and young people to promote and embed an understanding of trauma informed approaches. Use a range of interventions including direct support to children/practitioners/families/carers.

Maintain and update appropriate administrative records or as requested by professional staff in preparation of visits, checks, reports and meetings.

Use the necessary information technology systems, e.g. LCS, Outlook, Egress and the learning centre.

Develop an awareness of informal networks of foster carers and facilitate appropriate support groups.

Keep records and provide, as required, information, written assessments, reports or other documents to support multi agency partnership working.

Maintain a child centred approach to focus on the need to manage risk, reduce vulnerabilities and work towards sustainable positive change.

Record data and gather information in respect of the recruitment of foster carers and the enquiry process/application system.

Attend team meetings and fostering service events. Contribute to team action plans and service development.

Understand, uphold and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

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Knowledge / Experience / Skills		
	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Broad working knowledge of Social Care.		X
Awareness of relevant legislation and knowledge of services available to support children and foster carers.		X
Understanding of the impact of loss and separation on children's wellbeing.		X
Experience		
Able to develop professional relationships with a range of clients and colleagues based on mutual trust, respect for individual rights and cultural needs, and the promotion of equality, diversity and the interests of service users and carers.	X	
Demonstrable ability to prioritize work and organize competing demands.	X	
A demonstrable commitment to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, alongside showing empathy with foster carers, and understanding and respect for individual needs.	X	
Some experience of social care, but not necessarily in paid employment.	X	
Experience of working as part of a team.		X
Clerical or administrative experience.		X
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
NVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care or relevant qualification/experience.	X	
Willingness to work towards NVQ Level 4.	X	
Literate and numerate to GCSE level/Level 4 or equivalent.	X	

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Good IT skills, enabling effective input, manipulation and retrieval of data and other information.		X
Skills		
Ability to develop professional relationships with foster carers, prospective foster carers, children and colleagues based on mutual trust, respect for individual rights and cultural needs, and the promotion of equality, diversity and the interests of service users and carers.	X	
A demonstrable commitment to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, alongside showing empathy with foster carers, and understanding and respect for individual needs.	X	
Ability to process information quickly and accurately, applying quality standards to all tasks undertaken and ensuring that nothing is overlooked.	X	
Positive attitude to the use of computers with IT skills enabling effective input, manipulation and retrieval of data and information.	X	
Capable of producing basic correspondence, oral and written reports and records that are legible, accurate and easily understood.	X	
An excellent telephone manner, good listening, organisational and assessment skills.	X	
Prepared to undertake training and share new knowledge and skills within the team.	X	
Able to travel around the area to meet the requirements of the post, including areas that are not currently serviced by public transport	X	
Ability to speak fluent English as stated in Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016).	X	
Working Conditions		
The nature of the work will require the postholder to travel across the county to attend meetings and out of county as required. Will work from an allocated base with multi-professional teams.		

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Dimensions of the role
Working Arrangements
Somerset Council's Dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.
Corporate Accountabilities
Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Date: