

Job description

Post title: Practice Manager
Service area: People's Directorate, Safeguarding and Family Support
Grade: PO4
Reports to: Team Manager
Your team: Children Services Contact Team
Number of supervisees: 6

Primary Job Function

Our vision for the service is that children and young people are safe, can overcome difficulties and can form secure relationships through their childhood and into their adulthood.

You will confidently model motivational trauma informed practice. You will be available to your team in sharing your experience and support Social Workers in alignment with Islington's Practice model through coaching, consultations and co-working. You will lead on developing areas of practice.

You will share and exercise the organisational practice ethos which places Motivational Practice and trauma-informed practice at the heart of working with families. You will be ambitious for every child to reach their potential in all aspects of their development including education, health and emotional wellbeing.

The Children's Service Contact Team (CSCT) is Islington's single point of contact for all new referrals for both Children's Social Care and the various Targeted Services. It is integral to Islington's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and some MASH partners are co-located with the team. From September 2019 referrals to emotional and mental health services for CYP are also directed through the CSCT front door. This post will support the CSCT team to manage the increase in referrals that this change will bring. This will include partnership working with the CAMHS clinician and administrator, and third sector emotional wellbeing clinician who will be integrated with the CSCT team.

Islington CSC is rated Outstanding by Ofsted, during the last inspection in March 2020 the inspectors noted the following in relation to CSCT: *"Experienced and knowledgeable social workers screen contacts without delay. The 'no names' telephone consultation service is well used and valued by professionals and provides an effective service. Thresholds between early help and social care are well understood and applied appropriately. Escalating risk or need is recognised and results in timely referrals to children's social care, followed by a swift response. Since the last inspection, the local authority has introduced the co-location of highly*

experienced and dedicated early help and mental health practitioners in the children's services contact team. This is a significant strength and results in early signposting to specialist services to meet children's needs".

The CSCT Practice Manager is responsible for the achievement of good outcomes for children and their families through:

- Working with the Team Manager and the other Deputy Team Manager, to provide operational management of CSCT. Managing day to day activity to ensure it delivers high quality responses to contacts, within the required time-scales. Ensuring that the business process within CSCT and the MASH is effective and efficient.
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with key partners in CSCT, which are supportive and appropriately challenging. Ensuring information sharing in the MASH is a collaborative process
- Reviewing, filtering and make transparent, evidence based threshold decisions on all incoming contacts, within specified timeframes and avoiding delay. Taking a lead role in co-ordinating and/ or directly gathering relevant and proportionate information, via screening and MASH processes in order to analyse, make an assessment of risk/need and to decide the appropriate service to offer children and families within the specified timeframes of the MASH.

Ensuring that appropriate advice and consultation to members of the public and other professionals making contact with CSCT is offered. Providing guidance to those reporting safeguarding concerns and/or making referrals for Targeted and Specialist Children and Families Services.

Duties:

1. Assisting the Team Manager in monitoring and quality assuring the practice across CSCT, using regular audits and performance data. To ensure practice meets the standards set out in the *London Child Protection Procedures, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018* and local policies, procedures.
2. Working with the Team Manager, Practice Manager and Senior Social Worker in the allocation of workload to Social Workers and Referral Officers, management of a duty rota.
3. Directly line managing and regularly supervising Social Workers and Referral Officers, which complies with the department's supervision standards.
4. Quality assuring the work of the Social Workers and the Referral Officers.

5. Undertake relevant training and other practice development activity to maintain accurate up to date knowledge and skills in accordance with relevant legislation, statutory guidance, policies, procedures and research.
6. Ensuring that when information is shared within MASH, that the appropriate process is followed to make sure that access to the information is restricted to MASH professionals. Ensuring that issues of consent are appropriately considered across all CSCT activity.
7. Ensure that referrers and contributing agencies are kept informed of progress and of the referral outcome as per CSCT framework.
8. Providing leadership and promoting a positive culture, by role modelling professional standards of behaviour and mutual respect amongst colleagues and partner agencies.
9. Participate in a variety of other activities that contribute to the work of CSCT, the establishment and maintenance of good collaborative working relationships with partner agencies and the improvement of referrals, 'step up' and 'step down' processes to and from early help services e.g. project work, developing specialist skills/knowledge, attending meetings and/or delivering training.
10. Developing the skills and competencies of CSCT staff through training and development. To address any shortfalls in performance under Council procedures where necessary.
11. Ensuring information on the Early Help Module IT system is accurate and up-to-date.

To contribute towards the management of service budgets effectively and in accordance with Best Value principles.
12. Deputising for the Team Manager when necessary.

ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS:

- To carry out their responsibilities/duties within the framework of the Challenging Inequality Strategy and the Fairer Together Framework
- Carry out their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and relevant Health and Safety legislation
- Ensure that duties are undertaken with due regard and compliance with GDPR and other legislation.
- Adhere to the standards of conduct, performance and ethics of Social Work England.

- To use and assist others in the use of information technology systems to carry out duties in the most efficient and effective manner.
- To undertake training and constructively take part in meetings, supervision, seminars and other events designed to improve communication and assist with the effective development of the post and post holder.
- The post holder is expected to be committed to the Council's core values of public service, quality, equality and empowerment and to demonstrate this commitment in the way they carry out their duties.
- Ensure all the services within the area(s) of responsibility are provided in accordance with the Council's commitment to high quality service provision to users.
- At all times carrying out responsibilities/duties within the framework of the Council's Dignity for all Policy. (Equal Opportunities Policy).

Our ambition

We're determined to make Islington fairer. To create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

We also have an ambitious goal – to be the best council in the country – with every employee clear about the part they play and inspired, focused and supported to give their very best.

We want to build an organisation where employees feel valued, inspired and empowered to help us achieve our goals and provide the best services possible to our residents.

Our values and behaviours

'Be Islington' is about setting a clear challenge about what it means to be an Islington employee and sets the standard for every new recruit.

We ask our employees to 'Be Islington' – playing their part in working together for a fairer borough and to always be collaborative, be ambitious, be resourceful, and be empowering ('CARE').

Our commitment to challenging inequality

We are committed to tackling inequality, racism and injustice and creating a fairer borough for all. In order to do this, we need to set the example by being a fair employer and creating a workplace environment, which is free from discrimination, racism and inequality. Our approach needs to be proactive, consistently learning to create a fairer workplace and foster a culture, which empowers all staff to challenge inequality.

Fairness is at the heart of what we do. We want to celebrate and embrace our differences by:

- Ensuring our workforce is representative of the people we work on behalf of, our residents

- Creating equitable working environments and diverse teams
- Understanding our residents in order to design and deliver services that help tackle inequality and improve life chances for our residents
- Getting to know people and their differences
- Interpreting issues and concerns from a cultural perspective and address situations or problems from the points-of-view of multiple cultures
- Supporting people with long-term health conditions and/or disabilities
- Recognising the value of flexible working to support staff where possible

Work style

As a front facing service, work will be divided between both being in the office and working from home. We value the ability to provide a flexible approach to both the service and the families we work with, whilst also supporting a healthy work life balance

Person specification

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet the essential criteria. Please ensure that you address each of the criteria as this will be assessed to determine your suitability for the post.

Assessment Guide

A = Application

I = Interview

T = Test

Essential criteria

Qualifications

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
1	Social work qualification and registered with Social Work England, post qualifying experience of a minimum of two in a statutory social work setting.	A/I

Experience

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
2	Experience in supervising child and family Social Workers with a mixed-range of skills and experience.	A/I
3	To demonstrate the application of legislation and regulations that dictate the powers and duties of the local authority in safeguarding children in need of help and protection or who are looked after (e.g. child protection measures, pre-proceedings and Public Law Outline).	A/I
4	Experience of assessing and responding to referred risks and managing plans to safeguard children within a statutory children's social care setting.	A/I
5	Demonstrated skills aligned with the Motivational Practice framework.	A/I

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by

Skills

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
6	Demonstrate an ability to maintain a safe, calm and well-ordered environment that is motivating, supportive and efficient. Facilitate reflective practice that pays attention to priorities and pressures and offers constructive and strengths based solutions with, children, young people, families/carers and partner agencies that keep children safe	A/I/T
7	Demonstrated evidence of using respectful authority and empathy to build relationships in which you exercise proportionate statutory powers to address risk and maximize the opportunity for children, young people and families/carers to make informed choices. Show evidence of inviting respectful challenge to develop logical plans of action.	A/I/T
8	Demonstrate ability to debate, discuss, reflect upon and test hypotheses to help make sense of the complexity of children, young people and families' lived experiences. Make decisions that consider the child's and young person's voice for current and long-term outcomes, reviewing these in consultation with families and other professionals.	A/I
9	Demonstrate knowledge of research including indicators of risk and protective factors to children and young people and how you have used supervision processes to implement and monitor effectiveness of interventions	A/I
10	Ability to lead a small team providing reflective individual and group supervision that safeguards children and young people and helps to improve outcomes for them and their families	A/I
11	Experience of identifying the emotional barriers of supervisees which affect practice and show an ability to support them.	A/I
12	To ensure all reports and plans are of high quality	A/I
13	Demonstrate ability to effectively allocate work and use practice data and other systems to monitor and improve practice in order to be accountable within legal, regulatory, procedural and performance	A/I

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
	frameworks.	
14	To provide observation and feedback/coaching of direct practice to measure its quality alongside effective case management underpinned by theory and best evidence. Ensuring that child protection is prioritised.	A/I
15	To ensure all HR processes are fully complied with.	A/I
16	Deal with difficult situations including complaints and conflict between families and other professionals.	A/I
17	Ensure the help provided is delivered is child-centred	A/I
18	Ability to adhere to the Council's Dignity for All policy.	A/I

Special requirements of the post

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
19	This role will require you to obtain an Enhanced/Standard satisfactory clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service	✓

Our accreditations

Our accreditations include: the Healthy Workplace award, Timewise, London Living Wage Employer, Disability Confident Committed, The Mayor's Good Work Standard, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Time to Change.

