Grading Job Description and Employee Specification

Job title: Fostering Social Worker	**Service area:** Regulation and Standards
Post number:	**Division:** Children and Families
Grade: 7-9	**Section/team:** Fostering and Children's Commissioning

Overall purpose of job:

We are looking for an enthusiastic and creative social worker to join our outstanding team.

Fostering social workers need to have a range of skills in the following areas; recruitment activity, comprehensive assessments, delivering training, supporting foster carers and kinship carers, matching children and presenting to foster panel.

We deliver support to children and families through our one family approach, ensuring that children are able to stay local and as part of our community.

The successful applicant will have a passion for achieving outcomes for children through family based care. They will work alongside the foster family and other professionals as part of a multi-agency team to develop support plans, supporting families as appropriate.

Post holders will be expected to be flexible in undertaking the duties and responsibilities attached to their post and may be asked to perform other duties, which reasonably correspond to the general character of the post and are commensurate with its level of responsibility.

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Main responsibilities:

Basic Grade 7

- Provides a duty service for members of the public and other professionals making a fostering related enquiry or referral for service.
- Receives referrals and with appropriate supervision determines initial service delivery.
- Undertakes the role of Family Finder for children with a care plan of foster care.
- Within delegation and with appropriate supervision undertakes prospective foster carer assessments. Within delegation and with appropriate support presents said assessments to the independent foster panel.
- Undertakes enquiries and assessments in line with fostering regulations and procedures, and with supervision determines the most appropriate actions and interventions.

- Alongside children's Social Worker's, develop foster family support plans for children with foster carers and kinship carers.

- Works closely with other agencies and professionals to ensure that the most appropriate services are provided to children and their families to meet their assessed needs. Offers support and supervision to fostering families.

- Maintains all case records in line with departmental policy and uses computer systems as required. With appropriate supervision formulates and implements appropriate support plans to meet the needs of children and their families.

- With appropriate supervision and support act as 'Lead Professional' in respect of individual children and young people. Works in partnership with families and other agencies to provide a range of Social Work interventions to ensure that the assessed needs of children and their families and carers are met in the most appropriate way.

- Ensures the views, wishes and feelings of children and their families and carers are considered when formulating and implementing plans.

- Facilitates recruitment events, support and celebration events, family finding events and the provision of training. Flexible working is required.

Developed (Grade 8) All
of the above plus:

- Attends multi agency case conferences or other meetings as necessary.

- Within delegation and with support as required prepares assessments and reports for Child Protection Case Conferences, foster panel and court.

- Provides an advanced level of Social Work expertise and knowledge of the team and uses the knowledge to support other less experienced workers and to develop high quality and professional Social Work practice across the service

- Takes responsibility for more complex work, commensurate with the level of competence and experience including

- Undertaking specialist Social Work interventions

- With support as required provides statements and evidence within court proceedings in both public and private law proceedings

Advanced (Grade 9)
All of the above plus:

- Undertakes all of the above autonomously, professionally and within delegations plus;

- Manages a caseload of complex work involving multiple and complex assessment and safeguarding needs.

- Manages this caseload autonomously and professionally within appropriate delegations.

- Provides advice, guidance, support, coaching, mentoring and supervision to newly qualified and less experienced Social Workers within the team.

- Provides an advanced level of Social Work expertise and knowledge to the team and uses this knowledge to support other less experienced workers and to develop professional Social Work practice across the service

Knowledge, skills and experience:

Basic (Grade 7)

- Qualified and Registered Social Worker.
- Has a basic working understanding of the law relating to children, practice guidance, and government initiatives.
- Basic assessment skills and knowledge of the National Assessment Framework.
- Knowledge of child development.
- Ability to communicate effectively with children, families and other professionals using a variety of appropriate methods relevant to the age and level of understanding.
- Ability to establish relationships and maintain trust with children and families.
- Ability to formulate professional working relationships with other agencies and professionals.
- Ability to structure your time and manage your own caseload with support and advice required.
- Report writing skills and the ability to maintain accurate records.
- Experience of working with and proving support to children and their families. The ability to work in partnership with children, young people and their carers.
- The ability to work as part of a team

Developed (Grade 8)
All of the above plus

- A developed, working understanding of statutory and legal responsibilities towards children, young people and their families.
- An ability to work appropriately and professionally (with support required) within the court arena.
- An understanding of roles and responsibilities within a multi- agency framework, i.e. child protection, children in care or child in need, fostering and adoption and an ability to work effectively in a multi-agency way. Skills in analysis and the use of theoretical frameworks, research and professional knowledge within planning and decision making.

- The use of Social Work theories, practice tools and methods within work with children and families.

- The ability to work within lone working policies and to assess and manage risk to self and others within the day and day work with children and families.
- Safely manage challenging behaviour from either young people or their families.
- The ability to make competent and professional verbal and written presentations at fostering panel, case conferences, CIN meetings, core groups, child in care reviews, etc.
- An ability to manage own caseload, structure time and make autonomous decisions within appropriate delegated responsibilities

Advanced (Grade 9)

- Evidence of the use of a variety of research, practice tools and intervention methods in work with children and families and proven evidence of how these interventions have resulted in improved outcomes for the children and young people.
- Manage own caseload efficiently, effectively, professionally and autonomously within appropriate delegations.
- An advanced understanding of statutory and legal responsibilities to children and young people.
- An advanced and specialist knowledge and expertise within the area of Fostering Social Work practice
- The ability to use this knowledge to improve practice across the service by providing training, coaching, mentoring and co-working in order to develop the skills of other less experienced workers. The advanced and effective use of risk analysis and risk assessment tools in complex cases to influence decisions, interventions and outcomes.
- Experience of the supervision, mentoring and professional development of students or newly qualified Social Workers.

Creativity and innovation:

- Ongoing case management of complex cases; regularly includes responding to young people and children in crisis and intervening to promote the child's safety, prevent family breakdown or stabilise placements.
- Ability to work autonomously within delegations and be responsible for managing complexity, crisis and conflict.
- Ability to assess, analyse and manage risk to children, to families and to self.

Contacts and relationships:

Elected members -Consultation
Team Manager/Lead Officer - Evaluation, Informing, Consulting, Line Management. Seeking Advice
Health Professionals, Acute, Community, ICB - Informing, Advising, Consulting, Involving, Leading
External voluntary groups - Informing, Advising, Consulting, Involving
Work colleague - Informing, Advising, Consulting, Involving
Other Directorate's representative – information sharing, consulting, involving
Ofsted Inspectors Inspections – Informing Police

Due to the nature of these contacts, they are usually on a regular basis and involve complex issues associated with multi-agency working. Work is also of a sensitive nature and can become contentious when dealing with child related issues. It is the role of the post holder to maintain and co-ordinate links for and on behalf of these contacts which at times requires a certain amount of tact and diplomacy.

Decision making:

Basic Grade 7

- Prioritises own workload and is responsible for meeting and adhering to deadlines and procedures.
- Manages day to day casework decisions and is able to identify which decisions need to be actioned immediately and which can wait for line manager approval.
- Utilise supervision effectively.
- To undertake appropriate training identified through annual employee development review.

Developed (Grade 8)
All of the above plus

- Is able to make informal decisions (within delegations) on how work is to be undertaken and within a timescale.

Advanced (Grade 9)

- Within delegations prioritise own workload and manage caseload autonomously and professionally taking responsibility for how the work is to be undertaken and the approaches and methods used.
- Is able to supervise other staff in line with departmental policies and procedures and delegations.

Responsibility for resources:

- Contribute to maintenance of the building by reporting to the Line Manager and actioning requests for repairs/modifications.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Work demands:

- Routine is interrupted by responding to work demands and responding to young people and families in crisis.

- Flexibility is required as routine can be interrupted by deadlines for reports or other pieces of work at short notice.
- There will be complex and challenging situations to manage competing priorities for children and families.

Physical demands:

- Normal physical demand

Working conditions:

Working conditions are hybrid and community based but a significant proportion of the time is spent working in family homes and driving to and from appointments and visits.

Work context:

- There are risks of challenging behaviour, violence, threats, verbal abuse, drug misuse including alcohol misuse (service users), challenging behaviour from parent/carers and young people.
- This work is often conducted in highly conflicting environments.
- There is a potential risk of infection.
- Working with families with high levels of conflict is physically and emotionally demanding.

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Position in organisation:

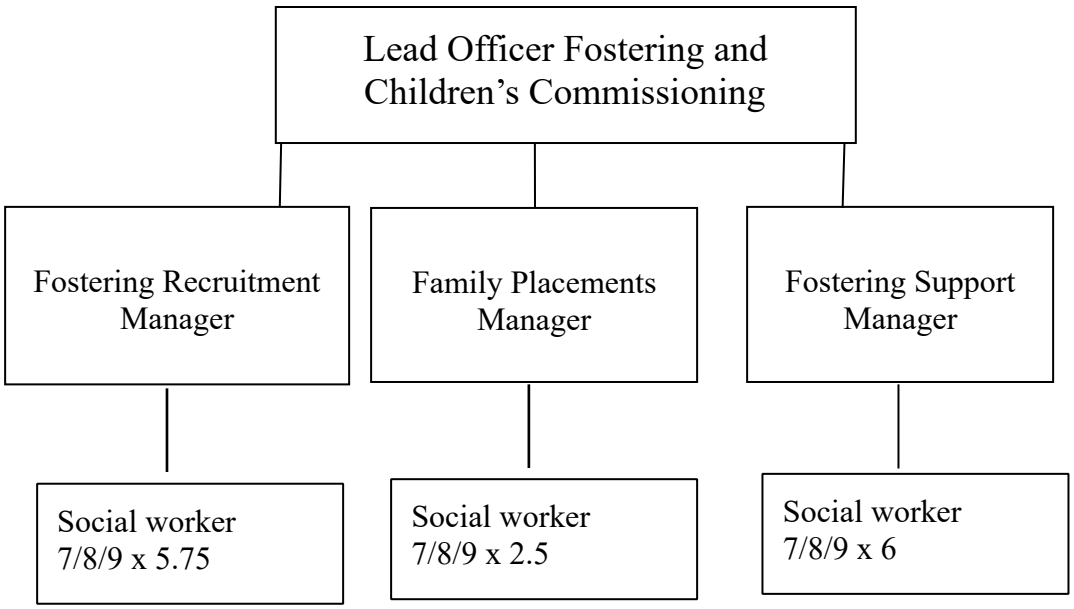
Indicate how many staff the post is directly accountable for: 0

Are posts in more than one location? Yes No ☐
Is this at the same site? Are the posts managed highly mobile?

Is the supervision/management shared with another post in the structure?
Yes No ☐

Please indicate which post(s)

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Job Description Version Control	
Date evaluated	
Date updated	
Updated by (manager name)	
Checked by (HR name)	

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	ASSESSED THROUGH:
Knowledge, Skills and Experience	**Application form/Interview**
• Basic assessment skills and knowledge of the National Assessment Framework. • Knowledge of child development. • Ability to communicate effectively with children, families and other professionals using a variety of appropriate methods relevant to the age and level of understanding. • Ability to establish relationship and maintain trust with children and families. • Ability to formulate professional working relationships with other agencies and professionals. • Ability to structure your time and manage your own caseload with support and advice required. • Report writing skills and the ability to maintain accurate records	
Education, Training and Qualifications	**Original documents**
• Social Work Degree or equivalent qualification. • Social Work England Registered.	
Working Arrangements	**Interview**
• 37 hours per week. • Must be able to work some weekends and evenings due to flexibility required of this role.	

DESIRABLE CRITERIA	ASSESSED THROUGH:
Knowledge, Skills and Experience	**Application form/Interview**
• Previous experience of work in a Fostering Team. • Previous experience of fieldwork or residential work. • Experience of undertaking complex assessments, providing evidenced based information and clear analysis • Experience of delivering training • Awareness of key issues and developments (both statutory and practice related) affecting children in care and care leavers. • Training skills, IT skills and presentation skills.	
Education, Training and Qualifications	**Original documents**
• Any relevant post-qualifying awards or training undertaken.	
Working Arrangements	**Interview**
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THE POST IS SUBJECT TO:	
Disclosure of convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exemption) Act 1974	
Yes ✓	**No ☐**
Political restriction	
Yes ☐	**No ✓**
The ability to speak fluent English under the Immigration Act 2016	
Yes ✓	**No ☐**

- Version Control

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