Fostering Operations Manager 

JE Code: JE2185

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|  **We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative, we are Milton Keynes City Council** |
| **Service:** | Corporate Parenting Service |
| **Reports to:** | Head of Corporate Parenting |
| **Job Family:** | Care and Welfare |
| **Grade:** | K |
| **Political restricted:** | No |
| **Date:** | November 2022 |

**Key Deliverables**

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| **1.** | To lead and ensure that services are delivered in line with The Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011 and legal requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and The Children Acts 1989 & 2004 as the Fostering Registered Manager. To effectively and creatively manage the team budget and that resources are managed effectively to ensure good outcomes for children and sufficiency. |
| **2.** | To ensure that all children in need, in need of protection, and/or in care are safeguarded and their well-being is promoted effectively, through assessment and care planning alongside the application of specialist theory, practical and procedural knowledge. To lead and facilitate partnership working with key agencies, ensuring best possible outcomes for children. |
| **3.** | To lead and manage the recruitment, training and assessment of prospective foster carers and manage retention. |
| **4.** | To be responsible for the Fostering Service complying with regulatory responsibilities as set out by OFSTED and to prepare and participate in inspections. |
| **5.** | To lead and manage staff, cases and strategic direction of the Fostering Team. To raise standards and quality assure all assessments and reports completed within the Fostering Service within timescales. To create a learning culture and facilitate team meetings, manging complaints/ compliments respond to feedback. |
| **6.** | To maintain robust monitoring/ auditing mechanisms and risk assessment systems in line with CSC policies and procedures. To provide data that is required for reporting purposes (internal and external) and ensure its accuracy. To utilise detailed and complex analysis from highly complex information and from a variety of sources and quality to underpin creative short and long term solutions in highly complex and risky situations. To ensure the development, revision and maintenance of Fostering policies and procedures. |

*Within reason these key deliverables may evolve to meet service need and it is expected that you will be flexible and adaptable in your delivery to meet both service and council wide needs*

**Essential Requirements (key skills, expertise & qualifications)**

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| **1.** | Social work qualification (DipSW, CQSW, Degree in Social Work or equivalent) and registered as a Social Worker with Social Work England, with proven ability to relate professionally with children and families evidenced through previous work as a Social Worker. The candidate will require post qualification experience and/or management and supervisory experience in a social care field with Fostering Service experience. Detailed theoretical knowledge of the Fostering Service, childcare issues, legislation, policy and research and experience of managing Fostering Panels.  |
| **2.** | Ability to analyse highly complex information, summarise and write/ record relevant information clearly and concisely so that it is easily understood by users and colleagues. Ability to work with partner agencies and knowledge of related specialist areas e.g. Adult Social Care, Legal Services, Health services, Police. |
| **3.** | Must be self-motivating and able to make difficult decisions and support staff in complex work, extensive experience in supervision, development, appraise staff, within a framework and to Fostering Service and Social Work England standards. Able to lead and motivate staff to deliver changes in practice, team structures and joint working in line with local and national requirements. |
| **4.** | To possess good written and verbal communication skills including presentation skills with ability to question, challenge, solve problems and complete tasks within variable time frames. |
| **5.** | Good interpersonal, organisational and information management skills. To build and coordinate a team of multi-agency, multi-disciplinary professionals to provide a quality service to service users. Able to balance risk weighing the risk against the probability for positive and negative outcomes on a day-to-day basis in order to make pragmatic and well thought through decisions to safeguard children. |

Job Family 

Care & Welfare

Grade K

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| **Colleagues Expectations*** Be professional at all times
* Work together for the good of the team, council and local people
* Promote a supportive culture
* Challenge assumptions
* Take ownership
* Be willing to change and do things differently
* Always work in a safe manner
 | **Managers expectations*** Be a role model by displaying positive behaviours at all times
* Make well-considered decisions
* Support, coach and communicate with my team
* Be accountable for my team’s performance
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Care and Welfare family jobs have as their primary responsibility, the vulnerable members of our community who depend upon the Council for direct advice, guidance and practical assistance. They may personally carry out caring related tasks, or manage those that do, but it is personal interactions with those in our care that are at the centre of these roles.

**Role characteristics**

At this level roles are team managers whose deep knowledge of their Social Work or Public Health specialism sees them dealing with a combination of highly complex strategic and operational issues. Expected to deliver innovation and service development, these jobs make an important contribution to shaping the Council’s response to the demands made upon it related to the care and welfare of vulnerable members of our community.

**The knowledge and skills required**

The expertise that underpins job holders’ decisions and authoritative recommendations is grounded in either an advanced level of theoretical understanding of a very wide range of social work issues and/or associated disciplines with an equivalent level of very lengthy practitioner level experience.

Most roles will require specific qualifications in order to comply with the legislative and regulatory requirements of their job.

Roles at this level will engage with others in assisting with physical tasks requiring some modest manual dexterity. Computer use is also a day to day feature of these roles.

**Thinking, planning and communication**

Problems at this level will include fast-paced operational decision making where juggling resource priorities, client needs, and procedural or regulatory limitations will combine to add considerable complexity to the process. But in addition to this, job holders must take a long-term view of their team’s targets and performance and will be expected to drive improvement through innovation and policy development.

With highly developed communication skills usually within the social work/public health arena at practitioner level, these roles will add to this the need to influence others at a corporate level in order to achieve team aims. They will also be dealing regularly with complex and contentious information which will require potentially difficult interactions both inside the Council and with external partner organisations and other stakeholders.

**Decision making and innovation**

Roles are constrained only by very high-level management oversight. Job holders are expected to shape their team’s operational priorities and methods in line not only with Council policy guidelines but according to national standards. Job holders will be required to use discretion and their initiative over a broad area of social work/public health activity.

**Areas of responsibility**

Job holders will have a major and critical responsibility for assessing the complex needs of large groups of vulnerable individuals and shaping the Council’s response to these needs, devising entire programmes of care and welfare. Their decisions and actions will impact directly on individuals and groups and have potentially long-term consequences.

Job holders will have formal management responsibility within their team or centre or be the lead in their field.

Job holders will have discretionary budget responsibility and may also contribute to budget setting by assessing financial need in relation to delivery of team aims.

Job holders will create and maintain work records, both written and electronic. There will, in addition, be sole or shared responsibility for the safe use and basic maintenance of a range of equipment, premises and/or vehicles.

**Impacts and demands**

The requirement for greater than normal physical effort is modest, although there will always be a need for limited standing, walking and the lifting/carrying of equipment and other items. Awareness of the actions of children, vulnerable adults and others will call for long periods of sensory attention, while tasks such as report writing and attending case meetings will call for lengthy periods of concentrated mental attention.

Given the range of case work involved, job holders will also experience high level pressures of deadlines and conflicting demands. The nature of these roles is such that most of the client relationships job holders are required to develop and maintain may need them to exert greater than normal emotional resilience, with particularly challenging service users.

Working directly with vulnerable service users will result in some exposure to disagreeable, unpleasant or hazardous environmental working conditions. This may extend to dealing with odours, intimate care and bodily fluids, and will also see job holders exposed to unpleasant or even threatening people related behaviour from time to time.