

Role profile

Job Title:	Lead Child Protection Practitioner	Directorate:	Children's Services
Department:	Child Protection Team (Multi-Agency Child Protection Team – MACPT)	Grade:	14
		Post no.:	06832
		Location:	Various
Role reports to:	MACPT Group Manager		
Direct reports:	None (may be required to provide cover for Team Manager on occasions)		
Indirect reports:	Up to 6 practitioners		

Job description

Recruitment practices to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and/or vulnerable adults apply to this post in addition to the requirement to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Purpose of role

The Lead Child Protection Practitioner will be based within Ealing's MACPT, a co located, office based, multiagency service operating in accordance with the Family First Partnership Programme Guide. The MACPT provides a central, specialist safeguarding function within a wider Family First system, ensuring that statutory child protection activity is integrated with Family Help and family network responses.

The MACPT's role is to consult on, initiate and undertake child protection investigations to assess whether a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. In line with Family First, the MACPT focuses on proportionate, timely and purposeful statutory intervention, ensuring that children and families experience continuity, clarity and collaboration across services.

Where the threshold for significant harm is met, the team manages the statutory child protection process, including child protection conferences and support to legal proceedings. The team undertakes forensic analysis of multi-agency information, including Family Help assessments, to inform defensible and child focused decision making.

Children's Services within the MACPT will be represented by the Lead Child Protection Practitioner, who will act as a key decision-maker on behalf of the London Borough of Ealing, including triggering statutory duties under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, in accordance with Working Together 2023.

The role requires a practitioner with substantial recent frontline child protection experience, with the authority, confidence and expertise to make autonomous decisions in complex and high risk situations. The post holder will produce high quality analytical reports suitable for child protection conferences and court proceedings.

In addition, the Lead Child Protection Practitioner will provide strategic safeguarding leadership within the Family First Partnership, influencing practice across the wider Ealing professional network and supporting consistent application of thresholds, partnership expectations and shared accountability.

The role will have an enhanced responsibility for shaping and modelling Ealing's Connect Communities principles, ensuring that safeguarding responses strengthen local resilience, build community capacity and promote inclusive, place based problem solving.

The post holder will also be expected to represent Children's Services at a senior operational level within multi agency forums, contributing to borough wide strategies for early help alignment, contextual safeguarding and partnership risk management.

In line with the Family First model:

The Family Help Lead Practitioner retains responsibility for ongoing direct work with the family, care planning and coordination of the Team Around the Family.

The Lead Child Protection Practitioner provides specialist safeguarding leadership, threshold decision making and statutory oversight, without displacing relational practice or existing trusted professional relationships.

The Lead Child Protection Practitioner will actively promote the use of family networks, Family Network Meetings and strengths-based planning, ensuring that families are supported to identify solutions and safeguards wherever possible prior to, and alongside, statutory intervention.

Where risks reduce and a child is no longer subject to a Child Protection Plan, the Lead Child Protection Practitioner will step away from the case, enabling continuity of support through Family Help services.

The post holder will be supervised by a qualified Social Work Service or Team Manager.

Key accountabilities

- Operational Service Delivery
- Be based within Ealing's MACPT, operating as a central safeguarding service within the Family First Partnership model.
- Ensure statutory child protection activity is proportionate, timely and integrated with Family Help and family network responses.
- Consult on, initiate and undertake child protection investigations to assess risk of significant harm.

- Act on behalf of the London Borough of Ealing in discharging statutory child protection functions under the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and Working Together 2023.
- Apply expert professional judgement to assess severity, duration, frequency and cumulative impact of harm, including contextual and extra-familial risks.
- Work collaboratively with partner agencies and Family Help practitioners to build a shared understanding of the child's lived experience.
- Convene and chair strategy discussions and lead Section 47 enquiries, ensuring Family Help practitioners and family networks are actively involved where appropriate.
- Decide appropriate actions following child protection enquiries, ensuring decisions are informed by multi-agency input, family perspectives and the voice of the child.
- Maintain oversight of statutory timescales and ensure child protection conferences are convened appropriately.
- Chair multi-agency child protection conferences independently, ensuring family participation is meaningful and accessible.
- Determine whether a child is at continuing risk of significant harm and whether a Child Protection Plan is required.
- Take decisive pragmatic action to create safe plans for children and hold responsibility for planning when there may be unknown areas of information.
- Identify and record categories of abuse or neglect.
- Ensure high-quality recording and timely distribution of conference decisions.
- Remain the allocated Lead Child Protection Practitioner, overseeing delivery of Child Protection Plans by Family Help services, while promoting continuity of relationships.
- Work flexibly as part of a rota to ensure MACPT cover during operational hours.
- Provide borough-wide specialist consultancy to Family Help teams, schools, health professionals and other partners, supporting confident early identification of risk and consistent application of thresholds.
- Lead on professional escalation and resolution of complex interagency disagreements, ensuring that safeguarding decisions remain robust, defensible and child-centred.
- Act as a senior practice advisor within the Family First Partnership, contributing to the refinement of the multi-agency operating model and supporting maturation of the integrated system.
- Support Ealing's Connect Communities programme by ensuring statutory safeguarding practice aligns with community-based early intervention approaches.

Service Planning and Development

- Contribute to delivery of the MACPT Team Plan.
- Review and improve child protection policies and procedures.
- Lead development of responses to emerging safeguarding risks.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of research and evidence-based practice.
- Engage children, families and partners in service development.

- Lead strategic learning loops across the Family First Partnership, identifying systemic barriers and recommending improvements to senior leadership.
- Contribute to borough-wide planning on contextual safeguarding, early help integration, and community safeguarding priorities.

Financial and Resource Management

- Demonstrate cost-consciousness and value for money.
- Ensure compliance with Ealing Council financial and procurement procedures.
- Use internal resource panels for decisions beyond delegated authority.
- Lead efficient multiagency resource planning for complex safeguarding scenarios, ensuring proportionate responses and effective demand management.

Service Improvement

- Identify and implement service improvements.
- Participate in quality assurance activity and learning reviews.
- Share best practice within the MACPT and wider Children's Services.
- Support innovation and pilot approaches to safeguarding practice.
- Provide strategic insight from MACPT practice to shape borough-wide learning, training and cross-service development.
- Champion and embed Connect Communities approaches in statutory safeguarding practice.

Contacts

- Work closely with internal Council services, Family Help teams, partner agencies, children, families and their networks.
- Actively engage parents and family networks in line with the Family First principle of partnership, promoting transparency, shared understanding and purposeful participation in safeguarding processes.
- Work closely with the Family Help service, at all levels of intervention, to offer consultation, advice, and to ensure families are supported to identify strengths, resources and protective solutions.
- Understanding of equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Knowledge of quality assurance frameworks.
- Ability to promote reflective practice and continuous learning.
- Community and partnership working are essential for all roles as are a commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and ensuring Health and Safety at Work for everyone working at Ealing Council.
- Represent the Council at senior multiagency operational forums relating to risk management, Child Protection, contextual safeguarding and community safeguarding.
- Act as a senior point of contact for schools, health partners, police and voluntary sector organisations seeking advice on complex safeguarding cases.

Key performance indicators

- Delivery of high-quality, timely work that meets agreed service standards and organisational objectives.
- Effective collaboration with internal teams, partners and community stakeholders, contributing to improved service outcomes.
- Compliance with organisational policies, including Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Health & Safety.
- Accuracy and reliability of information, records and reporting within required deadlines.

Key relationships (internal and external)

- Internal: Line manager, team colleagues, senior managers, cross-departmental teams, and relevant corporate services.
- External: Community organisations, partner agencies, voluntary sector groups, contractors, and members of the public.
- Relationships should support strong community and partnership working and reflect the Council's values and commitments.

Authority level

- Responsible for managing own workload, prioritising tasks, and escalating issues appropriately.
- Authority to make day-to-day decisions within the scope of the role and in line with Council policies and procedures.
- Expected to work autonomously while seeking guidance for complex or non-routine matters.
- Exercise enhanced delegated authority to support whole-system safeguarding decision-making.
- Provide leadership and authoritative advice to partner agencies in high-risk situations, including borough-wide safeguarding incidents.

Additional Requirement

- Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, ensuring inclusive practice in all aspects of the role.
- Commitment to Health and Safety, contributing to a safe environment for colleagues, residents and partners.
- Flexibility to work occasional evenings or weekends if required by the service (optional—remove if not relevant).
- Willingness to participate in training, development and continuous improvement initiatives.

Person specification

Substantial, recent experience of frontline statutory child protection work, including leading Section 47 enquiries, chairing multi-agency safeguarding meetings, and making autonomous threshold decisions in high-risk situations. Must demonstrate authority, confidence and professional credibility when working with multi-agency

partners and when representing the Local Authority in formal safeguarding and legal contexts.

Although the role does not hold direct budget responsibility, the post holder makes recommendations regarding resource allocation and must demonstrate sound financial judgement in all statutory safeguarding decisions.

Community and partnership working are essential for all roles as are a commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and ensuring Health and Safety at Work for everyone working at Ealing Council.

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Essential knowledge, skills and abilities

1. Strong communication skills, with the ability to present information clearly and appropriately for different audiences.
2. Ability to build and maintain effective relationships with colleagues, partners, and community stakeholders, supporting strong community and partnership working.
3. Good organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to prioritise competing demands and meet deadlines.
4. Analytical and problem-solving abilities, including the capacity to interpret information, identify issues, and develop effective solutions.
5. Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team, contributing to shared goals and supporting positive working culture.
6. Digital literacy, including confident use of Microsoft 365 and other relevant systems to support efficient service delivery.
7. Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, ensuring fair and inclusive practice in all aspects of work.
8. Commitment to Health and Safety at Work, ensuring a safe working environment for colleagues, partners and residents.

Essential qualification(s) and experience

1. Relevant professional qualification(s) for the role (insert specific requirements as needed).
2. Experience of working in a customer-focused or community-based environment.
3. Experience of working collaboratively with internal and external partners, community groups or multi-agency teams.
4. Experience of managing information and maintaining confidentiality in line with data protection requirements.

Values and behaviours

Improved life for residents	Trustworthy	Collaborative	Innovative	Accountable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is passionate about making Ealing a better place • Can see and appreciate things from a resident point of view • Understands what people want and need • Encourages change to tackle underlying causes or issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does what they say they will do on time • Is open and honest • Treats all people fairly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambitious and confident in leading partnerships • Offers to share knowledge and ideas • Challenges constructively and respectfully listens to feedback • Overcomes barriers to develop our outcomes for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tries out ways to do things better, faster and for less cost • Brings in ideas from outside to improve performance • Takes calculated risks to improve outcomes • Learns from mistakes and failures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages all stakeholders to participate in decision making • Makes things happen • Acts on feedback to improve performance • Works to high standards