

Role profile

Job Title:	Senior Social Worker	Grade:	Career Graded 11 to 12
Department:	Children's Social care	Post no.:	TBC
Directorate:	Children's	Location:	Perceval House

Role reports to:	Practice Manager
Direct reports:	Up to 2 direct reports for G12 SSW 1 Direct report for G11 SSW Student Social Worker Apprentice Family Practitioner
Indirect reports:	ASYE Social Worker Social Worker G10

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

- To undertake work with the most challenging cases, providing an exemplary service in line with statutory requirements and departmental priorities, improving outcomes for children and young people.
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- To demonstrate effective practice in the most complex situations, assessing and managing higher levels of risk, striking a balance between support and control, liaising with a wide range of professionals within multi-disciplinary teams, including more senior levels.
- To manage a more complex caseload and offer opinion, support and professional wisdom within the organisation and to others.
- To model best practice, setting expectations for others. To take responsibility for coaching and mentoring student social workers and supervising the work of Support Workers, where applicable.
- To participate in the management of the duty system, as required.

Please see Appendix 1 for service specific key accountabilities



Appendix 1 -
SSW.docx

Key accountabilities – Foundation Grade 11

- Support the team to work within legislative and policy frameworks, ensuring that all social work interventions are based on a clear care and support plan. Advise staff on relevant legislative and policy frameworks within care and support planning and application of social work interventions.
- Oversee proportionate and holistic assessments, ensuring the strengths, capabilities and support available from the person's wider network are maximised. Identify and advise on barriers to change and how needs impact on family members or others in a child's support network.
- Lead and oversee the progression of complex and difficult social work cases within the parameters of agreed policies, procedures, and framework for delivering Social Work, including timely intervention, resolution and case closure or transfer. Represent Ealing in a professional and competent manner, especially when making representations at Court, with families, or with other agencies.
- Promote social work and contribute to a range of service-related projects as they arise, including the development of new initiatives through representation on working/multi-agency groups.
- Oversee application of social work values and ethics with staff working with children and families to make the most of their emotional and practical assets as well as accessing the care and support they need.
- Provide professional advice and guidance to the team and other workers where required. Challenge systems and decisions that are oppressive or discriminatory and promote a person's human rights as enshrined in law.
- Demonstrates sound financial acumen with the ability to authorise and monitor expenditure in line with delegated authority, ensuring best value in service delivery. Experience in managing or influencing budgets to support children and families effectively
- Work with children and families in a variety of diverse and complex contexts, such as mental ill health, disability, substance misuse, domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation, poverty, discrimination, and immigration.
- Be accountable for own performance and monitor the performance of a designated group of professional staff within the team taking appropriate action to maintain high practice standards.

- Enable continued development of professional skills and social work practice to meet service requirements, ensuring staff adhere to policies, procedures, and capability frameworks.
- Research, demonstrate, apply, and advise on the relevant theories and methods of social work practice to complex situations, to help support staff to achieve identified outcomes.
- Use and advise on evidence and value-based practice to inform complex analysis, recommendations and decisions needed to support, empower, and protect children.
- Demonstrate understanding of the dynamics between theory, research, evidence, and expertise in the application of professional judgement in decision making and advise other workers on this.
- Chair Strategy Meetings as and when required and decide upon thresholds to initiate child protection enquiries under S.47 of the Children Act 1989 using the London Child Protection Procedures and threshold of need local protocol guidance.
- Chair Standards of Care Meetings as and when required where there are concerns relating to the providers of care of looked after children.
- Ensure colleagues and foster carers are supported through training and learning events to support children using the Ealing Brighter Futures practice model and trauma informed way of working.
- Support the Practice Manager/Team Manager in the induction of new staff and in managing the development of the team's knowledge base and expertise to ensure services are delivered and meet the standards required.
- Be Part of teams that handle new referrals including undertaking duty roles to assess immediate risks.
- To participate in the management of the duty system, as required.
- At the discretion of the Manager such other activities may be required from time to time to ensure the needs of the service are met.
- Deputise for the Practice Manager from time to time as and when required.

Key performance indicators

- Ensure minimal delay is experienced by families upon receiving new or existing allocated work.
- Ensure timely responses to children and families, kinship and foster carers through robust diary planning and management of own capacity.
- Ensure basic front page information for all children and foster carers is consistently of good quality and core records are up to date in the case

recording system: Case Summary, Supervision, Direct Work / Visits, Chronology.

- Ensure the application of threshold is appropriate and proportionate in accordance with the threshold of needs guide.
- Ensure all work with children, young people and families upholds the measures of the 2-stage audit process to a good or outstanding standard consistently.
- Take responsibility to respond to findings and recommendations of audits and support others in the team to fulfil these requirements.
- Ensure children are visited and provided with support in accordance with statutory guidelines and Ealing practice standards' timescales.
- Ensure responses to children in need of help and protection are timely and are informed by partner agency information.
- Ensure Child and Family Assessments, Strategy Meetings, and child protection investigations under S.47 of the Children Act 1989 commence promptly and management direction is implemented.
- Ensure Child and Family Assessments are reviewed at the 10-day point and decisions implemented.
- Ensure Child and Family Assessments are concluded at day 35 and sent to managers as agreed to be signed off by day 45 of the assessment process.
- Ensure the voices of children and families are consistently captured through different approaches, including use of digital applications.
- Ensure families are made aware of their rights including their right to complain and the process.
- Ensure every family is offered the opportunity to engage in a Family Group Conference.
- Evidence collaborative working relationships with key partners (defined in the Children Act 2004) and others, particularly health, schools, colleges and the voluntary sector, and other Boroughs.
- Share good practice examples and learning with the team on a consistent basis.
- Take a lead in team meetings, chairing team meetings regularly.
- Complete all mandatory training and keep Continuous Professional Development up to date, including SW England Registration.
- Develop, lead, and participate in formal and informal training exercises, workshops/discussion groups.

Key relationships

Internal	External
• Practice Managers • Team Managers • ECIRS Service Manager • Family Help Service Manager • Children in Care Service Manager	• West London Alliance Learning Academy • Police Child Abuse Investigation Team • Child Protection Lead Nurses for Safeguarding • School Nursing Team

• Fostering Service Manager • Leaving Care Service Manager • Safeguarding, Reviewing and Quality Assurance Service • Social Care Academy & Principal Social Worker • SEND Team • Virtual School • Family Group Conference Service • Housing Service • Adult's Social Care • Adult's Mental Health Service	• Voluntary and Community Sector local services • Home Office • Connexions • Youth Justice Service • Department for Work and Pensions
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Authority level

Authority to author all core reports relating to the welfare, progress, and planning for children in need of help and protection and children in care and care leavers.

Authority to agree financial support in accordance with the scheme of delegation.

Authority to deputise for the Practice Manager as and when required.

Additional Requirements

To ensure that the budgetary position of the team is fully understood and promote a best value approach to delivering services to children and families.

To undertake any other duties that may be required to meet the demands of the service. These may be varied from time to time to meet the needs of the service.

The role requires flexibility to work outside regular working hours, including evening.

Person specification

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.

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.

The pay Grade for the senior social worker role spans Grade 11 and Grade 12. The position of an employee in terms of their allocated Grade is dependent upon the level at which they match the elements of the person specification.

Movement through the Grades from G11 to G12 will take place through the annual appraisal process during which, progress against the person specification will be reviewed and progression to G12 can be recommended. This is subject to all mandatory requirements of the individual employee's learning plan being fulfilled.

Essential knowledge, skills, and abilities - Foundation Grade 11

1. An evidenced-based high level understanding and application of key policies, legislation, statutory guidance, and eligibility criteria for statutory Child and Family Social Work.
2. Ability to demonstrate a good understanding of adoption and permanence practice, policies, procedures and protocols, Court work and various legal routes to permanence.
3. A good understanding of and ability to work in accordance with the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 statutory guidance.
4. Familiarity with relevant recent research and current, up to date Government transformation initiatives relevant to Children's Social Care and how this will apply to the local context.
5. Knowledge of the Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Work in England and ability to demonstrate competence at 'Experienced Social Worker' and 'Advanced Social Worker' levels.
6. Ability to demonstrate consistent social work practice that meets the Knowledge and Skills Statement for Child and Family Practitioners 2018.
7. Working knowledge of legislation relating to Equal Opportunities.
8. Compliance with information governance, record retention.
9. Strong awareness of confidentiality issues and the General Data Protection Regulations.
10. Ability to provide high quality reflective, analytical, and evidence-based supervision to develop social work students to the highest professional standards.
11. Ability to build and develop effective working relationships across a wide range of internal and external partners.
12. Ability to prioritise, forward plan and work effectively on own initiative as well as part of a team.
13. Strong communication and writing skills, analytical skills to assess complex situations and the ability to work effectively within a statutory framework.
14. Communicate and work directly with children and young people, using a variety of techniques.
15. Demonstrate the ability to be jointly responsible, for recognising learning & development needs and identifying training or learning opportunities to enhance professional knowledge and skills.
16. Ability to take responsibility for own and others health and safety to ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 etc., the council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.
17. Uses IT systems and client databases to ensure effective and accurate client records are maintained.

18. Able to take a lead within the service on a specialist area to promote knowledge across Children's Services and partner agencies.

Essential qualification(s) and experience – Foundation Grade 11

1. Relevant degree, diploma or related professional qualification in Social Work
2. Up to date registration with Social Work England.
3. Completion of ASYE with Pass.
4. At least two years post qualifying experience in a statutory Children's Social Care setting that enables the post holder to have achieved the relevant level of the competency.
5. Completion of all mandatory training and Brighter Futures Practice Model training.
6. Completion of Practice Educator training with Pass
7. Completion of Enabling Others Certification
8. Experience of consistent multi-agency/partnership working across all areas of social work.
9. Experience of working with families spanning a range of complexity to cover at least: parental mental health issues, domestic abuse, substance use and neglect.
10. Experience of utilising a range of tools to analyse risk to support child protection investigations working together with statutory partner agencies e.g. Neglect Toolkit, Domestic Violence Risk Assessment Matrix.
11. Experience of assessing and reviewing foster carers completing BAAF Form F Assessments or updating Form F Assessments and presenting at Fostering Panel.
12. A proven track record of consistently high standards of practice and evidence of ability to take on the most complex and challenging cases.
13. Experience of writing Court statements and giving oral evidence in Court.
14. Experience of completing good quality Child Permanence Reports.
15. Experience of deputising for Practice Manager / Deputy Team Manager or leading Team Meetings / Group Supervision on behalf of the manager.
16. Understanding of Key Performance Indicators and the status of the team's performance against KPIs.

Progression to Grade 12

Progression to Grade 12 is determined through the annual appraisal process. Advancement requires a practitioner to demonstrate proficiency beyond Grade 11 expectations by exhibiting greater autonomy, leadership, innovation, and impact in complex situations. Fulfilling all mandatory learning plan requirements, including ongoing professional development, Social Work England (SWE) registration, and specialised training, is also essential.

The enhanced criteria below build upon the Grade 12 foundation for Key Accountabilities and Person Specification, emphasising strategic oversight, systemic improvements, and expert-level practice.

Key Accountabilities (Grade 12 Criteria)

At Grade 12, a Senior Social Worker must not only lead daily operations but also strategically influence service-wide improvements, innovate in multi-agency collaboration, and proactively manage risk in the most challenging cases. Progression requires consistent evidence of exceeding Grade 11 standards, demonstrated through audit outcomes, partner feedback, and measurable positive impacts on children and families.

- **Lead Advanced Social Work Interventions Across Teams:** Provide strategic oversight and mentorship to multiple teams (e.g., SIRs, family help, children in care, fostering/kinship). Lead cross-team initiatives to integrate the Brighter Futures practice model and demonstrate innovation in applying threshold guidance to complex cases involving intersecting issues like radicalisation, immigration, and exploitation. Evidence includes: leading successful case resolutions that prevent court proceedings or achieve permanence ahead of statutory timelines.
- **Champion Systemic Improvements in Safeguarding:** Drive service enhancements by analysing trends in referrals, risks, and outcomes. Develop and implement new protocols or tools, such as enhanced risk assessment frameworks, to improve multi-agency triage processes. Lead audits and quality assurance reviews that result in policy changes and challenge discriminatory practices at an organisational level. Evidence includes: representing Ealing in regional forums (e.g., West London Alliance) and contributing to projects that reduce inequalities for vulnerable groups.
- **Manage High-Complexity Caseloads with Autonomy:** Manage a caseload of the most intricate cases, including those involving chronic neglect, extra-familial harm, or care leavers up to age 25. Deputise for managers in key decision-making forums, such as strategy meetings and court proceedings. Expertly navigate relationships with resistant families, ensuring the child's voice shapes outcomes through advanced advocacy techniques. Evidence includes: chairing high-stakes meetings, achieving outstanding audit ratings, and mentoring staff to elevate team performance against KPIs.
- **Oversee Recruitment, Training, and Compliance:** Lead recruitment drives for in-house foster and kinship carers, innovating community outreach to exceed regulatory standards (e.g., Fostering Services Regulations 2011) and increase approvals. Provide advanced supervision and training to staff and practice educators to ensure compliance with legislation like the Children Act 1989 and Working Together 2023. Evidence includes: producing exemplary reports for panels and courts and leading projects that address service gaps.
- **Drive Professional Development and Performance:** Serve as a senior role model by monitoring and enhancing team performance using data-driven insights. Ensure all staff meet capability frameworks and ethical standards. Champion research-informed practice by advising on evidence-based interventions for complex issues like mental health and substance

misuse. Evidence includes: facilitating team learning events that result in improved KPIs, such as faster assessment completions and higher family engagement rates.

Person Specification (Grade 12 Criteria)

Progression to Grade 12 requires advanced mastery of knowledge, skills, and experience, evidenced through portfolio reviews, peer feedback, and performance metrics. This builds on Grade 11 essentials by emphasising strategic application, innovation, and leadership within a statutory context.

Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Expert knowledge and strategic application of key legislation (e.g., Children Act 1989, Working Together 2023, Adoption and Children Act 2002), with the ability to lead local adaptations of national initiatives and integrate research into service-wide strategies.
2. Advanced proficiency in the Professional Capabilities Framework (at advanced/expert levels) and the Knowledge and Skills Statement (2018), with evidence of mentoring others to meet these standards.
3. Superior analytical and supervisory skills to provide reflective, evidence-based supervision in high-risk scenarios, challenge systemic barriers, and promote human rights.
4. Exceptional communication skills to lead multi-agency partnerships at a strategic level and innovate solutions for diverse challenges, including poverty, discrimination, and radicalisation.
5. Advanced IT and data analysis skills to identify trends, ensure records exceed compliance standards (e.g., GDPR), and inform service improvements.
6. Specialist leadership in a chosen area (e.g., fostering, child protection), demonstrated by promoting knowledge across Children's Services through training or policy development.
7. Proactive leadership in health and safety, including conducting team-level risk assessments and ensuring compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Essential Qualifications and Experience

1. A recognised social work qualification (degree/diploma), current SWE registration, and a completed and passed ASYE.
2. Extensive post-qualifying experience in statutory children's social care, with proven progression in handling the most complex cases.

3. Completion of advanced training, including Practice Educator (with Enabling Others certification) and specialist modules in areas like court skills and permanence planning.
4. Extensive multi-agency experience with a track record of leading interventions in complex family dynamics involving issues such as parental mental health, domestic abuse, and substance use.
5. Proven experience in assessing foster/kinship carers, presenting at panels, writing high-quality court statements, and giving expert oral evidence.
6. Demonstrated leadership capabilities, such as routinely deputising for managers, chairing complex meetings, and driving team performance to outstanding levels.
7. A strong commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, evidenced by innovative contributions that improve services and outcomes for vulnerable children and care leavers.

Values and behaviours

Improved life for residents	Trustworthy	Collaborative	Innovative	Accountable
• 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	• Does what they say they will do on time • Is open and honest • Treats all people fairly	• 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	• 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	• Encourages all stakeholders to participate in decision making • Makes things happen • Acts on feedback to improve performance • Works to high standards