

# LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Designation:</b>	Senior Family Practitioner	<b>Grade:</b>	PO1
<b>Reports to (Designation):</b>	Family Thrive Team Manager / CSC Family Therapist	<b>Grade:</b>	PO4 / SWLO
<b>Directorate:</b>	Children and Young People	<b>Section:</b>	Early Help and Prevention / Children's Social Care

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### **Main Purpose of the job:**

In Family Thrive, to support the Family Thrive Area Manager in providing leadership and management, supervising a team of 5 Family Coaches, whilst also working directly with children, young people and their families in complex circumstances to help them achieve and sustain improved outcomes.

To be a practice lead in a specialist area, such as Domestic Abuse and/or child exploitation, leading programme and staff development, delivering training and implementing partnership approaches to support positive outcomes for children and families

Work collaboratively with young people and their families to provide focused support to families to improve outcomes, address challenges, reduce risks to children, and to enable families to make and sustain change and prevent needs from escalating to require statutory service intervention.

Build trusting relationships with children, young people and families and extended family members/friends/communities to build sustainable change within stronger family networks, helping to alleviate their social isolation.

Undertake and contribute to assessments and plans for children and their families in line with practice frameworks working alongside partner agencies as part of a multi-disciplinary Team Around the Family ensuring that each service is contributing to achieving the best outcomes for children and their families.

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## **Summary of Duties & Key Responsibilities**

1. To effectively engage families and to work directly with them on multiple issues including parenting and family functioning, employment, school attendance mental ill health, learning difficulties, domestic abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, bereavement, risk of going missing and child sexual exploitation, and/or involvement in gangs, criminal and antisocial behaviour.
2. Provide intensive support to vulnerable children/young people and their families, with complex support needs, through a family centred approach, facilitating the change needed in families to improve parenting capacity and outcomes for children.
3. To develop and implement effective evidenced based interventions with individuals, groups or a family in a range of settings including community and youth settings, streets and estates, schools and in the family home according to the needs of the family
4. To work with families in flexible and creative ways - grounded in principles of professional curiosity, anti-oppressive practice and systemic approaches - engaging with young people and families according to the needs of the family.
5. To develop and implement effective evidenced based interventions, including in the home, and on an individual or a group basis in flexible and creative ways through a variety of interventions, engaging with young people and families according to the needs of the family.
6. To maximise the involvement of children, young people and families in decision that affect them, and to ensure that the voices of children, young people and families are represented in their assessments and plans, and in service design, review and delivery
7. Assess parenting skills and help parents/carers to build physical and emotional caring abilities by providing advice and practical support with their parenting role, including use of positive activities to promote social inclusion and techniques to avoid conflict and manage challenging behaviour.
8. Undertaking one-to-one direct work and mediation work with children/young people and their families in a crisis, sometimes in challenging and volatile situations - working closely alongside colleagues from across Children Social Care and other key partner agencies to deliver best practice through an integrated response.
9. Reviewing family agreements, plans and interventions regularly with the family and professionals, working alongside parents and children to achieve shared goals and develop a clear plan to sustain progress when involvement of the service ceases.
10. To provide fast and flexible mediation, conflict resolution and rapid response support to children/young people and their families, to reduce and prevent escalation to the point where statutory services and involvement is needed.
11. To be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of children, young people and families, including responding to call outs at short notice where appropriate. This may necessitate working out of office hours – evenings and weekends on occasions.

12. To develop, encourage and reinforce positive behaviour through working with children/young people to address complex behavioural difficulties and manage the relationship with parents and carers, other family members and their peers
13. To work with children and young people not engaged in education, training or employment and those engaged in risky behaviours including crime and anti-social behaviour to support them to achieve their potential and introduce them to new opportunities and positive experiences.
14. To identify barriers to employment for parents, and provide coaching, advice and guidance to support employment and training
15. Developing plans with families, ensuring action plans are clear, time-bound and outcome focused.
16. To take responsibility for maintaining professional knowledge and skills, including national and local policy, relevant legislation, and emerging research in relation to providing services to children and their families.
17. To have a broad knowledge and understanding of local resources and agencies which support children, young people and families, including Mental Health teams, Schools, voluntary and community agencies, and to building close working link and communicate effectively with them in the best interests of the child and family
18. Making professional referrals and signposting families to relevant services where appropriate.
19. To maintain high standards of case recording and maintain case management records in accordance with service and professional standards, including electronic data entry in accordance with policy and procedures and with due regard to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
20. Compliance with QA of files, and all systems, processes, policies and procedures for the service, including data collection to support performance monitoring
21. Keep comprehensive records of work undertaken and provide these promptly alongside preparing other appropriate records; including preparing reports for multi-agency reviews, case conferences and courts.
22. To contribute to local and departmental training on practice issues in line with departmental policies and procedures, in light of research findings and in line with the Divisional Training Strategy.
23. Contribute to service development through attendance and contribution to team meetings and team development activities

### **Family Thrive**

24. To support the Family Thrive Team Manager in providing operational management of a team of Family Coaches, including day to day supervision and general management oversight, determining priorities and allocation of work to meet changing circumstances, and the assessment of risk and appropriate escalation of significant events.

25. To model leadership and behaviours that continuously develop staff and services, including group and reflective supervision for the team.
26. To support the Family Thrive Team Manager in ensuring the workload of the team managed and prioritised appropriately and is allocated to Family Coaches and Therapists making best use of their skills and capability.
27. To work with the Family Thrive Team Manager to monitor and support the performance management and development of unit staff, to support individual development and ensure that individual contributions are maximised.
28. To deputise for the Area Manager as necessary

### **Children's Social Care**

24. To provide practical and emotional support to children and families affected by Domestic Abuse and Violence including those at the point of crisis. This will include conducting direct work sessions on a regular basis and keeping casework records up to date.
25. To work collaboratively with allocated practitioners, families and other professionals to develop and deliver individual support and safety plans to address the risk of harm to survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of violence and abuse, and to ensure that such plans are in place for every child/young person.
26. To recognise, respect and address the needs of children and families who face particular barriers when seeking help to access domestic abuse support services, including those from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, LGBT communities, disabled people, individuals with complex needs and other hard to reach groups.
27. To work in partnership with allocated social workers and other agencies to ensure an effective, coordinated response to survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of violence and abuse.
28. To attend and participate in group supervision and case mapping sessions.
29. To contribute to risk assessment and safety planning for children/young people and their families

### **General Terms**

- To maintain personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the job and participate in appropriate training/development activities including the council's performance, development and review scheme.
- Ensure that all duties and responsibilities are discharged in accordance with the council's policies and procedures, Code of Conduct and relevant regulations and legislation.
- Ensure compliance with safeguarding procedures
- To comply with the council's equal opportunities and diversity policies ensuring anti-discriminatory practice within the service area.
- This job description is a guide to the level and range of responsibilities you will be expected to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to reflect changing circumstances and

demands. As directed, you will undertake additional duties and responsibilities that may arise from time to time commensurate with the grade of the post.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

**JOB TITLE:** Senior Family Practitioner

**DEPARTMENT:** Early Help & Prevention / Children's Social Care

**GRADE:** PO1

### Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person, but are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

<b>Equality &amp; Diversity</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of equality and diversity issues within the context of family support and early intervention.</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An excellent working knowledge of relevant legislation including the Children and Families Act 2014, Children's Act 1989 &amp; 2004, 'Working Together'; Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their families; Care Standards 2000, The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, Equality Act 2010 (other country equivalents may apply)</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of statutory and voluntary services in supporting families</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sound knowledge and application of Safeguarding procedures for children and vulnerable adults</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A good knowledge and understanding of child development and the needs of children</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant knowledge and understanding of issues affecting children/young people and their families, particularly the impact of social and economic disadvantage and multiple disadvantage on motivation, culture, confidence and progression through education employment and training.</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of whole family approach and solution focused practice</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of a wide range of methods used to develop personal, social and educational, mental health capabilities in children/young people and families in order to empower them and facilitate improved life outcomes.</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of national and local developments on good practice and evidenced based initiatives in relation to Health, education, social care and family support.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of professional boundaries and appropriate relationships with young people and their parents, carers or guardians and how to adhere to confidentiality policies.</li> </ul>	
<b>Aptitude</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having a strong commitment to making a positive difference to the lives of families</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to bring about positive change through both supporting and challenging individuals and families towards agreed goals and outcomes</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to be impartial and professional when working with young people, parents, carers and members of the community.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A positive, non-judgmental, empathetic and sensitive approach.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to undertake the work within an anti-discriminatory and empowerment framework</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to remain calm and effective in crisis and when under pressure, including making difficult decisions or dealing with challenging or confrontational behaviour.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to use initiative especially in complex family situations.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a team.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to undertake inter-agency work and a commitment to working in partnership at all levels.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience and the ability to cope with emotionally-draining and traumatic situations</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to work hours in a flexible way, including evenings and weekends to meet the needs of the service.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexibility to adapt to new tasks and situations.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to reflect on own practice; undertake training advice and constructive feedback</li> </ul>	
<b>Skills</b>	
Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective supervision and line management skills</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective team work skills, including within a multidisciplinary service or multi-agency network.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent interpersonal and communication skills - ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with children and adults</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to advocate, negotiate, mediate and interpret on behalf of service users as appropriate.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent organisational skills, able to manage own work programme and meet agreed timescales especially as relates to caseload management</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent IT skills in order to record and maintain accurate data.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to develop and maintain knowledge and understanding of local resources and provision, including community and statutory services, including Mental Health Teams, Social Services, Health, CAMHS, Benefits systems</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good observation and listening skills.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to apply effective and innovative strategies to meet the needs of families.</li> </ul>	

<b>Experience</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substantial experience of providing support to vulnerable children/young people and their families on a range of complex issues, including where there are safeguarding concerns, utilising a range of strategies to engender positive change.</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of developing and maintaining relationships across services and supporting them to work together to achieve coordinated responses to needs and achieve best outcomes for children and families.</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of supervision of staff, and/or line management in a family support setting</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of caseload management and prioritising and planning support.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of working in culturally diverse communities</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of addressing equal opportunities issues.</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of using different intervention models to support parenting.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of using practice models and structured assessments to assess risk, needs and action plan with families and individuals</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<b>General Education</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional qualification or relevant experience in a social work/health/or related children's services area.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and/or qualifications in social care, youth work, social work or equivalent to national standards, minimum NVQ 3</li> </ul>	
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Willingness to take responsibility for personal and professional development.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Willingness to work in different establishments and settings around the borough as required</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative and creative to introduce new approaches to delivering children's services.</li> </ul>	

Internal Contacts: These include representatives from across Council Departments who may be engaged with children and families, for example Children's Social Care, Adults Services, Housing, Youth Offending Service.

External Contacts: This will include all partner agencies working with families e.g., Police, Probation, Health Mental Health, voluntary sector as well as members of the public and other Local Authorities.

To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's relevant codes and procedures.

All employees are required to participate in the Performance Evaluation Scheme (PES) and to undertake appropriate training and development identified to enhance their work.

Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled post holder

THIS JOB DESCRIPTION MAY NEED TO BE AMENDED BY THE DIRECTORATE TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SERVICE.

Number of fully managed staff:

**Family Thrive**

Title: none                      Grade:                      No of posts:

Number of partially managed staff:

Title: Family Practitioner                      Grade: SO1                      No of posts: 5

**Children's Social Care**

Title: None                      Grade: N/A                      No of posts: N/A

Number of partially managed staff:

Title: None                      Grade: N/A                      No of posts: N/A

**Circumstances**

- Ability to work outside of normal hour's e.g. early evening training & on some occasions weekends.
- Can travel to attend meetings in and out of the borough at short notice.
- Satisfactory enhanced criminal records bureau disclosure.

**DBS Disclosure Required?**    **No**        **Basic**        **Enhanced**   

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor)

**Physical**

Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post