**Job Title**

**Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams**

**Family Help and Care - Child Protection Teams**

**Families, Quality and Commissioning - Adolescent Protection Team**

Team Managers (PO7)

Lead Child Protection Practitioners (Advanced Practitioners SP 41-43)

Lead Child Protection Practitioners (Senior Social Workers SP 35-37)

Job Ref

Job type: Full-time 35 hours

Closing date:

Contract Type: Permanent

Salary: £- £ (SCP) PO

Basic/Enhanced DBS check required

Discover yourself in Lewisham where what you do makes a difference to our vibrant and culturally diverse communities! We have a rich history of welcoming people from all over the world and are proud to be recognised as the UK’s first Borough of Sanctuary, for our work in championing the rights of refugees and migrants.

It's an exciting time to join us - Lewisham is a wave 2 Pathfinder authority and is leading the way on national reforms to social work practice through the Families First for Children programme.

**INTRODUCTION**

Lewisham is recruiting to several roles in in our newly established Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (CPT) and Multi-Agency Adolescent Protection Teams (APT).

These teams are situated in our Family Help and Care division and our Families, Quality and Commissioning division. These services are part of our Children and Young People Directorate and provide help and support to children and families from our family hub prevention services through to statutory child protection and care experienced young people.

The Child Protection teams work alongside the Family Help teams to intervene when child protection is required and where the risk to the child is from intra-familial harm. The Adolescent Protection teams work with children at risk of harm outside the home due to issues such as gangs, violence, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation. The CPT/APTs also have a quality assurance role and will be responsible for chairing child protection conferences and working alongside Family Help Lead Practitioners in care proceedings and the Public Law Outline.

It’s an exciting time to join Lewisham as we are at the forefront of social work reform as a Wave 2 Families First for Children Pathfinder local authority. These posts are part of our reform programme and the redesign of how we deliver services to children and families in our borough. Lewisham will be taking a lead role in supporting other local authorities to embed the reforms as part of the wider DfE national roll out. We are very proud of what we have achieved in the first year as a Pathfinder authority.

**What’s the role?**

We are looking for inspirational, creative and ambitious social work leaders and practitioners who want to be part of leading local and national reform to social work practice with children and families. If you are an experienced social worker or looking to take the next step in your career then we would love to hear from you. All roles are in statutory social work services providing help and protection to children and young people in our borough.

**We are recruiting to the following roles in both our Child Protection Teams and Adolescent Protection Teams**

**Team Managers**

You will lead a team of 4-5 lead child protection practitioners. This is an exciting and interesting role and you will be at the forefront of practice development in child protection work in Lewisham. You will be skilled and knowledgeable in relation to all aspects of child protection practice. The post holder will be able to build effective relationships with colleagues across the Family Help and Care and Families, Quality and Commissioning as well as with the multi-agency partnership.

You will have experience in:

* supervision and line management of staff
* managing complex frontline operational practice including chairing strategy meetings
* excellent knowledge of current child protection legislation and practice
* forming effective working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and colleagues

**Lead Child Protection Practitioners (Advanced Practitioners)**

You will be an experienced social worker with significant post qualifying experience and a thorough knowledge of current child protection practice. You will be skilled in working with children and have an excellent understanding of assessment of risk and conducting of S47 enquiries.

You will have experience in:

* managing complex frontline operational practice as a case holder
* ability to lead on S47 enquiries and chair meetings including strategy discussions and child protection conferences
* excellent knowledge of current child protection legislation and practice
* forming effective working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and colleagues

**Lead Child Protection Practitioners (Senior Social Workers)**

You will have experience of social work practice with children and families and a good understanding of current child protection practice. You will be skilled at direct work with children and have a thorough knowledge of how to undertake assessments of risk and need and conduct S47 enquiries.

You will have experience in:

* managing complex frontline operational practice as a case holder
* ability to lead on S47 enquiries and provide advice and consultation to the workforce
* excellent knowledge of current child protection legislation and practice
* forming effective working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and colleagues.

All post holders in the Child Protection and Adolescent Protection teams will be skilled at working with partners, creating cohesive teams that intervene decisively when needed to protect children from intra and extra familial harm.

**About You**

We are seeking candidates who are qualified social workers with a thorough technical knowledge of the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), the Pan London Child Protection Procedures and other relevant statutory guidance.  You will evidence a good understanding of the DfE Families First for Children programme of reform.

You will demonstrate an in depth understanding of the Signs of Safety practice framework.  You will have significant post qualifying experience which includes managing complex frontline operational practice either as a manager or as a case holder. You will be ambitious for children and families and be able to deliver effective services to improve the lives of children and young people. You will demonstrate an understanding of the current context of delivering local authority social work services and of the current reform.

**What’s in it for you?**

**Our Vision - What Good Children’s Social Work Looks Like in Lewisham**

In Lewisham Children’s Social Care, we know what good social work looks like and we are passionate about creating the right conditions and culture for good practice to thrive.

* Families are respected and supported to stay together, whenever there is safety.
* Families will tell us they understand why we are involved.
* Children will tell us their social worker has made a difference to their lives.
* Children who are in our care know we care, and we won’t give up on them.
* Young people who have been in our care feel confident about their future.

We have taken a whole system approach to improving our services to children and young people in our borough using Signs of Safety as our practice model.  Ofsted recognised the progress we have made noting that:

* *Staff talk positively about their manageable caseloads, regular supervision, team meetings and access to a range of training, including the social work model of practice.*
* *Senior leaders demonstrate a clear focus on hearing the voices of children to develop and improve services.*
* *Leaders know the service well. They have a clear understanding of areas for development that are being appropriately addressed.*

In January 2024, Ofsted's report lauds significant improvements in our children's services. Praised areas include strong leadership, high-quality support for families and children, and positive outcomes across all criteria.

* *The Executive Director for Children and Young People and his team are credited for driving these improvements, with particular focus on enhancing workforce stability, early help services, and partnerships with stakeholders.*
* *Noteworthy practices include creative life-story work and culturally sensitive social work approaches, crucial in a diverse borough like Lewisham.*
* *The Council's anti-racist practice network and safe space platform also garnered praise for supporting staff from black and global majority backgrounds.*
* *Overall, the report highlights a commendable commitment to improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Lewisham.*

**Why choose Lewisham?**

*“Lewisham has so much to offer any social worker. I feel supported, respected and valued every step of the way”*(Social Worker).

Our social workers benefit from working in small, supportive teams with caseloads on average between 15-20 children. Our Signs of Safety family-led practice framework means we are committed to working in a relationship-based way with children and families, focussing on strengths in the family network to effect change. A positive learning culture which promotes opportunities for reflection and relationship-based practice is important to us. We are committed to developing our practice using reflective practice spaces such as case mapping, thinking spaces and group supervision.

Our permanent and stable senior management team are visible and approachable.  Our dedicated workforce team supports professional development across the service so that you will;

* be supported through our comprehensive learning and development offer, which includes subscription to ‘Research in Practice’.
* receive regular supervision and appraisal.
* have 1-1 practice development coaching as a case holder, and professional development coaching as a manager.
* have access to regular Signs of Safety training.
* have access to external leadership development opportunities such as the Black and Asian Leadership Initiative (BALI).
* have a clearly defined career progression pathway with opportunities for professional development at all levels.
* have opportunities to become a practice educator and work with students and newly qualified social workers.

**What we’re looking for**

If you want to work in a thriving borough and our social work vision connects with your professional values, then we are interested in hearing from you. We are looking for people to join our team who:

* value the importance of communication and seeking feedback
* can inspire and motivate those they work with, manage and lead
* are committed to developing their skills and expertise to deliver an excellent service
* are professionally curious and value thinking slowly and calmly in a balanced way
* work inclusively, collaboratively with others recognising their strengths
* take responsibility and make a positive contribution by focusing on solutions
* are transparent, are appreciative in enquiry, reflect and learn.

In return, we’ll offer excellent development opportunities, the opportunity to make a real difference to our local community plus a range of benefits including:

* Generous leave entitlement
* Local Government Pension scheme
* Flexible working and family friendly policies
* Season ticket and bicycle loans
* A range of staff discounts including local subsidised gym memberships
* Supportive staff networks

**Location**

The job is primarily based in Laurence House in Catford SE6. There are 2 local train stations 3-5 minutes’ walk from the office, and the train journey from London Bridge is approximately 15 minutes. There are also numerous bus routes that stop right by the office.

We operate a hybrid approach where you will be required to work both in the office and from home on a regular basis.

**Creating an Inclusive Lewisham**

A core value of Lewisham Council is to 'draw on the diversity of our communities to create a more inclusive Lewisham'. We believe that freedom from discrimination and equality of opportunity are fundamental rights, and that each person should be valued regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, or age. Social inclusion lies at the heart of everything we do as a Council in our roles as an employer, a provider of services and a community leader.

**Diversity**

Lewisham Council is a Disability Confident employer. We welcome and encourage job applications of all abilities. If you require any reasonable adjustments in the application or interview, please contact the lead contact on this advert. We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure our disabled applicants and those with health conditions are supported throughout our recruitment process. We support the access to work scheme, further details are available at [www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply)

The Council has a dedicated employment support service, [Lewisham Works](https://lewisham.gov.uk/lewishamworks), which offers Lewisham residents guidance in relation to applying for jobs. If you want to join Lewisham Works, please email JobsAndSkills@lewisham.gov.uk and an advisor will be in touch with you.

**Your Application**

The recruitment process is anonymous and we don’t accept CV’s.

Applicant handbook- please read the guidance in this handbook when applying. It is essential that you complete the application fully and that your supporting statement covers how you meet each of the person specification criteria listed.

**Special conditions**

* The post holder must have a social work qualification and be registered with Social Work England
* The job is subject to a DBS check (Basic/Enhanced)

For an informal discussion about this job, please contact pathfinder@lewisham.gov.uk

**Salary**

£- £ (SCP) PO

All appointments will be offered at the minimum spinal column point (SCP) for the grade of the role. The only exception to this will be when matching current salary (up to the maximum of the scale), which is subject to evidential proof.

The Council reserves the right to close adverts early if there is a large response.

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