

Policy & Procedure for Family Workers

Role and Function CSC

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1 Role and Function of Family Workers

Family Workers are part of the range of workers employed by Children's Social Care so that it can fulfil its duties and responsibilities.

Family Workers are deployed in all of our Children's Social Care teams. They undertake a number of duties as determined by their manager depending on their knowledge, skills and experience.

Family Workers are skilled workers that work collaboratively and creatively to deliver support to families. They carry out quality interventions both individually and alongside Social Workers, providing an essential part of the Children's Social Care workforce.

The Local Authority ensures that Family Workers will undertake relevant and appropriate training to enable them to carry out their role. The management and supervision of Family Workers and the work allocated to them reflects this.

2 Work to be Undertaken by Family Workers

2.1 Cases Allocated to Social Workers

Family Workers will contribute to cases allocated to Social Workers, working with them on the implementation of care plans, and carrying out specific activities with service users. These might include:

- supervision of family time (supervised contact)
- transporting a child or young person
- assistance with practical tasks such as completing applications
- direct work with a child
- parenting intervention
- running groups
- life story work

Family Workers may also undertake a variety of 'one-off' tasks, either on:

- cases or for specific tasks
- Project work

All new work will be agreed by the line manager prior to the Family Worker becoming involved in a case. Their work must always be overseen by a qualified Social Worker and this will usually be their own line manager.

The work will have been identified within the child's plan, (Child in Need Plan, Pathway Plan or Protection Plan). Where the Family Worker is undertaking a piece of work on a case, they will contribute to the assessment.

2.2 Children Looked After (CLA)

Family Workers will not hold Children who are Looked After; they may however be involved where it adds value and where there is a pre-existing relationship with the child, for example:

- To undertake direct work
- To enable child and family contact time

Family Workers do not undertake the statutory CLA visit, other than for Regulation 24 placements.

2.3 Child Protection

Family Workers will not undertake Child Protection keyworker visits nor the monitoring in Child Protection cases. The Social Worker is responsible for seeing a child who is subject to a Protection Plan. Where the Family Worker is carrying out a piece of work with a child, who is subject to a protection plan, the Social Worker must still visit to see the child.

2.4 Team Duty Systems; including MASH and Duty Team

Family Workers will take part in all team duty systems, following the appropriate induction and must have undertaken the required level of Child Safeguarding training.

Family Workers will seek advice and guidance from their line manager in relation to the duty task to ensure the appropriate action is taken, and/or if a Social Worker is required.

Where a Family Worker is undertaking 'team duty', they must be able to have immediate access to the Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager for advice.

3 Allocated Cases

3.1 Case Holding

Family Workers can case hold Children in Need that are deemed appropriate to the child's needs, their skills level, training and experience. Should Child Protection concerns emerge on a Child in Need case, these will be assessed by a Social Worker, maintaining the relationship between the child and the Family Worker. Should a Child in Need become a Child Protection or Looked After Case, it will be re- allocated to a Social Worker.

The Family Worker should not hold a case that has had a recent Child Protection s.47 investigation unless there are particular reasons for this, and the risk management indicates that it is safe to do so with management authorisation. For example, where there is an absolute confidence that a s.47 has resulted from a malicious referral albeit these situations are rare.

3.2 Private Fostering

Family Workers cannot hold children who are Privately Fostered.

4 Assessments

Family Workers can contribute to single assessments or parenting assessments where they are or have undertaken work with the family.

Social Workers are responsible for single assessments; Family Workers can contribute and undertake direct work, or carry out parenting interventions.

Family Workers will not undertake s.47 enquiries and assessments although they may carry out specific tasks on such cases as directed by the manager.

5 Recording Policy

As with any other worker, Family Workers will comply with the Recording Policy.

6 Management and Supervision of Family Workers

6.1 Supervision Arrangements

Family Workers are supervised like any other member of staff in accordance with the Supervision Policy.

Where a Family Worker is case holding, supervision should be frequent and must not fall below the minimum 4 weekly requirement. The supervisor must be satisfied that the Family Worker feels supported in the work undertaken, about the quality and safety of the service provided to the family.

6.2 Accountability

Family Workers are accountable to their line manager.

When Family Workers are supporting a family with an allocated Social Worker, these tasks and the role of the Family Worker will have been agreed by their line manager, and the Family Worker remains accountable to their own line manager.

Family Workers will undertake work within their team, but in order to respond to variation in demand they may work across the whole service on some occasions with the agreement of the team managers.

6.3 Training and Induction Requirements

Family Workers can access all training opportunities available. They are inducted in the same way as Social Workers and are expected to complete mandatory training including Child Safeguarding training.

Family Workers should complete the normal induction process which includes the mandatory Bracknell Forest e-learning modules. Family Workers should undertake Child Safeguarding training and any other appropriate training relevant to their roles.