



## **FAMILY COURT ADVISER (ENHANCED PRACTITIONER) JOB PROFILE**

**Job Title:** Enhanced Practitioner

**Accountable to:** Service Manager / Senior Service Manager

**Working Arrangements:** Flexible Office Base (The expectation will be that the post holder works flexibly around the service area where required)

**Key Working Relationships:** Cafcass Staff, Judiciary and Court Services, Solicitors, Local Authorities and other related professional and partnership agencies

**Role Requirements:** (See attached Person Specification)

### **Terms of Employment**

**Grade:** Enhanced Practitioner

**Band:** Band 8

**Salary:** £42,234 - £43,244

**London Weighting:** £4,293 per annum for staff with a permanent work base in Greater London.

**Superannuation:** The pension scheme used by Cafcass is the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (a Local Government Pension Scheme). This is also our auto enrolment scheme. Contribution rates are based on a tiered system.

**Annual Leave:** 28 days rising to 33 days after 5 years reckonable service, inclusive of 3 privilege days to be taken between Christmas and New Year plus any of the bank/public holidays.

## **JOB SUMMARY:**

To provide advanced social work-level services to children, families and courts by assessing and analysing court applications for any child protection and serious welfare issues affecting a child or young person. Also to influence those with parental responsibility to be more child-focused when needed and to advise the courts about how a child's life can be improved, supporting judicial case management in the process. You will need to keep the child at the centre of your work through high quality direct work with children and their families. You will also need to be a skilled negotiator, working persuasively with family members and professionals on behalf of children.

You will keep the child's timescale at the centre of everything you do, in the context of their journey through childhood and, where applicable, the care system. You must be prepared to advocate in the best interests of the child, ensuring their voice is not lost in the court arena. You will be required to be a resilient, reflective and accountable practitioner, possessing good IT and organisational skills, so that you can maintain a high throughput of outstanding casework.

You will provide additional support to the Service Manager by providing supervision and quality assurance of work within the team, assisting with management of case allocation, ensuring case closures and undertaking liaison with local authorities or other agencies as required.

## **ENHANCED PRACTITIONER RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES in line with Cafcass Service Standards:**

### **Safeguarding/Child Protection**

1. To provide high quality early safeguarding and child protection advice, assessments and analysis to the Court on the needs and best interests of children subject to or involved in Family Proceedings
2. To ensure that the well-being and safety of the child is paramount throughout Cafcass' involvement in the case.
3. To ensure that all incidents or risks of significant harm to the child are dealt with in accordance with the relevant Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures and Cafcass policies and procedures
4. To directly work with children & families to achieve safe and positive outcomes for children, referring to other services where this will produce benefit.

### **Service Effectiveness Throughput and Productivity**

5. To produce high quality work with a rapid throughput, combining increasing productivity with quality of casework.
6. For all work produced to be rated good or outstanding in internal and external audits, with exceptions tolerated where the learning gained from those exceptions can be absorbed and applied to future work.
7. To be fully engaged with Cafcass policy that all cases must be allocated and to adopt a proportionate approach to work. In response to changing demands, the

regulating mechanism will be the average time spent on cases; which is lower when demands are higher, and vice versa.

8. Assist the Service Manager in the allocation of cases and co-ordinating duty rotas.
9. Support the Service Manager in the provision of reflective supervision, informal coaching/mentoring and effective performance management for all operational staff in the team including identification of performance issues and the induction of new starters.
10. Assist Service Manager in conducting or leading team meetings or team development workshops and training sessions.

### **Quality**

11. To carry out an advanced social work level case analysis of the child's circumstances and to ensure this is updated if circumstances change.
12. To provide advanced social work level advice and assist the Court to achieve a timely conclusion to proceedings and the best possible outcome for the child.
13. To administer orders made by the Family Court as required and conduct the necessary enquires in accordance with relevant legislation and Court Rules.
14. To provide a clear child-focused plan of work in each case which is monitored and subject to ongoing review.
15. To ensure the appointment and instruction of legal representation for the child as required, and work in partnership with the relevant agencies for each case.
16. To keep up to date with changes in legislation, Court Rules, policies, national directives, procedures and best practice developments.
17. To participate in training and development programmes in line with the agreed individual personal development plan, taking responsibility for your continued professional development in line with the Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Workers. Take responsibility for your own learning and improvement, through ever greater self-regulation supported by active and positive supervision in line with the Cafcass Supervision Policy.
18. Undertake quality assurance of work within the team including review of reports and case files, or undertake practice observation, providing feedback and guidance for continuous improvement.

### **Engagement and Partnership Working**

19. To work in a child-inclusive way at all times, emphasising the voice of the child to the court and all parties to a case.
20. To undertake own work in partnership with other parties, agencies and significant others for the child, putting the needs of the child first in all discussions and negotiations.

21. Act on behalf of Service Manager as an effective representative for Cafcass liaising with other agencies such as courts, LSCB and Local Authorities or other stakeholders.

*This job profile is not a definitive list of responsibilities but identifies the key components of the role. The specific objectives of the post holder will be subject to review as part of the individual performance review process.*



## ENHANCED PRACTITIONER PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Qualifications

Diploma in Social Work (or HCPC recognised equivalent)

### Experience

A minimum of four year's post qualifying experience in social work with children and families at risk

### Skills Areas

#### 1. Exercising statutory authority to safeguard the best interests of children

##### Skills to be demonstrated:

- A high standard of assessment and case analysis
- Ability to produce written work to a high standard
- Communicates effectively and demonstrates empathy with children & families within the family justice system
- Effective communication and joint working with a range of professionals and agencies.
- Negotiation Skills
- Ability to work autonomously
- Ability to work to deadlines
- Ability to prioritise
- Confident decision making to work in high conflict situations
- Ability to achieve safe outcomes in areas of conflict

#### 2. Assessing different levels of needs and risk including child protection

##### Skills to be demonstrated:

- Knowledge and use of tools and models of risk assessment
- Ability to gather, record and analyse complex information
- High quality concise recording and reporting skills
- Effective casework planning to timescales
- Integrate diversity into practice

#### 3. Direct Engagement with Children & Families

##### Skills to be demonstrated:

- Use of direct work techniques with children and adults
- Ability to respond to differing needs of children and adults
- Ability to engage children and adults from diverse backgrounds

#### **4. Workload management and use of various IT systems to monitor and record information**

##### **Skills to be demonstrated:**

- Competent and confident use of a range of IT and electronic systems
- Electronic planning and organising of work using a variety of IT tools
- Case Planning and use of various IT systems to monitor and record information
- Ability to work as part of a team

#### **5. Leadership and Management of People**

##### **Skills to be demonstrated:**

- A good understanding of performance management and the ability to set targets and monitor performance.
- Experience of training, coaching and support skills to improve individual practice
- Knowledge and implementation of practice policies and good practice guidance.