

FAMILY WORKER JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Home School Family Worker
HOURS: Flexible, Full or Part-time
ACCOUNTABLE TO: The Red Hen Project Trustees

JOB PURPOSE:

- To work in partnership with families who are experiencing challenging situations/circumstances, in their homes and in the broader community, to achieve positive outcomes for the whole family.
- To work in a whole family way through the development of effective relationships with parents and their family members using strength-based approaches to help, motivate and encourage behaviour change that will lead to a positive difference to people’s lives.
- To help children and their families to overcome barriers to learning by working across a cluster of primary schools to build positive partnerships between school/s and parents.
- To work with schools and parents to deliver a child-centred and parent-focused approach of early interventions to support children's development and learning, including, when needed, work to improve attendance and tackle behaviour issues.
- To identify and tackle difficulties at an early stage, signposting to appropriate services as needed and linking families to more specialised help and support when necessary.
- To devise, plan and run outreach activities to support families and achieve the objectives of the project, focusing on areas such as parenting, self-esteem and reducing isolation
- To work in partnership with other relevant agencies and organisations and assist families in accessing, building and maintaining effective relationships with them to facilitate community cohesion
- To improve outcomes for children and their families in North Cambridge

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MAIN DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- To be the lead professional for a small caseload of families who may have complex needs, working intensively with family and extended family members for an extended period of time.
- To work with families in their homes to address key issues that have an impact on family functioning which may include: poor school attendance, behaviour both at home and school, debt and money management, housing, domestic violence and abuse.
- To be responsible for working with appropriate partners to deliver interventions in these areas as well as having direct involvement through key link liaison with schools.
- In partnership with families and other agencies, carry out a comprehensive assessment for the family, considering both their individual needs and the needs of the wider family. Through this process, identify and understand the family’s strengths and challenges and analyse this information to develop appropriate support, referrals and activities.
- Work in partnership with families in a persistent and proactive way, making flexible and effective use of challenge, and employ a range of creative approaches to positively engage with families who may often be unwilling to be engaged.
- Support family members to develop skills which will enable them to carry out household tasks such as budgeting, basic healthcare and hygiene, establishing routines; support engagement with universal services such as GPs, dentists, etc and attendance at appointments; increase parenting confidence and capacity.
- Use a positive whole family approach to develop empowering relationships so that families become more resilient and independent so that their need for support services is reduced over time. Act as an advocate for families where necessary, and as a mediator where relationships are complicated or have broken down.
- Work in partnership with schools and practitioners from other agencies and organisations in a persistent and proactive way, to support them to work with families to achieve best possible outcomes, challenging behaviours and practices which do not support a whole family working approach. Undertake a coordinating role as a vital part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- Responsible for keeping up-to-date and accurate case notes detailing interactions with families and other services, in line with the policies of the organisation.
- To maintain up-to-date recording systems that evidence the impact of the intervention for the whole family.
- Make consistent use of agreed outcome measures with families at the start, during and on exit from involvement, contributing to the evaluation of service delivery both through completion of approved monitoring tools and contribution to case studies, etc.
- Actively manage, safely and appropriately, the handling, processing, sharing and disposal of information and data, both physical and electronic. Operating data quality management processes and maintaining a good awareness of relevant legislation, such as Data Protection and Freedom of Information.
- Operate within the guidelines and protocols set down by the organisation, in particular, the Safeguarding framework and Health and Safety policies and procedures.
- Demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional development through appropriate training. In particular, keep up to date with legislative changes, including Child Protection, Data Protection, Health and Safety etc. Participate in multi-agency skill-sharing opportunities by providing training, coaching and other learning and development opportunities as required.

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OTHER ACCOUNTABILITIES

- The post holder will become part of a team supporting the primary schools at Arbury, the Grove, Kings Hedges, Orchard Park and Shirley Primary in North Cambridge. The schools’ designated senior members of staff (e.g. Head or Deputy Headteacher) will act as the liaison officer and will identify individual cases using agreed systems.
- Maintain close working relationships with parents/carers, headteachers and the teaching staff as well as with other agencies in the development of strategies to support families.

OTHER DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Contribute to the broader running of the project, including the creative promotion and development of services and activities.
- Supervise staff, including possible volunteers and provide clinical supervision to other family workers.
- Work with the Project Lead to identify potential projects and provide supporting information for funding applications.
- Contribute to and participate in the appraisal management system.
- Work with, and support, students placed with the project from time to time.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- The vision and values of The Red Hen Project.
- The needs of children, parents and schools within the area.
- The difficulties and problems that can arise within areas of social or economic deprivation and the resultant impact on family life.
- The educational support mechanisms and strategies relating to children displaying challenging behaviour.
- Child Protection procedures and requirements. Ideally, the individual will have already undertaken training and become the Child Protection designated person for the project on appointment.
- The roles of relevant support agencies such as Social Care and the Early Help District Team, when cases should be passed to them and the processes to follow when referring such cases, for example, the Early Help Assessment.
- Local resources that are available, to refer parents to for support and assistance when their needs are outside the scope of the project.

PLANNING AND SETTING EXPECTATIONS

- Set expectations for parents and children being supported, by discussing and agreeing on objectives with the people involved, and deciding on the work to be undertaken going forward.
- Identify and agree realistic but challenging outcomes, with families at the opening of the case.

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RELATIONS WITH PARENTS, SCHOOLS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

- Develop and support relationships between children, parents and the schools' staff.
- Establish a partnership with parents. Advise and work with them on strategies that promote punctuality, regular attendance at school and positive behaviour at school and in the home. Provide information about other resources available to them.
- Work with children and parents, helping them understand both their own, and others' behaviour. This may include direct work with children, liaison with the family at home, and/or group work where appropriate.
- Encourage parents to become involved with the school in supporting their child's learning.
- Empower the child, and parents to resolve problems themselves, as well as signposting to other support facilities in the local area.
- Work with the schools' staff and parents to ensure a consistency of approach to difficulties at school and in the home.
- Attend and contribute to planning meetings with parents and other professionals.
- Develop effective links with the local community and other agencies to make full use of the services available to the families and enable any family with problems to approach the project for support.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

- Implement clear policies and practices for assessing, recording and reporting on the progress made by parents and children.
- Maintain records of work undertaken with children and families and monitor the progress against agreed aims, achieved by the employment of appropriate strategies:
 - Children experiencing trauma, crisis or challenging behaviour will have improved emotional and physical wellbeing and improved engagement with their education.
 - Parents facing family crisis will increase their parenting skills, confidence and emotional wellbeing.
 - Schools, support agencies and statutory bodies will be better coordinated to meet local needs so that families feel less isolated and frustrated with their interactions with them.
 - Families will have improved links with others in their communities and are better able to support others with similar problems.
- Evaluate the outcomes achieved against the aims of the Project.

MANAGING OWN PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

- Prioritise and manage own time effectively, particularly concerning balancing the demands made by the schools, family work and involvement in the broader running of the project.
- Take responsibility for your professional development.
- Participate in the arrangement for appraisal and participate in the appraisal of team colleagues.

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OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS

- We work with parents, carers and children up to the thresholds for Children’s Social Care involvement, with the aim that our early-intervention work will avoid difficulties in the family escalating to such an extent that referrals to statutory services become necessary. Where families have vulnerabilities but have limited capacity to change, Family Workers have a role in supporting the management of risks.
- The nature of the work may involve the jobholder carrying out work outside of regular working hours, i.e. evenings and weekends.
- Travelling around the area we operate in is essential, and as such, a driving licence and use of a vehicle is required.
- You will be expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the salary grade and the overall purpose and principles of the Family Worker role.
- Due to the type and size of the organisation, you will need to be flexible, creative and self-sufficient. You will be expected to take ownership of your caseload and other projects without the need for close management.
- You are expected to have an understanding of, and commitment to, equal opportunities, and the ability to apply this to all situations.

It is standard practice to review job descriptions annually to ensure that they are relevant to the job currently being performed, and to incorporate any changes which have occurred or are proposed. We reserve the right to make reasonable changes to your job description to meet the needs of the role.

Both the Red Hen Project and our schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All appointments are conditional and subject to an enhanced DBS check.

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