

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

Designation:	Fostering Family Therapist	Grade:	P07
Reports to (Designation):	Fostering and Kinship Group Manager	Grade:	P07
Directorate:	Family Help and Care	Department:	Care Resources

Main Purpose of the job:

Deliver systemic and therapeutic interventions to foster carers, children and young people; and lead the embedding of trauma-informed, attachment-focused, and relationship-based practice across Lewisham's fostering service. The post holder provides consultation, reflective supervision, training, crisis response and formulation-led input that enables carers to offer stable, nurturing homes for children with complex needs. The role integrates the core Family Therapist responsibilities with specialist fostering duties including placement stability, carer consultation, multi-agency coordination, and therapeutic parenting development.

Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:

- 1. Direct Clinical Support to Foster Carers
 - Provide regular clinical consultations and reflective spaces for foster carers, in-person and virtually as appropriate.
 - Coach carers in applying therapeutic parenting models (e.g., PACE, Dyadic Developmental Practice principles) and co-regulation strategies.
 - Undertake home visits to model therapeutic responses and build carers' confidence in responding to trauma-related behaviours.
 - Support carers to formulate children's needs and translate formulations into day-to-day care and routines.
 - Lead and facilitate peer support groups for foster carers, ensuring a safe and strengths-based culture of learning and mutual support.
- 2. Therapeutic Work with Children and Young People
 - Deliver direct therapeutic interventions where appropriate (e.g., play- and creativity-based approaches, CBT-informed work, stabilisation and emotion regulation).
 - Contribute to life-story work and identity-affirming interventions.

- Work systemically with family networks (birth family, kinship carers, siblings).
 - Assess and review progress, adapting therapeutic plans through shared goals with the child/young person and carers.
- 3. Clinical Input into Placement Planning and Matching
 - Contribute to therapeutic assessments to inform placement matching.
 - Advise supervising social workers and managers on strategies that promote placement stability.
 - Provide written formulations and recommendations for care planning, permanence and transitions.
- 4. Crisis Support and Placement Stability
 - Provide timely, intensive support to placements under strain and participate in stability meetings.
 - Offer crisis formulation and de-escalation guidance.
 - Support transitions including reunification, adoption, kinship, residential or semi-independence.
- 5. Multi-Agency Collaboration
 - Work collaboratively with social workers, SSWs, IROs, education, health and voluntary sector partners.
 - Attend and contribute to professionals' meetings, child protection conferences and core groups.
 - Support referrals to CAMHS/specialist services and ensure coordinated plans.
- 6. Training and Workforce Development
 - Design and deliver a training offer for foster carers on trauma, attachment, behaviour and mental health.
 - Facilitate reflective practice groups for carers and staff.
 - Contribute to induction and CPD of fostering staff and SSWs.
- 7. Reflective Supervision and Consultation to Staff
 - Provide systemic practice supervision and coaching to Family Coaches/practitioners.
 - Lead case discussions, genogram work and consultations.
 - Promote curiosity, hypothesising and use of evidence-informed models.
- 8. Quality Assurance, Outcomes and Data
 - Support development and embedding of outcomes framework.
 - Undertake audits, analyse themes and use findings to drive improvement.
 - Produce or contribute to high-quality reports for panels and governance.
- 9. Safeguarding and Risk Management
 - Maintain up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding legislation and local thresholds.
 - Identify and manage risk with carers and professionals.

- Exercise autonomous professional responsibility in line with codes of practice.

- 10. Case Recording and Information Governance
 - Maintain clear, timely and analytical case records.
 - Ensure compliance with GDPR and local information governance policies.
 - Respect confidentiality and obtain informed consent using Gillick/Fraser guidance.

- 11. Equality, Diversity and Anti-Discriminatory Practice
 - Work cross-culturally with sensitivity to all aspects of identity.
 - Challenge discrimination and promote equitable access across Lewisham's communities.

- 12. Service Development and Innovation
 - Support development of therapeutic fostering schemes and pathways.
 - Promote evidence-based models and contribute to practice guidance.
 - Keep abreast of research and translate learning into practice.

- GENERAL TERMS
 - Maintain personal and professional development and participate in supervision, appraisal and mandatory training.
 - Comply with council policies, procedures and relevant legislation.
 - Undertake occasional evening/weekend work as required

Internal Contacts: These include representatives from across Council Departments who may be engaged with children and families, kinship and mainstream foster carers, for example Children's Social Care, Virtual School, Family Hubs, Adults Services and Housing

External Contacts: This will include partner agencies supporting kinship and mainstream foster carers e.g. Fostering Network, Coram, ICB and Health, Police, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Mental Health services, 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 policies, codes and procedures.

To carry out duties with due regard to the Council's values and behaviours

All employees are required to participate in Appraisal and Performance Management processes and to undertake appropriate training and development, including mandatory induction training, 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 postholder.

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

Number of fully managed staff:

Title:	Grade	No of posts
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Number of partially managed staff:

Title:	Grade	No of posts
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Fostering Therapist

Grade: P07

Department: Fostering and Kinship / Care Resources

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 and 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.

Equality & Diversity	
Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community	S
Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post	S
Knowledge	
In-depth knowledge of models of systemic therapy.	S
Operational knowledge of safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.	S
Knowledge of trauma, attachment, child development and mental health.	S
Understanding of fostering frameworks and therapeutic parenting models.	S
Understanding CAMHS thresholds and specialist service referral criteria.	S
Aptitude	
Ability to analyze complex information and think systemically.	
Ability to make timely, evidence-based judgments and produce high-quality reports.	
Excellent verbal/written communication and influencing skills.	
Resilience and clarity in emotionally charged situations.	
Skilled in gathering information including observation of interactions.	
Ability to intervene early to strengthen relationships and prevent placement breakdown.	
Skills	(To Be Tested – T)
Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested	
Competence in delivering systemic and trauma-informed interventions.	S
Ability to develop systemic thinking and deliver training to kinship and foster carers as well as fostering and kinship staff.	S
Experience	
Minimum 2 years post-qualification experience using systemic interventions with children and families, parents or carers.	
Experience supporting/challenging practice using systemic tools.	S

Experience undertaking therapeutic assessments and analysing complex information.	S
Experience providing consultation/supervision using systemic thinking.	S
Experience supporting foster carers or similar settings to prevent breakdown.	S
Experience using audit/analysis to inform service planning	
Experience of systematically monitoring and reviewing decisions and plans, revising them where appropriate in the light of new information and evaluating whether the interventions are achieving the planned outcomes (S)	
Ability to work collaboratively with children, parent and carers, staff and partnership.	S
General Education	
Educated to degree standard or equivalent:	
Relevant professional qualification: Msc. Systemic Family Therapy, Systemic Psychotherapy or equivalent qualification.	S
Professional registration (e.g., UKCP, AFT) and commitment to CPD.	
Personal Qualities	
Passion for Lewisham's vision to support children and young people and carers.	
Strong organizational abilities; flexibility and able to work independently.	
Strengths-based, collaborative and pragmatic approach.	
Ability to manage emotional distress and maintain reflective stance.	
Good communication and interpersonal skills that are open, honest, reflective and supportive.	
Circumstances	
Ability to work outside of normal hour's e.g. early evening training or foster carer support group	S
Can travel to attend meetings in and out of the borough at short notice.	S
Satisfactory enhanced criminal records bureau disclosure.	S

Physical

Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post

DBS Disclosure Required

Basic

Standard

Enhanced

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor, if a DBS is not required please leave boxes blank)