



## **Head of Service Family Help and Partnerships (including, Partnerships and Family Support, MASH, South Locality and Central 2)**

**Salary:** Band 15, £76,335 to £85,316 per annum

**Hours:** 37 hours per week

**Contract:** Permanent

**Reports to:** Deputy Director Children and Families

**Location:** Civic

Portsmouth City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Every post is subject to PCC and Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership safer recruitment procedures.

This role requires a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at Standard/Enhanced level which will be required prior to any offer of employment and this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

### **Who We Are**

Portsmouth City Council's Children and Families Services is committed to creating stronger futures for children, young people, and families. We work in partnership across education, health, police and community services to provide high-quality, inclusive support that helps families thrive. Our approach is relational, restorative, trauma informed and strengths-based, ensuring that every child has the best start in life and every family receives the right help at the right time.

### **About Family Help**

Family Help is our way of working that brings together targeted early help and Child in Need support into a single, seamless offer. It replaces the traditional divide between early help and statutory services, making it easier for families to access support without stigma or duplication.

Key features of Family Help include:

- Whole-family approach – addressing needs across the family, not just the child.
- Single assessment and plan – reducing duplication and focusing on outcomes.
- Family Help Lead Practitioner role – acting as the main point of contact for families and coordinating the Team Around the Family
- Evidence-based interventions – practical, relational support that builds resilience and prevents escalation.
- Family-led planning, ensuring family-based solutions are at the heart of all we do.
- The right help at the right time by the right lead professional.



## The Role

This is one of two posts to provide strategic and operational leadership for the Family Help Service and hold additional portfolios for our Integrated Front Door (MASH) and Partnerships and Family Support. The postholder ensures high-quality, relational, and effective early help and statutory social work services for children, young people and their families.

The role leads system transformation, practice improvement, partnership integration, and delivery of the local authority's priorities. This includes a newly established Partnerships and Family Support Service with practitioners and leaders within the service, providing a strategic point of contact for all key partners to ensure our continued alignment with Solent NHS Trust. This service will work in partnership with key partners, including those delivering work within the Best Start in Life Strategy, and oversee the critical business that is delivered by our family hubs, including parenting pathways.

The postholder ensures high-quality early help, statutory support, and inclusive community provision aligned with the Families First Partnership reforms, working collaboratively across education, health, social care, partners, and the voluntary sector.

The Head of Service, working through Service Leaders as direct reports and as a key member of the Senior Management Team, provides strategic leadership that drives continuous practice improvement, co-production with children and families, workforce development, and a culture of safe decision-making, early intervention, and family-centred support. The role ensures that high-quality, relational, and strengths-based practice is embedded across all teams, supporting effective safeguarding, timely help, and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.

## Key Responsibilities

### Leadership & Management

- Lead the strategic direction and continuous improvement of:
  - **Family Help services** (targeted early help and Statutory Social work interventions through multidisciplinary teams)
  - **MASH** (single point of contact where professionals from different agencies work together to assess safeguarding concerns about children and young people to ensure swift information-sharing, better risk assessment, and faster, safer decisions when there are concerns about harm, abuse, or neglect.
  - **Partnerships and Family Support** services (strengthening partnership alignment—particularly with Solent NHS Trust—ensuring integrated pathways, shared priorities, and consistent delivery across children's and family support systems)
- Translate national legislation and reform requirements into local strategies, policies, and operational frameworks.
- Shape and deliver a coherent vision for integrated family and adult support across the system.
- Oversee high-quality, proportionate, and timely Family Help interventions that reduce risk and build resilience.
- Ensure seamless pathways between targeted early help and statutory social work into one family help offer.

- Drive consistency in threshold application, decision-making, and risk management.
- Ensure services reflect relationship-based practice, safe uncertainty, and family-led planning.
- Ensure robust systems for identifying and responding to children at risk of harm, both in and outside of their home.
- Provide strategic oversight of the MASH .
- Provide Strategic oversight of partnership delivery and alignment for integrated delivery including parenting pathways.

### **Quality Assurance, Standards & Practice Improvement**

- Lead a strong QA framework across family help, including additional portfolios, ensuring learning from:
  - audits
  - complaints
  - practice observations
  - lived-experience voices
  - statutory reviews (SARs, SEND inspections, Ofsted ILACS)
- Ensure practice frameworks are consistently applied and embedded.
- Drive a culture of reflection, learning, curiosity, and continuous improvement.

### **Workforce Leadership & Culture**

- Lead and support Service Managers, Team Leaders, and multi-disciplinary teams.
- Build workforce stability, capability, and confidence.
- Embed strengths-based, relational, and trauma-informed practice cultures.
- Provide visible leadership, mentoring, and accountability.

### **Performance, Commissioning & Financial Management**

- Oversee performance frameworks, KPIs, dashboards, and outcomes tracking.
- Manage and forecast budgets across Family Help, MASH, and Hub delivery.
- Identify invest-to-save opportunities, particularly in prevention and early intervention.
- Oversee commissioned services.
- Ensure value for money and improved outcomes.

### **Partnership & System Leadership**

- Lead multi-agency working across health, police, education, voluntary sector, adult services, SEND, and commissioning.
- Strengthen cross-system pathways (e.g., domestic abuse, exploitation, mental health, transitions, parenting pathways).
- Represent the local authority at strategic boards
- Promote co-production with families, carers, children, young people, and adults.



## **Who is the person?**

### **You will have /be**

- A relational and compassionate leader.
- Commitment to inclusion, rights-based practice, and co-production.
- Curious, reflective, and evidence informed.
- Confident in leading through complexity, ambiguity, and change.
- High integrity, resilience, and professional credibility.

### **Skills, Knowledge & Experience**

- A social work qualification is essential and registered with a professional body.
- Senior leadership experience in children's services is essential
- Deep knowledge of:
  - Children Act 1989/2004
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children
  - SEND Code of Practice
  - Family Help / national social care reforms including Best Start in Life and early years reform programme
- Experience of leading multi-disciplinary teams and large portfolios.
- Strategic planning, service redesign, and transformation expertise.
- Strong financial management and commissioning experience.
- Experience of working across complex systems with senior partners.
- Experience in inspection readiness (Ofsted ILACS, CQC, Joint Targeted Area Inspections).
- Experience in leading multi-portfolio services.

**You will need to demonstrate that you have the Right to Work in the UK. No post will be offered without it.**

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

Portsmouth City Council is the Data Controller of any personal information you provide when applying for a job. It will only be used in connection with the recruitment process and will not be kept for longer than necessary. For more detailed information you can access the Data Protection Privacy Notice on our [careers portal](#).