Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

Advanced Social Worker (Specialism Mockingbird Liaison worker)

Salary: Band 11, £48,738 to £53,051 per annum, pro rata

Hours: 30 hours per week

Contract: Permanent

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. It is also committed to promoting quality childcare across the City that works to improve outcomes for children.

DBS Disclosure at Enhanced level will be required prior to any offer of employment and this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Every post is subject to PCC and Portsmouth Safeguarding Children's Board safer recruitment procedures.

Why would you come and work for Children's Social Care in Portsmouth?

Our service is committed to high standards and a culture of restorative practice. We are continuing to increase foster carer numbers and the menu of support to carers year on year. This is an exciting time to join Portsmouth City Council Fostering Service as we strive to further enhance outcomes for the children we care for. We are committed to professional development and the provision of training to staff and all our carers.

As a fostering service we recognise that children need diversity of carers whilst they cannot live with their parents. We support approved foster carers, kinship carers, private foster carers and offer a range of support including formal supervision, training, mentoring, support groups, social events.

We have a fantastic cohort of carers who are committed to Portsmouth and the children we care for. The vast majority of those children live with our own foster carers. We are creative and open to new ways of working: having launched the Fostering Network Mockingbird model of care in 2021 we now have a well-established and successful Mockingbird community of carers. We have foster carers partnered with each other to provide breaks as needed and a range of support groups. We offer child and parent care and always looking to build on our service. Our Fostering Service have a wealth of knowledge and skills through learning and development offer including Motivational Interviewing and DDP.

As a small local authority, we have strong working relationships with our children's teams and which enhances working together always to achieve best outcomes for our children. Feedback form one of our foster carers - describes us as 'small but mighty' 'a real community'.

If you are seeking a change and are motivated to support our carers supporting children, we have an opportunity for you to join us. This is an ideal opportunity to use your knowledge and experience of working with foster carers and children we care for to supervise and enhance the development of foster carers. We want individuals to champion the very best social work practice, who are motivated, flexible, enthusiastic, passionate and with a "can do" attitude who share our passion for improving children's and young people's lives.

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As a service we take pride in our work by valuing others, focusing on what's important so that we make a real and positive difference. Our values are outlined in our Ways of Working and our Guiding Principles and if they appeal then this could be the job for you. Portsmouth received their "Outstanding" Ofsted rating in 2026 which reflects the excellent work we do with Children and Families in the city.

What is the Role?

An exciting opportunity has arisen within the Fostering Service for a Social Worker to take on the lead role in implementing the Mockingbird Model of foster care.

Foster Portsmouth are the south coast pioneers of the Mockingbird Programme. The award-winning foster care model comprises of a ‘constellation’ of up to ten ‘satellite’ fostering households, at the heart of which a ‘hub’ carer offers vital peer support, respite care and social activities, all of which strengthen relationships and provide support similar to that of an extended family.

We are looking for someone who has experience of working with foster carers, is able to work under their own initiative as well as part of a collaborative team.

You will be responsible for supporting our home hub carers, across our constellations. You will work closely with the Mockingbird Team leader. You will be well organised and have the skills to put the Mockingbird family model into practice, providing performance and monitoring information to measure the success of the project, ensuring fidelity with fostering network guidelines.

The role will have a lead responsibility to recruit Foster Carers to the constellation, and work with families in the constellation to create an extended family community for children and young people. They will provide effective communication about the offer and work of the Mockingbird Constellation and ensure that the Fostering and social work teams work effectively with the constellation and Hub Carer.

Who is the Person?

- Have a social work qualification (degree, diploma or equivalent) and be registered with Social Work England.
- Have suitable post-qualifying experience in children and families work, including experience of working with children we care for and foster carers.
- Understand models of therapeutic parenting that enable you to support carers to meet the needs of traumatised children and promote placement stability.
- Be motivated to achieve excellent outcomes for children and be able to celebrate success and also challenge poor practice.
- Have a sound understanding of legislation and care standards relating to children, fostering and safeguarding.
- Have strong communication skills which enable you to communicate with children, families, fellow professionals including foster carers and other agencies and to challenge as appropriate. The ability to converse at ease with service users and provide advice in accurate spoken English is essential for the post.
- Have excellent presentation skills to support the production and delivery of virtual and face to face training for carers.
- Use restorative practice working with carers, families and professionals.

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- Be solution focused, openly communicate and explore issues that may be challenging for potential carers or approved carers.
- Have good written skills and be able to gather record and maintain accurate information in a clear and concise way to support your work, producing coherent and analytical reports.
- Be someone who enjoys a busy atmosphere who can cope with competing demands and the challenges that come with them.
- Be a resilient, supportive, and a flexible team member with a willingness to participate in other team tasks in the fostering service.
- Be able to work on your own initiative, be flexible and prioritise a caseload to meet timescales.
- Be able to analyse and risk assess with a child centred focus complex data in order to ensure placements for children are safe, stable and will meet the child's short or long term needs as appropriate.
- Be motivated to achieve good outcomes for children and able to challenge poor practice.
- Be computer literate using MSTEAMs. One drive, Outlook and database systems.
- Be willing to participate in the Out of Hours Foster Carers Support Service.
- Be able to meet the travel commitments of the post when assessing or supporting carers outside Portsmouth City including overnight stays if required.
- Have a full UK driving licence

Desirable:

- Experience with the Mockingbird Family Model or similar peer-supported frameworks.
- Project coordination or community engagement experience.

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)

As part of any recruitment process, Portsmouth City Council collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. Portsmouth City Council is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses that data and to meeting its data protection obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Completing and sending an application in for a vacancy is your consent for us to process your data for the purpose of recruitment. Your data is not used in any other way and you can withdraw your consent at any point in the recruitment process and we will destroy or delete your information.

For more detailed information on what we collect, how we use, store, delete data and your rights you can access a privacy statement on our Job board.