

JOB DESCRIPTION

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER



Purpose and Impact

The Family Support Worker plays a vital role in strengthening safeguarding, improving attendance, promoting inclusion, and enhancing student wellbeing across the school community.

Working closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), pastoral leaders, senior leadership team, and external agencies, the postholder will work in partnership with parents and carers to support their children and understand their needs. The aim is to improve pupils' school attendance and engagement with learning. The postholder will work proactively, finding ways to make the school as inclusive and accessible as possible; and will increase parental engagement.

The role contributes directly to the school's commitment to:

- Maintaining a strong culture of safeguarding
- Securing high levels of attendance and positive behaviour
- Promoting inclusion and reducing exclusions
- Supporting students' personal development and wellbeing
- Engaging parents and carers as partners in education

Key Responsibilities and Duties

- Build and develop positive ongoing relationships with parents/carers/families. Empower them to overcome challenges, provide advice and guidance to enable them to find sustainable solutions to barriers to good attendance. Support them to understand and access the education system, to develop their skills and to engage with the processes that support their young people.
- Establish and nurture close working relationships with external stakeholders, such as local authority education and social care services, state funded health services, voluntary organisations and community groups.
- Act as an advocate for students and their families by brokering support from agencies regarding issues such as health, benefits, employment, and housing; utilising highly developed negotiating and persuasive skills to broker correct support.
- Work closely with relevant school staff. Provide and receive feedback regarding student and parent/carer progress and give advice and guidance regarding possible strategies to support students' attendance.
- Use effective communication skills and deal sensitively with emotional, contentious, or distressing situations.
- Attend and participate in case conferences, internal and external and multi-agency meetings as required.
- Work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and ensure any Child Protection disclosures or pastoral concerns are dealt with sensitively and referred appropriately in line with Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Establish and develop effective support relationships with designated students both 1 to 1 and in small groups. Guide, mentor and encourage engagement to ensure they make progress in line with specific development objectives to improve attendance.
- Liaise with primary schools to help ease the transition for parents/carers and to help forge a bridge between primary and secondary school, particularly for those with barriers to good attendance.

- Attend and contribute to relevant school meetings and training. Work collaboratively with colleagues from schools within the Trust to learn and share good practice.
- Seek advice from the DSL and SENCO, as needed.

People Management

- Take responsibility for identified students in supporting them and working with their families to achieve their specific agreed objectives.
- Undertake difficult conversations with parents and families around attendance at school and family issues at home.
- Work with the Attendance Lead to provide advice and guidance to the senior team whilst developing school strategies and policies for attendance and assist in their implementation to remove barriers to students' learning.
- Promote the inclusion and acceptance of all students within the classroom.

Resource Management

- Undertake home visits to support engagement and develop a better understanding of the specific challenges facing referred students and their families.
- Participate in the comprehensive assessment of students and families to establish specific needs barriers and challenges to good attendance.
- Build up a detailed knowledge of student and family support services available, serve as a point of contact for students and support students and families to access specialist support where appropriate.
- Maintain up to date, comprehensive and accurate written and electronic records of interventions, action plans, objectives, and progress.
- Support with processing of student absence messages daily and record absences accurately on Arbor / ACE as required.
- Support with production of clear and accurate attendance related reports, statistics and returns to meet both internal and external requirements.
- Assist with the completion of documentation as required, such as referral paperwork or compiling legal documents for court cases, ensuring it is compliant and within guidelines.
- Ensure all written and electronic records, reports, letters, and other documentation are completed in an accurate, comprehensive and timely manner.
- Support management with the input and upkeep of My Concern.

Promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding and child protection policy.

NB: The duties and responsibilities of this post are not restrictive and the post holder may be required on occasion to undertake other duties, tasks and responsibilities commensurate with the grade of their post. This will not substantially change the nature of the post.

Supervision and Management

Responsibility for: up to two members of admin staff within the Safeguarding/Attendance team.

Decision Making

- Use professional judgement to determine the referral and signposting of students and parents/carers to relevant internal interventions and external provision to address specific needs, in accordance with local protocols in order to improve attendance.
- Monitor the effectiveness of interventions using data and feedback from parent/carers, students, service providers and staff. Adjust plans, alter strategies, and revise intervention

programmes to support the student's continued inclusion and enabling them to attend school regularly.

Work Demands

- Be flexible to meet the needs of students and their families, able to multi-task and adapt to ad-hoc circumstances as they arise.
- Consistently manage changing circumstances and conflicting priorities in order to meet deadlines and objectives.
- Able to juggle and complete immediate tasks at short notice alongside ongoing tasks.
- Support other colleagues in managing conflicting priorities.
- Communicate with several sources at once to ensure delivery of operations.
- Maintain strict confidentiality at all times.

Physical Demands

- Normal physical effort required.

Working Conditions

- Work will be school and community based, involving visiting other sites or external providers to support specific students and families/carers.
- Will involve dealing with challenging situations which can require conflict resolution and working within an emotive environment.
- Where home visits are required, they should be carried out in line with school guidelines. Risk assessments should be undertaken to ensure the emotional and physical safety of all those involved.
- Will include attending meetings such as Parent Forum and Parents' Evening that fall outside of normal school hours.
- Remain calm, empathetic, and focussed within an environment where multiple and challenging situations require professional response.

Equality and Diversity

SAST recognises the benefit of having a diverse workforce and is committed to building a workforce which reflects diversity from the communities it serves. SAST values the contributions from all staff from a wide range of different backgrounds and actively seeks to promote an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and at the same time supports fair promotion and cultural acceptance. Under the provision of the Equality Act 2010 SAST welcomes applications from everyone and operates a recruitment process which is fair and does not discriminate against or disadvantage anyone because of their age, disability, gender reassignment status, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race or nationality, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Safeguarding Responsibilities for this post

Safeguarding responsibilities associated with this role may include engagement in regulatory activity, such as administering first aid or supporting an upset child. It may have some contact with young people on a day to day basis. SAST is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will have to meet the person specification, and the post is subject to safeguarding checks, including an enhanced DBS check and Children's Barred List check. The post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Qualifications

- Level 3 qualification (or above) in Childcare, Social Care, Youth Work, Education, Counselling, or related field.
- Safeguarding training (or willingness to undertake).
- Educated to AS/A level or equivalent qualifications/experience.
- Good literacy and numeracy skills evidenced by GCSE Maths and English or equivalent qualifications or equivalent experience.
- Full, clean driving licence with willingness to obtain business insurance and daily access to car or another suitable vehicle.

Essential Experience

- Proven experience working with young people and their families in education or a related area such as youth, community, health or social work.
- Experience supporting vulnerable students.
- Knowledge of safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Understanding of the range of issues that can affect young people, their families, and disadvantaged sections of the community and a willingness to keep up to date with developments in this area.
- Experience of multi-agency working.
- Experience of working to improve attendance or engagement.

Essential Skills

- Strong relationship-building skills with students and adults.
- High levels of empathy, resilience, and emotional intelligence.
- Ability to challenge appropriately and hold high expectations.
- Excellent communication skills (written and verbal).
- Strong organisational and case management skills.
- Professional integrity and confidentiality.

Desirable

- Experience in a secondary school setting.
- Experience leading Early Help assessments.
- Knowledge of attendance legislation and statutory safeguarding guidance.
- Training in trauma-informed or restorative practice.