



# Thinking about becoming a social worker in our Young People's Service?

Together we can do

**GREAT THINGS**



# What do social workers in the Young People's Service do?

As a social worker in the Young People's Service you will work with young people who are:

- ✓ Children in Need aged 16 and 17
- ✓ Looked After Children aged 15 to 18
- ✓ Care leavers up to the age of 25

It is a really rewarding job where you will build positive relationships with young people and play a key role in supporting them on their journey into adulthood. The young people you work with will make your job unpredictable, challenging and immensely rewarding.

## How will I be supported?

You will join a warm and welcoming multi-disciplinary team who are passionate about their work with young people and supportive of each other. The team includes social workers, young people's advisors, supported lodgings workers, an accommodation and support co-ordinator, and social work assistants. A small business support team provide administrative support.

Your team manager will provide you with regular supervision, including reflective case supervision, and support you with the most important decisions. Your social work consultant will offer you day-to-day advice on your cases, support you with difficult meetings and help you stay on track.

There are a range of named workers from other parts of the Council and other organisations who provide support for young people with accommodation, benefits and education, training and employment.

## Who can be a social worker in the Young People's Service?

You should be a qualified social worker who loves to work with young people between the ages of 15 and 25. You should be able to communicate well with young people, forming positive and effective working relationships, and to network, negotiate and advocate on behalf of young people to achieve positive outcomes.

You must be able to travel. Although travel is normally within County Durham and our neighbouring local authority areas you may be required to travel a greater distance.

# What do our social workers say about working in the Young People's Service?

These are some of comments our social workers made when we asked them why they loved the job.

We work with young people at a time when they are exploring their own identities and making life choices. We are there with them on their journeys.

Every young person is different.

We work with young people who start with no reason to like or trust us, and we turn that around.

I genuinely like young people.

It's a great team to work in. We all help each other out.

We use our skills to bring families back together.

There is a lot of variety in the work.

Court work is rare.

We are all passionate about what we do.

The team are warm and supportive. We are a "work family".

## What do our young people say about their social workers?

These comments came from one of our young people who left the service several years ago and recently wrote to her former social worker to let her know how she is getting on.

It's been nearly 4 years since we last spoke so I'd just thought I'd let you know that things are going really well in my life now. I don't mean to sound like I am bragging but for the first time in my life things are good for me so I feel proud.

...I just wanted someone who knew me when things were bad to see how things have changed and that I wake up looking forward to the day now! I just wanted to show you that you changed my life 100% for the better.

Once again, thank you for everything you have done for me. Most people would have walked away, but you got me the help I desperately needed. Now I am a lot better, I can see how much you did and hope you know it worked.

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# Why join our Young People's Service?

County Durham is a great place to work with young people. You will benefit from:

- Competitive salary (starting salary dependent on experience and current salary)
- Contributory career average salary pension scheme
- Allowances for Practice Educators
- Car salary sacrifice scheme
- Interest-free travel loans
- Discounted gym membership

## A senior leadership team that listens

- Opportunities for meaningful communication including regular briefings, and practice weeks where senior managers spend time with you in your workplace
- A culture of high expectations, high challenge and high support

## Support for your work with young people

- A team manager who will provide you with regular supervision, including reflective case supervision, and support you with the most important decisions
- A social work consultant who will offer you day-to-day advice on your cases, support you with difficult meetings and help you stay on track
- Young people's advisors who support young people as they prepare to live independently, and offer advice, guidance and support after young people leave care
- Supported lodgings workers and an accommodation and support co-ordinator who can help to identify appropriate places for young people to live
- A dedicated welfare rights officer to provide help with access to benefits
- Social work assistants who can support you with specific tasks
- A small team who can provide support with administration and finance
- A locality based voluntary and community sector worker who can help you find the support you need for young people

## An electronic case recording system which supports your work

- Liquid Logic is our case recording system

## A consistent practice framework

- Signs of Safety is our Practice Framework supporting consistent practice across Children's Social Care and all of our Partners, which is designed to help you slow down your thinking so that robust evidence-based assessment and analysis guides your practice.

## Career progression

- As the 7th largest local authority in England, and the largest in the North East we offer excellent opportunities for career progression

## Professional development

- A clear professional development offer
- Funded specialist training
- A commitment to offer you 5 days a year for continuous professional development (CPD)

## Celebrating your work

- We make sure you get positive feedback about the things you do well

## Holiday

- 26 days holiday per year, increasing to 31 after five years continuous Local Government service
- Option to purchase up to 10 additional days annual leave per year through our salary sacrifice scheme

## Flexible working

- Laptop/tablet and mobile phone to help you work wherever you can access wifi
- Tools to support you to work effectively at a distance (including Microsoft Teams for meetings)
- Freedom to arrange your working day and up to 13 days flexi leave per year
- Opportunities for part time/job share working and for flexible retirement

## Family life

- Maternity, paternity, adoption and parental leave
- Dependent leave for carers

## Support when you need it

- Physiotherapy
- Confidential telephone counselling
- Occupational Health service
- Opportunity to join a trade union

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# What salary and support can we offer you?

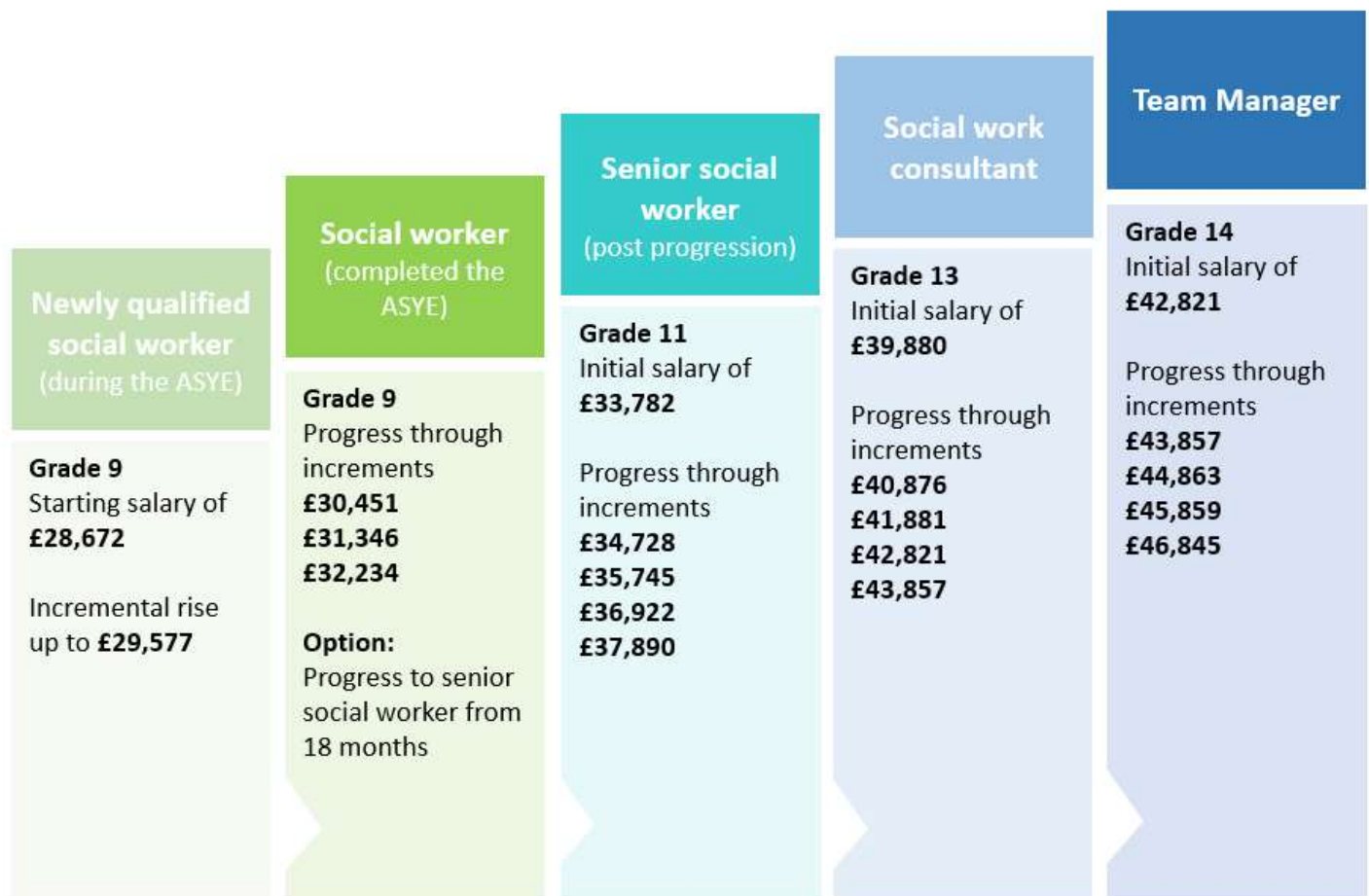
## Salary on appointment

Your salary on appointment will be agreed with you based on your relevant experience and current pay. You can see our current pay scales in the graphic below.

Wherever our pay scales allow we will match or exceed your current salary.

## Practice educator allowance

We encourage our social workers to become practice educators and support students. As a practice educator you will receive an allowance of £10 per placement day, normally £700-£1000 per placement (placements are normally 70 or 100 days in length).



## Our progression process

You can go through the progression process taking you to senior social worker with a significant increase in salary from as early as 18 months after qualification. Our progression recognises and celebrates your ability to work consistently at a higher level of responsibility with more complex cases.

## Progressing in your career

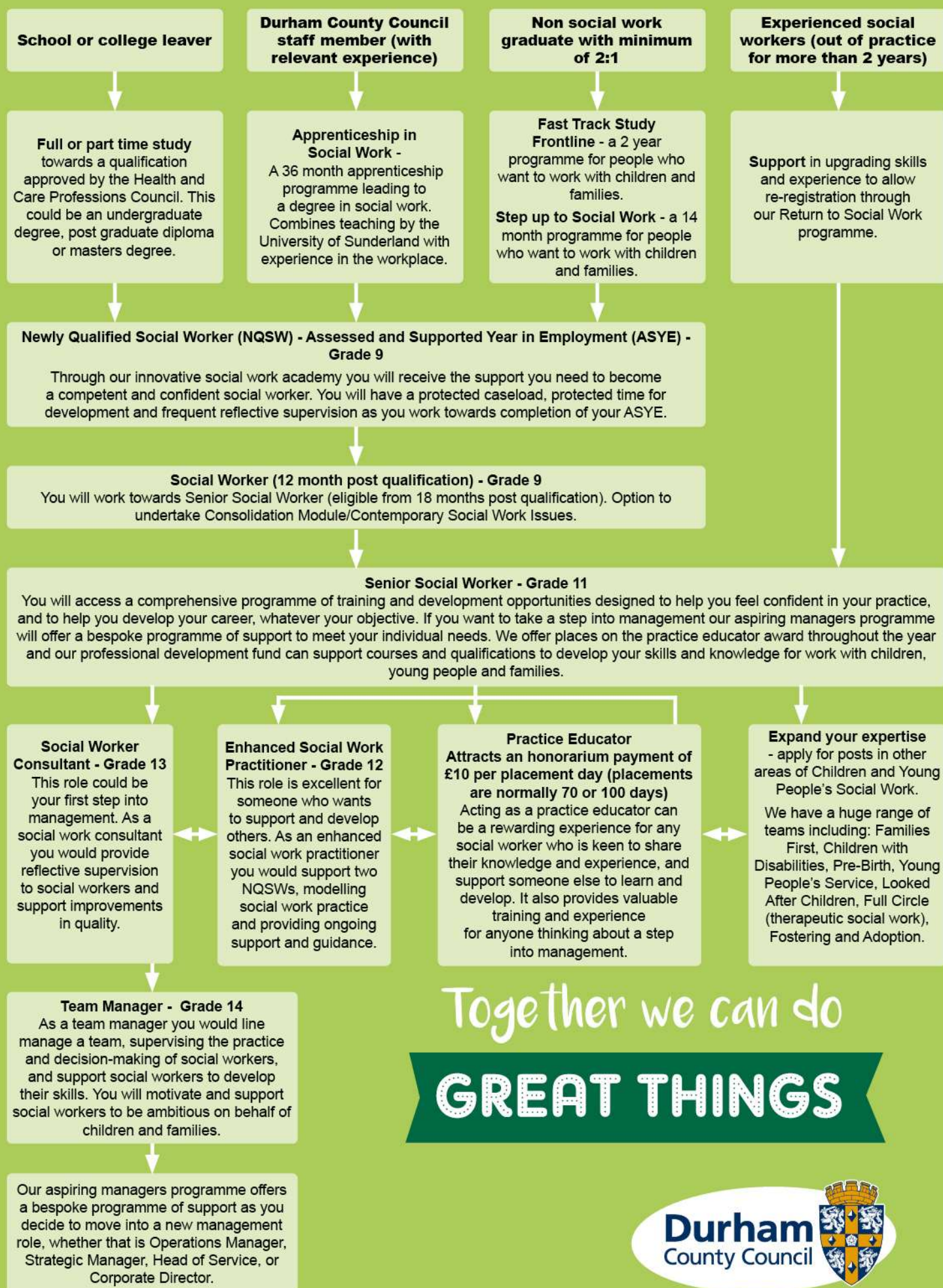
You can develop your career in Durham – whether you want to develop your expertise, move into management or progress to another level of management. You can benefit from our comprehensive professional development programme, commitment to 5 days per year for your continuing professional development and our aspiring managers programme.

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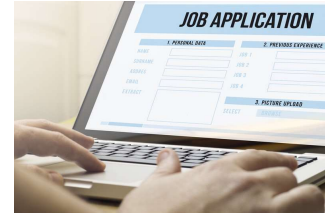


# Careers in children's social work in Durham County Council



# Ready to Apply?

If you are ready to take your first step towards joining our Young People's Service, these tips will help you to make the best application you can.



## Completing your application form

- ✓ Make sure you understand the role and what we are looking for. Read the job description and person specification and speak to the Lead Officer to find out more.
- ✓ Reflect on your own experience, skills and qualities. Your chances of getting to interview are far greater if you apply for positions that are relevant to your existing skill set and experience.
- ✓ **Tailor your application to the job.** We are interested in your experience and skills that are relevant to the role, so teasing out the most relevant aspects of your own skills, knowledge and experience, whether they have been gained in paid work or placements, in your application will demonstrate that you are a good candidate.
- ✓ Where possible pick out each of the elements of the person specification and provide examples of how you meet these, highlighting relevant experience, skills, knowledge and personal qualities. Refer to your knowledge of appropriate legislation, policy and practice developments.

## Preparing for your interview

- ✓ Refer again to the job description and person specification for the role – ensure you are confident about how you meet these requirements
- ✓ Research issues relating to young people in County Durham.
- ✓ You will find it useful to know about the Children Leaving Care Act 2000, the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Pathway Planning and our Local Offer for Care Leavers.
- ✓ Consider a piece of practice that you are proud of and why, and how you have overcome a practice challenge.
- ✓ Think about your social work values, and the way you use or want to use supervision and reflection in your practice.
- ✓ Think about continuing professional development you have completed and any areas in which you would like to develop.

## Your interview

- ✓ Your interview is likely to take place through Microsoft Teams. When you receive your invitation to your interview read the information carefully so you are in the right virtual place at the right time.
- ✓ Think about the best place to sit so that you are comfortable and have a drink ready.
- ✓ Remember that the people interviewing you want to get the best out of you on the day. It is ok to pause and think about a question, or ask for a question to be repeated.
- ✓ Don't worry if your interviewers are writing rather than giving you eye contact. We need to make sure we record your answers carefully.
- ✓ Think about what you might want to ask your interviewers at the end of the interview.

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