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| **Job Description** | |
| **Post title** | School Counsellor |
| **JE Reference No** | A6143 |
| **Grade** | 9 |
| **Service** | Children and Young Peoples Services |
| **Service Area** | Early Help Inclusion & Vulnerable Children, Specialist Inclusion Support |
| **Reporting to** | The post holder will report to a Senior Educational Psychologist through a delegated management arrangement. Line management and supervision will be provided by the Counselling Team Leader. Day to day within a school context the counsellor will be accountable to the Head Teacher via his/her nominated representative.  The post holder will work closely with colleagues across Children’s & Young Peoples Services, and link to other agencies as appropriate. The post is located within Durham’s SEND and Inclusion Services, as part of the Educational Psychology Service. |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be the schools purchasing the Service Level Agreements during term time. However, you may be required to work at any council workplace within County Durham, and on a monthly basis will be expected to attend Team Meetings at the Education Development Centre in Spennymoor. |
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| **DBS** | This post is subject to an enhanced disclosure. |
| **Flexitime** | This post is not eligible for flexitime. |
| **Politically restricted** | This post is not designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the requirements of Section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State. |

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| **Description of role** |

All officers employed within Children’s Services have, as well as their specific post related responsibilities, a general responsibility to contribute to the successful operation the organization by recognising that the purpose of the Service is facilitating and supporting learning in the County and that doing so requires staff to work together in teams and co-operate to achieve this objective. The general responsibilities of the post therefore include: -

To contribute to improving the quality of education and learning opportunities for the people of the County of Durham by assisting:

* Individual clients and service users
* Head Teachers and other heads of establishments and services of CAS and other teaching and support staff on managerial, administrative, procedural, resource and other matters
* Colleague officers and inspectors and, where appropriate, governors and Elected Members in supporting schools and other educational establishments in their work

This will involve supporting the senior management team of Durham Children’s Services (DCS) and the wider group of officers in:

* Implementing the policies of DCS as they bear on the individual's post and responsibilities
* Providing direct advice and support to clients of DCS
* Responding to requests for advice from Head Teachers and heads of other educational establishments or services
* Assisting in the organisation of, and taking part in, County Council in-service training and personal development programmes
* Assisting in the implementation of special projects as appropriate to the post holder’s sphere of work
* Contributing to regular review processes
* Maintaining an effective and up to date expertise and ongoing involvement in policy implementation, specifically in relation to the duties of the post but also more generally

The Emotional Wellbeing and Effective Learning Team is part of the Educational Psychology Service. The counselling service which is a part of this multidisciplinary team was commissioned through the CAMHS Strategy in 2001. It has delivered counselling support to young people in secondary and primary schools since that time. The postholders work closely with schools to develop safe and effective systems for service delivery which are sensitive to individual contexts.

The work undertaken is funded through Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with schools, either individually or in clusters, with additional Health funding provided to enable Service development, supervision, practice development and safeguarding.

Practice is fully aligned with Health strategy principles of early identification and assessment; readily available support delivered where young people are; non-stigmatising and available intervention without long waiting periods.

Support is aimed at promoting wellbeing, achievement and resilience, and avoiding the escalation of needs and the risk of exclusion. Practice evaluation demonstrates that counselling promotes positive mental health and wellbeing, and better engagement and learning within school, when provided as part of an appropriately designed and coordinated support arrangement.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

The Counselling Service is part of the multidisciplinary Emotional Wellbeing and Effective Learning (EWEL) team. The focus for the EWEL team is to work with schools to:

* Improve the wellbeing, achievement and resilience of socially and emotionally vulnerable young people
* Develop the capacity of schools to effectively meet the needs of all their learners

The team consists of Educational Psychologists, Advisory and Support Teachers, Counsellors and Support Staff. The team provide:

* Assessment, screening and consultation in relation to the social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs of children within school contexts
* Advice and consultation in relation to how SEMH needs impact on learning and inclusion
* Intervention at individual, group and whole class levels; and school development support
* Training and network support for a range of evidence based programmes
* Research and development support aimed at developing evidence based practice

Under the direction of the Team Leader and the Management Team, the post holder will:

1. Support the identification of young people in school with emotional wellbeing needs
2. Support identified individuals and/or groups of young people through the provision of:
   1. Counselling or other forms of therapeutic intervention in which the counsellor may be qualified or competent to deliver
3. Provide schools, parents/carers and young people with information and education about:
   1. Mental health problems
   2. Individual vulnerability and approaches to prevention
   3. Aspects of emotional health and management.
4. Maintain good record keeping and appropriate levels of confidentiality
5. Liaise and consult with teaching and non-teaching colleagues in the school, and professionals from other disciplines, sharing information appropriately and as required
6. Plan and deliver staff development
7. Continue to undertake professional development through participation in any training/CPD events organised by the Service
8. Engage in management and clinical supervision on a regular basis
9. Monitor, evaluate and report on work undertaken
10. Carry out casework that supports better understanding and support of children and young people with SEMH needs, and which enables better progress and inclusion over time
11. Support the planning and reviewing of support arrangements in schools as part of casework involvement, encouraging evidence based and ethical based practice in all instances
12. Produce written communication for a range of purposes, as appropriate to the role
13. Link to and work in collaboration with a range of other agencies including Social Care, CAMHS and One Point Services
14. Work in full collaboration with professionals across the EWEL team, and in relation to a range of projects and initiatives
15. Provide training and network support to schools based staff, and others as appropriate
16. Maintain a good working knowledge of national and local education and school agendas; and provide support to colleagues to ensure effective understanding of these.

The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by the Team Manager.

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| **Organisational responsibilities** |

* **Values and behaviours**

To demonstrate and be a role model for the council’s values and behaviours to promote and encourage positive behaviours, enhancing the quality and integrity of the services we provide.

* **Smarter working, transformation and design principles**

To seek new and innovative ideas to work smarter, irrespective of job role, and to be creative, innovative and empowered. Understand the operational impact of transformational change and service design principles to support new ways of working and to meet customer needs.

* **Communication**

To communicate effectively with our customers, managers, peers and partners and to work collaboratively to provide the best possible public service. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to our public.

* **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

To take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety policy and procedures.

* **Equality and diversity**

To promote a society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live, free from discrimination and prejudice and ensure our commitment is put into practice. All employees are responsible for eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination in everything that they do.

* **Confidentiality**

To work in a way that does not divulge personal and/or confidential information and follow the council’s policies and procedures in relation to data protection and security of information.

* **Climate Change**

To contribute to our corporate responsibility in relation to climate change by considering and limiting the carbon impact of activities during the course of your work, wherever possible.

* **Performance management**

To promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. Contribute to the council’s Performance and Development Review processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

* **Quality assurance (for applicable posts)**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and service level so that the highest standards of service are delivered and maintained. Use data, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of service provision and support decision making processes.

* **Management and leadership (for applicable posts)**

To provide vision and leadership to inspire and empower all employees so they can reach their full potential and contribute to the council’s values and behaviours. Managers and leaders must engage in personal development to ensure they are equipped to lead transformational change; always searching for better ways to do things differently to meet organisational changes and service priorities.

* **Financial management (for applicable posts)**

To manage a designated budget, ensuring that the service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

*The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.*

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| Person specification | | |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * Diploma in Counselling or equivalent * Professional Accreditation or working towards accreditation | * Diploma or formal training specific to working with children and young people * Education to graduate level * Certificate or Diploma in Clinical Supervision |
| Experience | * Experience in counselling children and young people * Experience of working with children who are at risk of exclusion * Understanding and experience of school and education systems, both primary and secondary * Experience of multi-agency working | * Experience of engaging with parents/carers * Experience of undertaking therapeutic group work with young people * Experience of providing clinical supervision * Experience of delivering training |
| Skills & Knowledge | * Knowledge of attachment and child development * Knowledge of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children * Sound understanding of ethics and working within an ethical framework (e.g. BACP/UKCP) * Proven ability to engage with and work therapeutically with children and young people within a theoretical framework * Awareness & understanding of mental health issues and factors affecting young people today * Good organisational skills and an ability to work independently & demonstrate initiative * Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing | * Ability to carry out research and analyse data * Sound IT skills |
| Personal Qualities | * Good interpersonal skills * Access to a car or means of mobility support (if driving then must have a current valid driving licence and appropriate insurance) * Readiness to seek help & support to manage professional issues and problems * Strong professional boundaries | * High level of motivation and commitment * Readiness to engage in professional development opportunities |