



Role Profile

Job Title: Participation Support Officer	Role Profile Number: PCDN77
Grade: N Grade Salary:	Date Prepared: November 2020
Directorate/Group: Children's Services	Reporting to: Participation Officer
Structure Chart attached:	No

Job Purpose

Our Vision

Swindon Borough Council will be ambitious and aspirational in its engagement with children, young people and parents/carers and will achieve a culture where children, young people and parents/carers who receive a service are listened to and are involved in decisions that affect their lives. Our services will actively engage children, young people and parents/carers and use their views and experiences to inform plans and improve outcomes for individual children and families, the services we commission and deliver, and the staff we recruit. We will have systems in place to support participation work and, our workforce at all levels of the organisation, will have the skills and knowledge needed to ensure the views of children, young people and parents/carers are heard and make a difference. Participation will be embedded in our culture and practice.

Our Vision is to ensure that Swindon Borough Council's children and especially those that are 'looked after' are listened to and involved in decisions.

The purpose of the Participation Team is to develop and support the participation and engagement of children, young people and families in the services they receive from Swindon Borough Council. This unique and diverse role will support the Participation Officer to drive the Participation Agenda. The post holder will have particular responsibilities for exciting new projects within the Participation Team. Firstly, a Family Advisory Board, which will recruit and train family members who have previously experienced social care intervention to become advocates who will then support parents currently experiencing social care intervention. The Board will also advise the local authority to help shape service delivery and design. Secondly, the post holder will be responsible for running a Youth Council to provide a forum for young people to discuss relevant issues, engage with decision makers and contribute to improving the lives of young people within their communities. The post holder will also support the work of the Participation Team as a whole.

Key Accountabilities

- Supporting the Participation Officer in the implementation of Swindon Borough Council's Participation and Engagement Strategy
- Setting up a Family Advisory Board for Swindon, this will include working with partners both internally and externally to agree a model, setting up meetings and meeting set targets, for example
- Directly supervising family advocates (volunteers), this will include:
 - Identifying and recruiting appropriate volunteers;
 - Supporting advocate training;
 - Conducting supervision at agreed frequency according to need of the volunteers;
 - Being on hand to provide day-to-day support including de-briefing after meetings as appropriate;
 - Offering personal and professional support; encouraging their strengths and identifying areas for improvement, particularly where further support/training is required;
 - Matching volunteers to the family members they will support;
 - Addressing safeguarding issues both the volunteers and those they support
- Ensure the Parent Advocacy Board is inclusive, fair and well run and identify and act on areas for improvement
- Organise, attend and facilitate training as required
- Set up a Youth Council for Swindon's children and young people
- Ensure marketing of the Youth Council by working with schools and other key stakeholders, holding elections, and other duties associated with this
- Ensure the Youth Council is inclusive, fair and well run with clear terms of reference. This will include, setting up meetings, obtaining items for the agenda, minute taking, following up on actions, etc.
- Supporting members of the Youth Council, identifying and acting on safeguarding issues as they arise
- Identify and assist the ongoing development of procedures and guidelines for both the Family Advisory Board and Youth Council
- Continually reflect on processes and programmes with guidance from line manager to identify areas for innovation and improvement; this will include identifying both short and long term goals for those projects for which the post holder has responsibility
- Work flexibly to support all areas of the Participation Team's work, this may include helping facilitate Participation Champions sessions, or the Children in Care Council (particularly at key times such as the Children in Care Achievement Awards)
- Communicate clearly and effectively with children, young people, families and key stakeholders ensuring a transparent service. This includes with vulnerable children, young people and families with experience of social care services
- Effectively network with key partners both internally and externally to maintain and increase the profile of the Participation Team
- Promote good race, ethnic, disability and community relations, including children, young people and families from a diverse range of backgrounds
- Ensure and safeguard confidential data and adhere to General Data Protection Regulations and Information Sharing Protocols and legislation

Supplementary Accountabilities

- Achieve service outcomes and outputs, as agreed by the line manager
- Undertake training and constructively take part in meetings, supervision, seminars and other events designed to improve communication and assist with the effective development of the post and post holder
- Due to the nature of the work and in accordance with the demands of the service, you will be required from time to time to work outside normal office hours, including evening and weekend working, for which time off in lieu of payment should be taken at a time agreed with the line manager.
- Take personal and professional responsibility for own training needs and discuss with the line manager
- Undertake any other duties deemed commensurate with this post as directed by the line manager

Knowledge & Experience

Candidates must have substantial knowledge and experience in the following areas of business and will be required to provide evidence of this:

- Recent, relevant experience of working with vulnerable children, young people and families in a range of settings
- Proven ability to build effective relationships with vulnerable children, young people and families
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with a range of people particularly vulnerable children, young people and families but also including other professionals, internal and external stakeholders
- Experience of utilising creative approaches to engaging vulnerable children, young people and families in projects to enable them to shape service development and delivery
- Experience of planning events and projects to achieve agreed outcomes
- Able to demonstrate evidence of understanding and working to promote equality of opportunity and challenge stereotypes with young people, families, professionals, and agencies
- Knowledge and understanding of current child protection policies and procedures
- Minimum Level 2 Child Protection training or willingness to undertake
- A working knowledge of recent legislation, central government policy and local policy and procedures that would be relevant to working with children and young people and families
- Ability to produce risk assessments
- Ability to interpret data and produce reports
- Excellent organisational skills and ability to prioritise effectively
- Ability to work in a highly confidential manner
- Experience of handling sensitive information
- Ability to work collaboratively and flexibly as a member of a small team
- Strong ability to use own initiative, organise and manage own workload

- Proven ability to work flexibly under pressure and to meet often competing deadlines
- IT proficient, with competent use of MS Office (Word, Excel & Outlook, Publisher), Social care Database, Social Media and other mediums of communication preferred by children, young people and families
- Commitment to Equal Opportunities Policy
- Full, current driving license or alternative modes of transport as role will require travel around the local authority
- Able to work outside of core hours, including some evening and weekend work

Qualifications

- A Level educated including Grade 4/C in GCSE English and maths or equivalent.
- Recognised qualification in a relevant field i.e. family work, social care, teaching, housing, youth and community

Decision Making

- Work with Corporate Policies, Children Services policy and procedures and team procedures
- Ability to prioritise own workload, responding to conflicting pressures, with guidance from line manager
- Across all aspects of the position, to make an informed decision based on current legislation
- Regularly make decisions in day-to-day operational situations in response to sudden changes in situations and circumstances associated with working with vulnerable children, young people and families
- Analysis of complex situations to make informed decisions with regard for appropriate policies and procedures such as regarding safeguarding matters and matching advocates to family members they will support. The Participation Support Officer will receive guidance on decisions relating to their work through supervision
- Support vulnerable families and young people in high stress situations, problem-solving to find appropriate solutions

Creativity and Innovation

- Find innovative solutions to issues, driving forward projects to increase the participation and engagement of our children, young people and families. For example, ensuring both the Family Advisory Board and Youth Council are well attended by marketing and networking with appropriate stakeholders to ensure it is well known
- Creative approaches to engaging vulnerable children and young people and families
- Working with partners both internally and externally to ensure projects are successful
- Creative approaches to gaining the voice of children, young people and families to ensure they are enabled to shape service design and delivery
- Approach difficult situations in a solutions-focused and creative manner appropriate to working with vulnerable families and young people

Employee Signature:	Print Name:
Date:	
Line Managers Signature:	Print Name:
Date:	