

PROJECT WEST

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER

Job Description and Person Specification

Safeguarding commitment

Project West is committed to safeguarding children and expects every worker to share this responsibility. Appointment is subject to satisfactory safer-recruitment checks appropriate to the duties and legal eligibility of the role.

1 JOB DETAILS

Job title	Family Support Worker
Working arrangement	Employee or sessional arrangement, as stated in the vacancy and written terms
Hours	As advertised or mutually agreed. Family work may include evenings and weekends.
Base	Project West, 27 Sandringham Road, Northolt Village, UB5 5HN, with authorised work in family homes, education settings and the community
Reports to	Project West Manager, Coordinator or other named senior worker
Responsible for	Allocated Family Support work. No formal line-management responsibility unless separately agreed.
Pay	As advertised or confirmed in the written engagement terms

2 PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

To deliver safe, child-focused and outcome-based practical and emotional support to children, parents and carers. The Family Support Worker helps families strengthen routines, relationships, parenting capacity, engagement with services and day-to-day functioning in accordance with the referral, assessed risks, agreed plan and Project West procedures.

Family Support and Family Time

This role does not automatically authorise the worker to supervise Family Time, undertake a formal assessment or provide expert evidence. Those duties may be allocated only where the worker has been separately assessed as competent, appropriately briefed and expressly authorised.

3 KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Child-focused and outcome-based work

- Keep the child's safety, welfare, wishes and feelings central to planning and delivery.
- Build purposeful professional relationships with children and families while maintaining clear boundaries.
- Deliver the work specified in the referral, plan or written instruction and identify when needs or risks have changed.
- Use age-appropriate, culturally responsive and accessible methods to help children participate and express their views.
- Agree practical goals, review progress and support families to sustain change rather than creating dependency.

Direct family support

- Provide practical guidance, modelling and encouragement around routines, boundaries, home conditions, school attendance, appointments, budgeting, community access and other agreed needs.
- Support parents and carers to understand children's developmental and emotional needs and to respond consistently and safely.
- Help families prepare for transitions, meetings, reunification, changes of placement or other agreed plans.
- Support engagement with education, health, housing and community services without taking over responsibilities that belong to the family or statutory professionals.
- Use strengths-based practice while remaining professionally curious and alert to disguised compliance, coercion, conflict or escalating risk.

3 KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES (continued)

Safeguarding and risk management

- Follow the current risk assessment, safety plan, lone-working arrangements and any legal restrictions relevant to the work.
- Observe, identify and report concerns, disclosures, injuries, incidents, missing information or changes in presentation promptly through Project West procedures.
- Do not investigate disclosures, promise confidentiality, exceed professional competence or delay escalation while waiting for a scheduled meeting.
- Stop, pause or seek immediate assistance where work cannot continue safely, and contact emergency or statutory services when directed or required.
- Maintain personal safety during home and community work and follow check-in, travel, entry, exit and emergency arrangements.

Planning, partnership and communication

- Prepare for allocated work by reading relevant instructions, plans and risk information and seeking clarification before delivery.
- Liaise professionally with the referrer and authorised professionals within agreed information-sharing arrangements.
- Attend reviews, planning meetings and professional discussions when required and contribute factual, proportionate information.
- Communicate changes, cancellations, non-attendance, barriers and unmet needs promptly to the Coordinator or Manager.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues while preserving role clarity and avoiding duplication of statutory functions.

Recording and reporting

- Complete accurate, timely, child-focused and professionally written records for every required activity.
- Produce reports at the commissioned frequency, which may be daily, weekly, fortnightly or monthly, and contribute to a fuller final report where instructed.
- Distinguish clearly between direct observation, information reported by others, professional analysis and recommendation.
- Make recommendations only where commissioned, supported by evidence and within the worker's competence and role.
- Meet submission deadlines, respond promptly to management feedback and correct factual or formatting errors without altering the integrity of the record.
- Store, send and discuss information only through authorised and secure systems in accordance with confidentiality and data-protection requirements.

Professional practice

- Maintain calm, respectful, impartial and anti-discriminatory practice, including when people are distressed, angry or resistant.
- Use Project West equipment and communication routes appropriately and never use a personal device to photograph or record service users or documents.
- Declare conflicts of interest, prior connections, gifts, complaints, allegations, secondary work and any change affecting suitability.
- Participate in induction, supervision, appraisal, training, reflective practice and quality assurance.
- Follow Project West policies and reasonable management instructions and contribute to a safe, respectful and effective service.

4 SCOPE AND LIMITS OF AUTHORITY

- The worker must not change a care plan, court order, statutory decision or commissioned outcome without written authority.
- The worker must not provide legal advice, therapy, clinical treatment or an expert opinion unless separately qualified and instructed.
- Transporting a child or family member requires prior authorisation, a suitable risk assessment and verified driving, insurance, MOT and vehicle-safety arrangements.
- Personal contact, social-media connections, private arrangements, unauthorised gifts, loans or financial dealings with service users are prohibited.
- Any uncertainty about authority, confidentiality, consent, risk or professional boundaries must be referred to a Coordinator or Manager before acting, unless immediate protective action is required.

5 PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criterion	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
Level 3 qualification in children and young people, health and social care, youth work, education or a related area, or substantial relevant experience	✓	—	Application / certificates / interview
Further relevant qualification, professional registration or specialist family-support training	—	✓	Application / verification
Experience of direct work with children and families experiencing vulnerability, conflict or complex needs	✓	—	Application / interview / references
Experience of family support, Early Help, supervised Family Time, social care, education or community work	—	✓	Application / references
Understanding of safeguarding, child development, parenting capacity and the impact of trauma and family conflict	✓	—	Application / interview
Awareness of domestic abuse, substance use, mental ill-health, exploitation and extra-familial harm	✓	—	Application / interview
Ability to engage children and adults respectfully while maintaining impartiality and professional boundaries	✓	—	Application / interview / references
Clear factual recording, report writing and basic digital skills	✓	—	Application / written assessment
Ability to assess changing situations, follow risk plans and escalate concerns promptly	✓	—	Interview / scenario / references
Ability to organise a varied caseload, travel between settings and meet deadlines	✓	—	Application / interview
Commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice	✓	—	Application / interview
Full UK driving licence and access to a suitable vehicle with business-use insurance	—	✓	Documents / discussion
Availability for agreed evenings and weekends	✓	—	Application / discussion

6 SAFER RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT CONDITIONS

Appointment is conditional

No worker may begin unsupervised or regulated duties until Project West has confirmed that the required checks, induction, role allocation and risk arrangements are satisfactory.

- Completed Project West Staff Application Form and satisfactory interview and assessment.
- Proof of identity and right to work in the UK.
- Two satisfactory professional references, including the most recent relevant children's employer where applicable.
- Enhanced DBS check and Children's Barred List information where legally eligible and required by the actual duties.
- Relevant overseas checks, qualification and professional-registration verification where applicable.
- Satisfactory driving documents where driving is authorised and any role-related health assessment following a conditional offer.
- Completed induction, signed terms, confidentiality requirements and acceptance of Project West policies.

7 GENERAL

This description sets out the main responsibilities of the role and is not an exhaustive list. Duties may be reasonably adjusted to reflect service needs, the worker's competence and changes in law, guidance or Project West procedures. Material changes will be discussed and confirmed through the appropriate employment or engagement process.

Website applicants

Applicants should read this document alongside the vacancy information and complete the Project West Staff Application Form. A CV may be attached but does not replace the application form.