



Job Vacancy

About FosterTalk - FosterTalk is a not for profit, independent organisation which has been established for 21 years. FosterTalk is an exciting, flexible and inspiring organisation to work for. We focus solely on providing high quality professional support services to foster and kinship carers. FosterTalk is one of the fastest growing support organisations delivering services UK wide.

Safeguarding Statement

FosterTalk is committed to recruiting staff who are suitable to work with children, and prioritises the safety and welfare of children. We commit to safeguard and protect all children and young people by implementing robust safer recruitment practices and identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.

This role is subject to a Criminal Records Check disclosure. FosterTalk will request the individual being offered the position to undergo appropriate disclosure checks along with any other safer recruitment checks deemed appropriate.

This position is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, due to the nature of the role. Applicants will be required to complete a Self-Disclosure form to support their application.

Equal Opportunities

Our ambition is to maximise people's potential and we aim to promote an inclusive environment and improve the diversity of our workforce so our people truly represent the communities we serve.

All individuals regardless of race, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership are encouraged to apply for this post. We encourage applications from individuals with a lived experience of care, fostering and mental illness. The selection of candidates for interview will be based on those who meet the required standard of skills, qualifications and experience as outlined in the essential and desirable criteria.

POST: Allegation Support Team Practitioner
RESPONSIBLE TO: Allegation Support Team Manager



LOCATION: Home/Office Based
Salary: up to £37,000 dependent on experience
HOURS: 35 hours per week. Monday- Friday 9am- 5pm. Part-time hours and job share will be considered.

JOB SUMMARY

FosterTalk is seeking a qualified and experienced fostering social worker, related professional or experienced foster carer, to offer advice and support within FosterTalk's Allegation Service supporting the independent contractors who provide face to face support for foster and kinship carers during allegations and also provide telephone support to foster carers accessing this service. This post requires a high level of telephone and email communication with foster carers, social workers and fostering service providers.

FosterTalk's Allegations Support Team (AST) provides advice, guidance and support, in line with National Minimum Standards (22.12) England, safeguarding guidance Wales and best practice guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland. AST provides independent professional support to foster carers who are subject to investigation due to an allegation, standard of care concerns, or complaint. We understand that this process can be extremely difficult for foster carers and our support and guidance can assist them with understanding the process and what to expect. The AST Practitioner will liaise with foster carers and fostering services regarding the support available from FosterTalk and will give oversight and support to our pool of Independent Advisors to deliver a high quality service.

AST, alongside the Head of Social Work and Development and the Operations Director also provide advice to Foster Carers who are members of FosterTalk in relation to a range of Fostering themed topics. This service is a highly valued part of the overall membership offer.

KEY TASKS:

1. Provide telephone advice on the full range of fostering issues to foster and kinship carers, special guardians and staying put/supported lodgings carers.
2. Liaise with fostering services regarding the support of foster carers who are facing investigations, complaints and de-registration.

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3. Allocate referrals from fostering services to FosterTalk's pool of self-employed advisors to ensure timely and appropriate support is provided.
4. Ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported promptly in line with legislative and local authority processes, procedures and requirements and that records are maintained accurately and in a timely manner to evidence this.
5. Provide regular updates for referrers/commissioners regarding on-going cases.
6. Provide telephone support and consultation to advisors on cases.
7. Support the recruitment of advisors (self-employed).
8. Support in delivering the induction and providing development opportunities for the independent advisors.
9. Provide information and advice based on current regulations, standards and guidance, and fostering best practice across all areas of the UK.
10. Be responsible for ensuring that all communications are recorded accurately on the company's data collection systems. Support with the collection of data and statistics for the organisation.
11. Attend meetings and service reviews with Fostering Services if required to support the AST Manager.
12. Reviewing and auditing of advisor cases in line with policy and procedure.
13. Contribute to regular reviews and evaluations of the service and monitoring systems as required, in order to identify key issues from users that may inform or influence government policy with regard to foster care.
14. Support the AST Manager in promoting and marketing of the service on a nationwide level.
15. Respect confidentiality and carry out their duties in line with FosterTalk's Information Sharing Policy and Safeguarding guidelines.
16. Compile reports and statistics from the company database.
17. Contribute to providing information for blogs, guidance, website content and articles for newsletters including PR and Marketing activities for FosterTalk as required.
18. Assist in the development and delivery of FosterTalk training programme as relevant.
19. Support tenders to develop business in relation to independent support.
20. Undertake training and attend meetings as required to further personal development and the development of the service.
21. Comply with all Policies and Procedures provided by FosterTalk.
22. Undertake additional specific tasks as required.

This job description is produced to assist the post holder in identifying their main duties. It may include other tasks which from time to time may be allocated after consultation with the post holder and with regard to the level of responsibility appropriate to the position.

Person Specification

Factors		Essential
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		/Desirable
Qualifications experience & knowledge	A qualified and registered social worker with experience of fostering.	D
	Knowledge and/or experience of working with fostering services in an advocacy/mediation role.	D
	Knowledge and/or experience of supporting foster and/or kinship carers.	E
	Knowledge of fostering legislation, regulations, guidance, standards and the legal framework surrounding fostering.	E
	An understanding and experience of safeguarding, child protection and complaints procedures and a working knowledge of Local Authority and Independent Fostering Services.	E
	Knowledge/experience of the process for investigating allegations against foster carers.	E
	Experience of providing staff supervision.	D
	Evidence of related experience/training, and continued willingness to undergo additional required training for their role.	E
	A working knowledge of Customer Service standards and principles.	D
Business development experience.	D	
Skills/Abilities	Ability to provide support and advice.	E
	Ability to work with clarity and accuracy on own and as part of a team.	E

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	Excellent listening, verbal and written communication skills by telephone, email and online.	E
	Familiarity with social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and the use of discussion forums.	D
	Able to explain issues and concepts with clarity and accuracy, without the use of technical jargon.	E
	Good IT and administration skills.	E
	A non-judgemental attitude of acceptance and tolerance for others, including foster carers and kinship carers whose values and attitudes may be different to your own.	E
	Able to give support to others in the team and ask for support and guidance themselves where appropriate.	E
	Excellent communication skills for work with foster carers, Fostering Services, colleagues and potential customers in meetings and other forums.	E
	Ability to support independent advisors to represent a foster carer's views and work on their behalf.	E
	Good time and workload management and prioritisation skills. Able to meet deadlines.	E
	A car driver and willingness to travel as required.	E
Personal Qualities	A commitment to meeting the needs of carers through the provision of impartial advice and support.	E
	Ability to have a balanced, reasoned and measured approach and to show warmth and empathy to people using the service.	E
	Sensitivity to the needs and wishes of the carer.	E
	A commitment to equal opportunities.	E
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	<p>A commitment to safeguarding and contributing towards improved outcomes for looked after children.</p> <p>Reliable and consistent.</p> <p>Ability to work collaboratively for the greater good of the company, as part of a team.</p> <p>Willingness to be flexible in meeting the needs of FosterTalk.</p>	<p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p>
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MISCELLANEOUS

- The post holder will be expected to comply with the no smoking policy in place.
- Work those hours necessary to complete the job.
- Be aware of and comply with policies and procedures set down by FosterTalk including, but not limited to Health & Safety Policies and Equal Opportunities Policies.
- Maintain strict confidentiality in relation to the work undertaken.
- Attend and participate in team meetings, training courses, supervision sessions and appraisals, as deemed necessary for the pursuance of the post.
- Carry out any other duties commensurate with the post holder's knowledge, skills and experience if required.