



Children's Social Care

West Sussex County Council Applicant Information Pack





**"A positive
experience,
with support and
encouragement
to progress"**

Annie MacIver

Director, Children and Family Services

Here at West Sussex County Council we are ambitious for our children and our workforce.



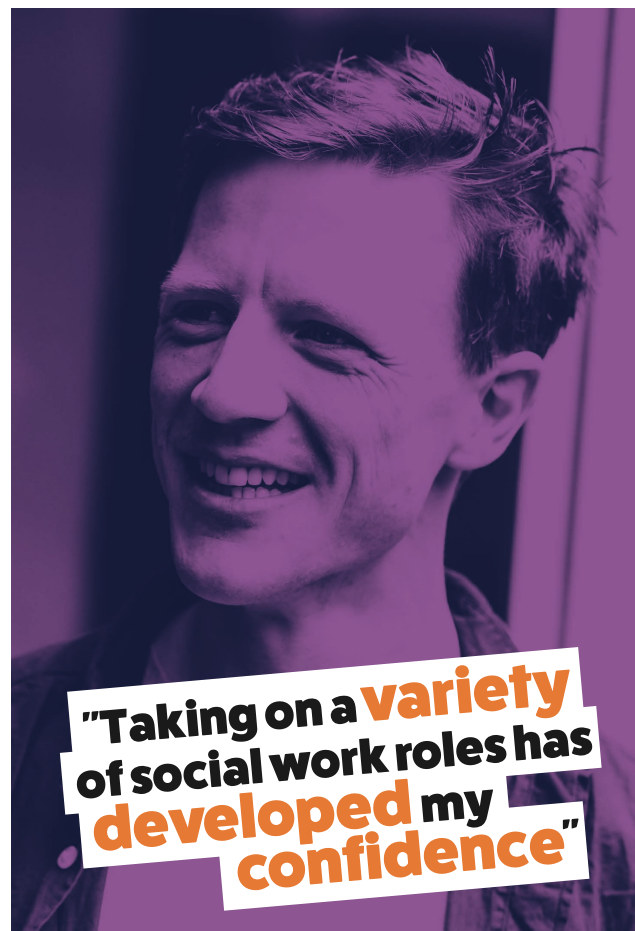
Social work is a challenging job and we recognise that to achieve excellent outcomes for our children our staff need to feel supported, contained and challenged. It is important to us that our staff and our children know that we are with them 'every step of the way'.

We have a strong and experienced leadership team in place and a clear practice model. As a Social Worker I am very proud of my profession and continue to be inspired by the work our Social Workers do. Do come and find out more about us – I can guarantee that if you have talent, ambition and a fire in your belly to achieve excellent outcomes for children then we will support you to achieve your career aspirations.

Sarah Daly

Head of Children's Social Care

Before joining West Sussex County Council, I spent four years at the London Borough of Merton where I was the head of service for looked after children. Prior to this, I was the head of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding at Croydon Council. My ambition is to develop and maintain a stable workforce which invests in its people and supports people's chosen career pathways. I want us to work in an environment where teamwork, transparency and honesty are embedded in our working lives.



"Taking on a variety of social work roles has developed my confidence"

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Meet the teams...

MASH

This team:

- Respond to enquirers-offering advice and consultation
- Make decisions on 'contacts' within 24 hours
- Signpost to universal services
- Signpost to early help services
- Work in partnership with partner agencies to identify children in need/need of protection
- Undertake strategy discussions

Assessment and Intervention

This team:

- Undertakes child and family assessments
- Carries out Section 47 enquiries
- Progresses cases to Initial Child Protection Case Conference
- Deals with intervention and planning for children in need
- Direct work with children and families
- Works in direct partnership with partner agencies including police and health
- Undertakes joint work with our Early Help and Prevention Service

Family Support and Protection

This team:

- Works with children subject to a child protection plan
- Works with children and families subject to Pre-Proceedings and initial Court Hearing

Disability

This team:

- Provides a specialist service for children with complex disability needs
- Undertakes child and family assessments and where required ongoing work with those assessed to be children in need, children looked after, and children in need of protection
- Works with children, families and other agencies to meet children's assessed needs in relation to their disability and support them to achieve their potential



Children Looked After

This team:

- Works with children to achieve permanency for children
- Works with children looked after from 0-18years old
- Works with children who are subject to Court Proceedings
- Works with Children who return to their birth family's subject to an Order where it is safe to do so or to extended family/friends subject to a Special Guardianship Order
- Works with Children remaining in long term care where it is not safe for them to return home and there are no other family/ friends options available
- Works with Children who may be placed for adoption

Fostering and Adoption

This team:

- Recruits, approves, supports and develops foster carers
- Recruits, approves, supports and develops Adopters and Special Guardianship Carers

Adolescent, Family Resource (AFR)

This team:

- Works directly with families and young people between 11 and 17 to prevent children coming into the care system and staying with family or in the community where safe to do so
- Uses the Signs of Safety and Solutions focused interventions to develop robust Child In Need, Risk and Safety Plans
- Works alongside families to develop resilience and explore parenting models and techniques so families feel equipped to deal with the demands of parenting in a complex environment

Child and Family Intervention Service (CFIS)

This team:

- Assist parents/carers to better understand and make changes to their parenting capacity in order to meet their children's needs
- Deliver interventions in order to identify and reduce harm to children within their family context
- Assist colleagues in case holding Social Work teams in making timely permanency decisions for children



Career Progression

In June 2017 we introduced a progression scheme for our Social Workers and Practice Managers. Progression is a mechanism to identify and recognise the level of skill, experience and professional performance within an individual. The purpose was to enable our people to progress without the need for a vacancy to have arisen. Since the progression process was introduced we have heard amazing stories about our people and the work they undertake.

Our progression scheme allows a social worker to join us at Grade 9 and then as they grow, develop and gain experience which they can evidence; subsequently progress through Grade 10 and ultimately Grade 11.

Return to Social Work

Has it been a while since you've left social work? Maybe you had a career break. Maybe you left to care for your own family. Whatever the reason you left, if you have a current HCPC registration and previous experience of Statutory Social Work on the front line then we want to support you to return.

This is a bespoke offer of support that looks to give you the opportunity to update your knowledge and shadow a team building towards an interview.

Following initial contact by the Professional Practice Team our offer includes a mixture of reflective sessions, shadowing and self-learning to help you to renew your knowledge. With the right experience we may also consider a supervised practice placement to support you getting your HCPC registration again.

As a social worker with West Sussex you will have access to excellent learning and development provision, post graduate training pathway with a local university as well as access to Research in Practice with a guarantee of a minimum of 5 days per year CPD.

Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs)

We are proud of our Social Work Academy which has developed a stream of high quality social work professionals who now work hard to keep children and families safe. We offer on-the-job guidance and support for through the first crucial year of practice. Social workers will working within a close and supportive team, be trained to become the best possible social worker using a phased approach to the volume and complexity of workload.

Flexible Working

We recognise that flexible working is an important benefit for social workers in order that they can achieve a work life balance. At West Sussex we have listened to our social workers and improved access to arrangements like the nine day fortnight, TOIL and career breaks.

Communication

We consider ourselves an evidence based organisation and central to this is having the opportunity to obtain feedback from our people. We have established 6 monthly focus groups, undertake an annual staff health check survey and our Head of Children's Social Care conducts drop in sessions. We then communicate via undertake a weekly email newsletter, closed Facebook group and a quarterly staff conference at which we also recognise people's achievements.

Blended Teams

We know that social workers are in demand so we have created a blended model to allow them to concentrate on the work they need to do, by investing in co-ordinators to take administration work off them. Our social workers have responded positively to this, estimating they have been saved a day a week. Whilst we know this model doesn't replace social workers, it does support them and make their workloads more manageable.

Social Activity

We are an active lot! This year we have entered a team in the Bognor 10k & are raising money for a local children's hospice by completing the Littlehampton 10k. But, it's not all running. Our Assessment & Intervention team had their team day and tug of war. Our Family Support & Protection team organised for six of their staff to complete the 5k inflatable fun run at Lingfield race course in May.

Events

We actively raise our profile within the Social Care sector by attending and speaking at Community Care Live and Compass, as well as running our own events inviting high quality speakers to provide attendees with valuable CPD.

In 2018 we hosted our first Social Work Conference to celebrate World Social Work Day. Our theme was Direct Work: Not Just Childs Play with both internal and external delegates learning and sharing best practice.

Further Information

WSSC Children's
Social Care Website
www.withyoueverystep.co.uk

Health and Care Professions
Council (HCPC)
www.hcpc-uk.co.uk

Email us
hereforyou@westsussex.gov.uk

Phone us
033 0222 4180

Follow Us on Twitter
[@WestSussexPSW](https://twitter.com/WestSussexPSW)

Join our Social Worker
Facebook group
WSSC Children's Social Care

"I'm
proud to offer
the **quality**
of training we
deliver"