

## **Job Description**

<b>Title:</b>	Therapeutic Care Worker
<b>Reports to:</b>	Shift Leader Director, Oakwood Therapeutic Community
<b>Direct reports:</b>	None
<b>Location:</b>	Oakwood Therapeutic Community, Kent
<b>Salary:</b>	£31,600 per annum
<b>Benefits:</b>	40 days' annual leave, up to 6% employer pension contribution, health benefits, life assurance and the opportunity to become a qualified child psychotherapist. Relocation package considered.

## **Context:**

Childhood First is a charity with a long and successful history of running therapeutic communities, which provide integrated programmes of care, education and treatment for traumatised children and young people. We are very successful with our work and help children achieve outcomes are substantially better than those achieved by the national cohort of looked after children.

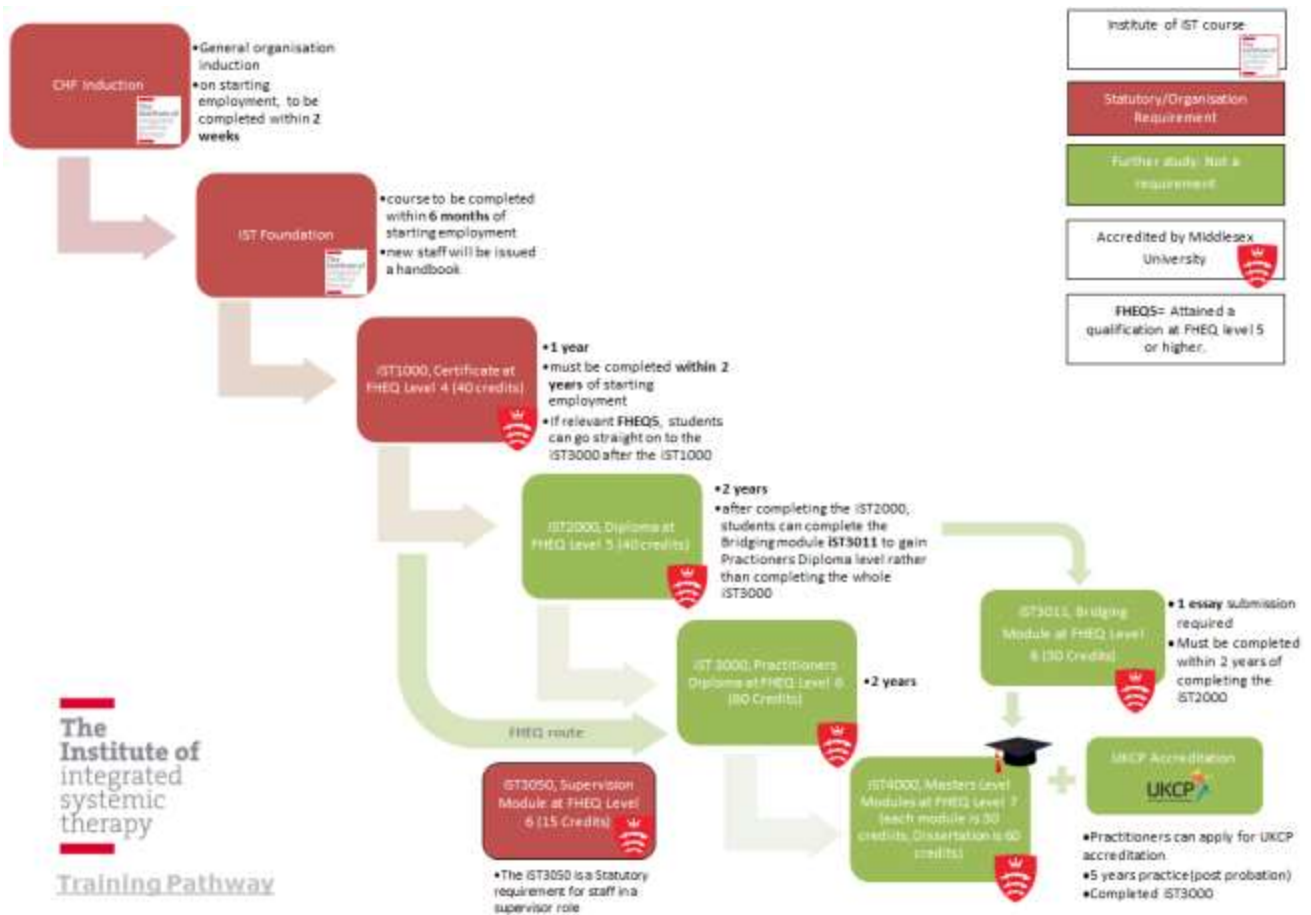
Oakwood House is one of our residential specialist therapeutic homes, for a group of four young people with complex emotional and psychological needs, aged 11 to 16 years.

We are committed to creating therapeutic environments where children and young people can have their care, emotional, educational and treatment needs met by experienced and informed therapeutic staff. Our work is grounded in psychodynamic principles and we believe that a child's difficulties are rooted predominantly in their past relationships, and that healing can happen through the building of new and safe relationships.

We therefore require staff to engage in the training and support provided in order to gain an understanding of these relationships, including those with their colleagues through the use of a staff dynamic group process.

Childhood First is a teaching-organisation and we work in partnership with our holding-company the Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy, which develops and delivers many of the accredited courses we offer.

We offer various accredited iST Training Pathways, which include:



- The iST Foundation Course, must be completed within 6 months of starting employment, this is a statutory requirement;
- The Certificate iST 1000 is a mandatory requirement which all staff must have; The IST certificate is recognised by Ofsted as equivalent to the mandatory Diploma 3 training required in Residential child care;
- With relevant APEL and Tutor’s discretion, students can proceed down pathway B to the IST3000 (2 year course to gain Practitioners Diploma) from IST1000, otherwise they proceed down pathway A to IST2000;
- After completing the IST2000, students can take pathway C, the bridging module, to gain their practitioners diploma instead of doing the full two year course;
- After achieving the Practitioners Diploma, students can proceed to pathway D to partake in Professional practice modules/ gain an MA in IST4000;
- The Supervision module is mandatory for team leaders/ supervisors;

The purpose of Oakwood is to provide an environment where the hurt and damage of a child's past can begin to be addressed. Staff will need to demonstrate a level of commitment openness and willingness to engage

with the IST approach in order to facilitate the therapeutic needs of children in their care.

In return Childhood First will provide a comprehensive package of training and support, including regular line management supervision overseen by a Child Psychotherapist, weekly reflective practice/dynamics groups which are facilitated by qualified Group analytic psychotherapists and regular theoretical seminars facilitated by psychotherapists.

## **Purpose**

Therapeutic care workers are required to attend to the overall task in a thoughtful manner and to contribute to understanding and addressing issues that affect the therapeutic task as a whole. Alongside the therapeutic task workers are required to work within a comprehensive regulatory framework.

## **Responsibilities**

1. Promoting wellbeing and helping children and young people to achieve their potential;
  - Develop practices and work responsively to support children in achieving their potential;
  - Engage with the children in pursuing education, play, hobbies, and interests;
  - To participate in the development and implementation of individual treatment/placement plans for the children;
  - Support children to manage themselves and their behaviours enabling them to recognise the impact of their actions on themselves and others using reflection and approved therapeutic methods of intervention;
  - Adhere to the philosophy of care and work within the guidelines and practice principles identified by Childhood First;
  - Positively engage with all safeguarding requirements and ensure any potential concerns are reported immediately;
  - Actively participate in the development of the centre's therapeutic environment and ensure that the highest standards of care and education prevail for each resident;
  - Provide good primary care as appropriate, ensuring that all the children are living in an environment which confirms their sense of worth and physical well-being. This will include cooking, cleaning, laundry, helping the children at mealtimes, bed times, bath times and with school activities and other day to day tasks involved in looking after children;
  - To be the Key Worker for specific children, as matched by the Director.

## 2. Relationships with children/young people

- Develop safe, professional supportive and nurturing relationships with the children;
- Implement Childhood First's approach to 'parenting' in residential childcare;
- Demonstrate at all times a clear understanding of personal and professional boundaries;
- Support the child's relationships with other significant people in the child's life by fostering a positive/professional approach;
- Understand the range of challenging behaviours presented by the children and use positive behaviour management approaches to respond. On occasions physical intervention may be required to safeguard the children staff or others;
- Set, promote and role model appropriate personal behaviour for the children.

## 3. Working as part of a team and with others

- Work together with others as a whole to ensure continuity in care and containment and work with team dynamics to understand the concept of "splitting";
- Fulfil shared and specific responsibilities within the team;
- Communicate appropriately and share information effectively;
- Provide appropriate support and constructive feedback to others
- Contribute to team meetings and dynamic groups;
- Maintain and promote good relationships with team members, management, external professional networks and the home's neighbours

## 4. Legislation, policies and procedures

- Promote, practice and comply with all policies, procedures and instructions;
- Support the management in ensuring the home can demonstrate that it meets the Quality standards for children's homes;
- Work within the legal framework for children and young people;
- Maintain the highest standards of record keeping in line with the Children's homes regulations, other legislation in relation to care planning and the Childhood first internal recording processes.

## 5. General

- To undertake specific pieces of work with the children as directed
- To participate in individual supervision, training and staff development opportunities as offered;
- To undertake any other duties commensurate with the post as directed by management.

## Person Specification

**Title:** Therapeutic Care Worker  
**Location:** Oakwood Therapeutic Community

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Education and Qualifications	<p>Good general education</p> <p>Prepared to undertake statutory training and to undergo development in psychodynamic practice.</p>	<p>A higher level qualification in a relevant subject such as social work, youth work, health, education, psychology.</p> <p>Childcare qualification – Level 3 Diploma or equivalent.</p> <p>Outdoor pursuits, sports or art-related questions.</p>
Experience	<p>Working in a team environment.</p> <p>Exercising appropriate decision making.</p>	<p>Experience of working with children in a related field.</p>
Skills and Abilities	<p>Must be suitable to work with children and young people.</p> <p>Ability to deal with the physical and emotional demands of the work.</p> <p>Ability to communicate in an open and positive manner and form appropriate.</p> <p>Ability to use work-based support.</p> <p>Demonstrable self-awareness and a commitment to reflective practice.</p>	<p>Recreational interests or hobbies that could be shared with the children.</p> <p>Embracing change and willingness to take on new tasks, roles or new ways of doing things.</p>
Knowledge	<p>Awareness of safeguarding issues and the regulatory framework.</p>	<p>Children’s developmental needs.</p>
Other	<p>Committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children</p> <p>Committed to anti-discriminatory practice</p>	<p>Commitment to working in the community for at least 3 years. Stability is very important in addressing trauma from relationships.</p>

\* Reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants will be considered

## **Further information**

This section is for guidance only and is subject to change without notice. It provides information about some of the important terms of employment you may want to consider as well as the benefits package we typically offer.

### Hours of work

In order to provide appropriate cover, a shift pattern is worked providing 24 hr care to the children. Staff are required to work some unsociable hours, including bank holidays, weekends and other times of the year including Christmas and New Year.

The average hours are 45 per week plus sleeping in duties once or twice a week. Staff are required to work additional hours when required to meet the needs of the community and will be offered time of in lieu if their hours are higher than an average of 45.

There is an annual community holiday and all therapeutic care workers are required to take part. This could mean being away from home for up to 7 days.

### Holidays

The post attracts 40 holiday days in a holiday year (April to March). In the first year holidays are accrued as 1/12 of entitlement for each month worked.

In order to provide stability and predictability for the children holidays are booked in advance for the full holiday year. Holidays are taken in one or two week blocks. Holidays are not approved during key times for the community such as over Christmas or during the community holiday. Exceptional cases will be considered by the Director and HR.

### Meal breaks

We recognise the therapeutic importance of meal times and therefore the community take their meals together. The meals are nutritious and homely and is provided to staff without charge. As far as is reasonable we will take into account dietary requirements.

### Pensions

You will be automatically enrolled in to the Childhood First Group Personal Pension Scheme pension at the minimum employee contribution as set by legislation or scheme rules (whichever is the higher) when you meet the criteria set by pension legislation.

You may increase your pension contribution to any percentage you choose. The organisation will match your contributions to a maximum of 6%.

### Help with health costs

We provide a 'health cash back scheme' via an insurance provider. If you occur every day medical costs such as dentist checkups, eye checks, physio you can submit receipts to the provider and get some money back. The scheme offers around £60 a year for each of the medical cost types.

Life assurance

We provide a life assurance scheme that provides 3 times your salary should you die to the person/s you nominate.

## **Safeguarding Children: Information for employment candidates**

### **Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare**

Childhood First is committed at every level to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. We take seriously our duty to protect every child from abuse and maltreatment and to prevent impairment of children's health or development.

The safeguarding and welfare of the children is considered within the context of their relationships with others and from within a culture of listening to, and engaging in dialogue with children and seeking their views about all aspects of their lives and their care

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. We understand it as the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm. Children who receive a service from Childhood First have suffered significant harm or have been at risk of doing so and remain vulnerable especially as children who live away from home.

### **Working together to Safeguard Children 2018**

All Childhood First policies are written in accordance with the relevant key legislation. The Safeguarding and child protection policies are written with particular reference to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. All Directors and senior staff within the organisation are aware of the importance of this document and guided to use it with their staff teams.

### **Accountability**

Childhood First has a clear line of accountability in each of its services up to the Director/Registered Manager of the service. Each Director is line managed by the Chief Executive (also the Responsible Individual for the organisation). The Executive is accountable to the Board of Trustees.

Every member of the organisation has a duty to report Safeguarding/Child Protection concerns to their line manager or the community designated safeguarding lead. Immediate steps must be taken to prevent the child from harm or further harm. These should be agreed with the most senior person available. It is the responsibility of the Registered Manager or Responsible Person (or the designated safeguarding lead) to inform statutory agencies who may instigate a Child Protection investigation. This will include the child's social worker and parents (Where appropriate); the police as necessary; and the Local safeguarding Children Board MASH team within the host authority.

The ongoing systems of training, supervision, and consultancy, in group forums and individual sessions, work together to ensure that all employees of Childhood First are clear about their responsibility to work together to safeguard children. These systems ensure that all remain aware of policy and practice areas which impact on our joint ability to safeguard children. All staff are reminded that they must remain alert to the potential indicators of abuse or neglect and to the risks that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children this includes other children or young people living in the home and perpetrators external to the home.



### **Inter-agency working**

Childhood First is committed to working in partnership with local authorities and other agencies to safeguard and protect children from abuse. Good inter-agency co-operation and communication are the essential bases for carrying out child care and safeguarding children. We co-operate with all statutory and other professional agencies in the spirit of protecting children.

Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures in each place of work are consistent with local policies and agreed with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The Registered Manager of each facility will ensure that all staff have access to these procedures and are provided with regular Safeguarding/Child Protection training commensurate with their role. All induction training includes Safeguarding.

Events and Notifications under Regulation 30 of Children's Homes Regulations are sent to Ofsted as well as to the Chief Executive and (Responsible Person) and the organisations designated safeguarding lead.

### **Local Children's Safeguarding Boards**

Local Children's Safeguarding Boards are the key statutory mechanisms for ensuring safeguarding and protection of children. Their roles include agreeing how relevant organisations (like Local Authorities, providers of residential care like ours) will co-operate to do this and ensuring effectiveness including training and increasing understanding of Safeguarding issues. It is their job to ensure that children and adults know who to contact if they have a concern that a child is being harmed.

### **Recruitment and HR procedures**

Childhood First has comprehensive recruitment and selection procedures, as an organisation we follow safer recruitment guidelines to ensure that our children and young people are safeguarded we then provide supervision/ appraisal and continued CPD to ensure all of our staff develop in their roles to provide the high standards of service delivery, disciplinary and whistleblowing procedures which must be complied with at all times.

### **Training**

All staff members undertake appropriate Safeguarding training starting at basic induction, and including refresher training at regular intervals. The training includes an awareness regarding CSE and the radicalisation of children and young people, regular refreshers provide a continued update to reflect changes in guidance, policy and legislation.

## **Recruitment of ex-offenders**

1. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for working with vulnerable children, Childhood First complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
2. We are committed to the fair treatment of our staff, potential staff or users of our services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
3. This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
4. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
5. Because of the nature of our work Enhanced Disclosure is required for most positions. For ancillary posts at residential children's homes Standard Disclosure is required. All application forms and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of an individual being offered the position.
6. Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, all applicants called for interview will be asked to provide details of their criminal record. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within the Foundation, and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
7. We will only request information about 'spent' convictions from applicants for posts covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exemptions Order 1975).
8. We ensure that everyone who is involved in the selection process has been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
9. At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

10. We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
11. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

## **Disqualification for Caring for Children Regulations 1991, Amendments Regulations 1997**

These regulations set out the conditions under which an individual can become disqualified for caring for children. No person disqualified from caring for children is permitted to work with children without written consent from the Secretary of State. In addition to our own checks about whether employees are disqualified we also require a declaration from individuals who are invited for interview that they have not been disqualified.

The conditions which would disqualify an individual include:

- being convicted of or cautioned for certain offences. A list of the offences (known as Schedule 2) is available from Childhood First.
- circumstances where a child of the individual has been the subject of a care order, or where an order has been made to remove a child from the individual's care or to prevent a child living with the individual
- where an individual has been involved with a home which has been removed from the register, or refused registration
- where an individual has been prohibited from being a private foster parent, has been removed from the register of child minders or day care providers or has had such registration refused