

Recruitment Information



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Working for Powys County Council

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Welcome

Thank you for the interest you have shown in working as a Social Worker for Children's Services in Powys. We have prepared this information pack to tell you more about us.

We are a service that is focussed on ensuring children, young people and families receive the highest quality services. Following a recent Care Inspectorate Wales inspection a great deal of improvement is underway and this is an exciting time to be part of the Children's service.

Working for Powys County Council, you will be part of the largest geographical public sector organisation in Wales. The council as a whole works well together to achieve systemic change to meet the needs of our communities, especially the most vulnerable. Our mission is to provide effective services for children and their families

Working for Children's Services, you will be part of an energetic and creative workforce, who aspire to make sure our families are supported and that our children are safe and able to reach their full potential. This will be a challenging role to achieve the best possible outcomes to support children & families in Powys You will help us to achieve the targets we have set ourselves to improve outcomes for children and families in Powys County Council. We will support you in your work and your career development. We have worked hard to achieve manageable caseloads to support you to do your best.

We have excellent training and development and you will have access to a supervisor who will support you in your continued professional development in your chosen role.

If you are a self-motivated and resilient individual, with a real drive to succeed, this is a great opportunity to join a children and young people focussed service where your skills, knowledge and expertise will be valued and your professional development supported.

I look forward to your application.

David Johnston

Interim Head of Children's Services



Working for Powys County Council

Powys is a beautiful county that brings with it numerous benefits:

- Beautiful rural, scenery and communities from the Brecon Beacons National Park to the Elan Valley & Lake Vyrnwy
- World renowned shows and festivals such as Royal Welsh Agricultural Show, The Green Man Festival and the Hay Festival of Literature

Working for Powys County Council also has its benefits which include:

Benefits for Employees

- Relocation Package – up to £8000 for hard to fill posts
- Personal lease car scheme
- A minimum of 24 days holiday a year plus bank holidays
- Local Government Pension Scheme
- Flexible working patterns including a 9 day fortnight
- Agile working opportunities - full-time, part-time, flexi-time, compressed hours, careers breaks, special leave
- Payment of Social Worker Registration Fees
- Competitive salary

Powys County Council is a Unitary Authority which serves a population of some 132,000 residents over an area of some 2,000 square miles in Mid Wales; making us one of the most sparsely populated areas in Wales and England. Within that total population, just under 25,000 of people are under the age of 25.

There are approximately 22,000 children and young people under the age of 18 living in Powys. The proportion of pupils in compulsory education entitled to free school meals is 12%, which compares with 18.9% nationally.

To support families across Powys there approximately 220 staff in Children's Services across a range of teams including Fostering, Adoption, Children's locality teams (0 – 18), Care leavers teams, Children With Disabilities, Youth Justice Service, Integrated Family Service Team, Bannau & Camlas, Powys People Direct, Safeguarding & Quality Assurance and Children & Young People's Partnership. Staff work out of our main offices in Welshpool, Newtown, Llandrindod Wells, Brecon and Ystradgynlais.

For most children and young people, Powys is a good place to grow up. Most children and young people are well educated, experience good health and have good leisure and employment opportunities. However, there are groups of children and young people who experience poorer outcomes, compounded in some cases by the challenges of sparsity and isolation. There is a vulnerability profile which demonstrates the current level of need in Powys from targeted to specialist services.



The council is structured into 5 directorates as follows;

- People
- Place
- Schools
- Resources
- Chief Executives

These directorates are responsible for providing a wide range of services for the people of Powys and work together in order to ensure corporate parenting for all children and young people

Childrens Services – Who are we?

We are an ambitious service and are focussed on positive outcomes for children and young people. We listening to the child's voice in our role as corporate parents. Our primary aim is to keep children safe by ensuring children, young people and families receive the help they need at the earliest possible opportunity, so that they are supported to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives, whether in their birth family or in other permanent care.

We strive to ensure our services are informed by evidence based best practice, and we are on a continual journey of improvement so that the support we offer children, young people and their families in Powys is both high quality and effective in helping families to turn their lives around when needed.

Children's Services have had a small increase of children being placed on the Child Protection Register within the last 12 months, which has stabilised and is below the national average. We are beginning to roll out signs of safety within the department and continuing to embed the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 into practice.

We want to ensure that our services identify the needs of children and address the root causes of problems, so that families can be strengthened and supported to achieve change for themselves and their children.

Working in Children's Services in Powys, as in other areas, can be challenging. You will be facing many of the challenges that social workers experience everywhere in the UK, however, you will be facing them in a beautiful part of the UK, with some of the most affordable housing.

The social care teams are relatively small, friendly and supportive units that work on a locality basis. Increasingly we are working more closely with Powys Teaching Health Board, with a number of integrated teams, and working towards more joined up working with partners across the county.

Childrens Services Vision

"We are working together to ensure that children and young people in Powys are safe, healthy, resilient, learning, fulfilled. Their voices will be heard, valued and acted on."

Our strategic priorities

- To support families to stay together
- To manage risk confidently and effectively when providing support to families where children and young people need to be safeguarded or are judged to be on the edge of care
- To provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high quality placements for children who are looked after
- To give children and young people clearly planned journeys through care and into adulthood



Our Team includes:

Since the Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection, Children's services have been transforming their front line services and you will be joining an improving service

Join us as a newly qualified or experienced Children's Social Worker and you will support families across Powys to produce and implement care plans to ensure children can live at home safely, and intervene where they can't.

You will work closely with professionals from a range of agencies including health, education and social care, police and youth offending services in order to improve experiences for children.

You could be handling complex but manageable caseloads whilst helping us deliver a strategy that puts children and young people at the beginning, middle and end of everything we do, with all the support and resources you need to do it, Families First in Powys provides support to families with children who are facing difficulties, particularly to those with low-incomes. Families First provides various of support to the whole family depending on need , through projects, activities and training delivered by a range of council services, charities and partner organisations.

Powys Integrated Disability Service (IDS) is a multi-agency service where professionals from health, education, children's social care services and voluntary agencies work together to provide support for children and young people with disabilities and their families. The Children with Disabilities Team help children who have a disability which affects their everyday life. This team is part of the wider Integrated Disability Service.

The Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) works with families who need help from Children's Services to keep their children safe. IFST brings together social workers and health workers. The team only work with families who want to meet them.

The Youth Justice Service (YJS) supervise young people who have been referred by the police, or sentenced by the youth court, looking at each situation and deciding what interventions are needed. They have a bureau system which supports early intervention and prevention work, and reduces the number of formal court orders placed upon young people.

The Fostering and Adoption Service fulfils the council's statutory obligations to recruit, assess, train and support foster carers and adopters for our looked after children. They also undertake post adoption work with young people and their families

There are other services and support which are available as part of Children's Service which include: safeguarding and independent reviewing officers, quality assurance and policy support officers, dedicated administrative support, and roles in Powys People Direct single point of access.

Children & Young People's Partnership (CYPP), early help is one of the key principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act, 2014. Identifying needs early and providing targeted support is the best way to achieve good outcomes for children but also to



prevent the escalation of issues that leads to statutory interventions. This prevention and early help approach will be key to developing more effective and efficient services to protect and safeguard children.

The Health and Care Strategy, a joint Powys Teaching Health Board and Powys County Council Strategy <http://www.powysthb.wales.nhs.uk/health-and-care-strategy>, seeks to enable children and young people to 'Start Well', for people to 'Live Well' and for older people to 'Age Well'. In Powys the number of looked after children is low compared to Wales, however there are increasingly complex needs arising and more children being placed on the child protection register, with neglect being the most common reason.

There is a need to develop a local plan to ensure prevention of adverse childhood events and appropriate focus on the first 1,000 days. There are opportunities to look at how health and social care work with schools to talk to children about their wellbeing. Broadening staff understanding around the early beginnings and what services are available is essential to ensuring children get the right level of support as early as possible.

Everyone needs a bit of extra support from time to time and having a Team Around your Family (TAF) can help. TAF is a way of finding out what extra support a family may need and how best to provide it. Powys TAF can help with many aspects of life such as: Parenting stresses and problems; difficult family relationships; access to sports, play and other activities; improving your child's self-esteem and confidence; dealing with times of change and engaging with school or training

Philosophy and Culture

In Children's Services, we are guided by a set of principles, values and expectations. As a social worker in Powys County Council, we will expect you to be knowledgeable and confident in your decision making and interventions. You will be a worker who thrives in an environment of high expectations, high challenge, and high support. We aim to champion good quality frontline social work practice and management, leading to the best outcomes for children and young people.

A Listening Culture

We will listen to the experiences of children, young people and families, hearing what they are telling us and responding to this in our improvement work. We pride ourselves on placing the views, wishes and experiences of our children and families at the heart of everything we do. We are clear that engaging with service users ensures that we understand their needs and how well services meet them. Ongoing feedback from service users is critical information which helps us to drive improvement and change.

Listening to our staff

Having listened to our staff we work hard to ensure that social workers have appropriate caseloads so that every social worker is able to produce work of a consistently high standard and have a good work life balance



Partnerships

Partnership working is a key strength in Powys County Council. We have a successful track record of working with our key partners, schools, police, the voluntary and community sector and health services both strategically and at a local level. This supports good information sharing, joint working and a shared approach to safeguarding children.

What Powys can offer you...

Induction and learning and development

Within Powys County Council we wish to see our staff continuing their learning and development therefore we are committed to ensuring that all employees are provided with a good induction, regular supervision and access to training and development opportunities. The formal qualifications available to employees who are not in social work positions include:

- QCF Level 2
- QCF Level 3
- QCF Level 4 Registered Manager
- QCF Level 5
- K101 – ‘An Introduction to health and social care’ Open University 60 Credit course
- KZW113 – ‘Foundations for Social Work Practice’ Open University 60 credit Course

Completion of K101 and KZW113 provides employees with a recognised Social Services Practitioner (SSP) Award which is also the First year of an Open University Degree in Social work.

Newly Qualified Social Workers can access First Three Years in Practice (Mandatory) whilst Social Workers returning to the sector are offered access to training courses, advice and guidance on the re-registration requirements and the portfolio of evidence that is required and work placement shadowing opportunities.

We are committed to the continuous professional development of our Social Workers, offering a range of core post qualifying routes and options together with corporate and role specific courses which are mandatory for staff, these include:-

- Corporate Induction (E-learning)
- Line management/Supervisory – for staff managing others (face-to-face)
- Service Induction (Face-to-face)
- Health and Safety (E-learning)
- Equalities (E-learning)
- VAWDSV (E-learning)
- Manual Handling (E-learning)
- Data Protection (E-learning)
- IT and Data Security (E-learning)

We also offer The Experienced Practice in Social Work (EPSW) Programme, leading to Graduate Certificate and the Experienced Social Work Practice Programme (ESWP), The Senior Practice in Social Work (SPSW), and the Consultant Social Work (CSW) Programme.



Powys County Council offer a Team Management Development Programme and a Middle Management Development Programme alongside Practice Courses which include Practice Assessors Award, Best Interest Assessor, Pre AMHP and AMHP. Staff can access Corporate Leadership and Development Courses in Coaching, ILM5 Coaching and Mentoring, Discover Leadership Programme and the Develop Leadership Programme.

Recruitment and Selection process

If you apply to Powys County Council you will be contacted by email shortly after the closing date of the post to inform you of the outcome of the application. If successful you will be provided with an interview date and any specific interview requirements.

Interview panels are usually made up of a Chair person, and safe-recruiting officers.

We aim to inform you of the outcome of your interview as soon as possible.

Offers of appointments are always subject to the provision of satisfactory references, health and DBS clearances.

