

September 2018

Dear Candidate,

I am delighted that you are interested in learning more about Frontline and the role of **Principal Curriculum Lead (PCL)** in this exciting organisation. Frontline is a charity with a mission to transform life chances for vulnerable children by recruiting and developing individuals to be leaders in social work and broader society. Having been set up in 2013, we recruit graduates and career switchers to join our two-year programme where they eventually qualify as social workers working in child protection and child in need work. We develop first line managers through our prototype of Firstline, a leadership programme for those directly managing practitioners. On completion of one of these flagship programmes, participants join the Frontline fellowship, a movement of outstanding individuals who are applying themselves to address social disadvantage in different ways.

We are expanding our curriculum team and have two full time Principal Curriculum Lead (PCL) posts available. These posts are specific to the Frontline programme, with one focusing on year one of the programme and the other leading on year two and Consultant Social Worker Practice Education award (PEPS). Both post holders will play a vital role in this pioneering organisation by bringing their practice and management wisdom, theoretical rigour and clear planning skills to the curriculum development and delivery. They will work to the Head of Curriculum and together lead the curriculum team (creating a strong team ethos and ensuring the team feel aligned to the vision for the programme). Principal Curriculum Leads will hold accountability for the design and dissemination of all Frontline programme content and teaching, ensuring the curriculum is cohesive, innovative, relevant to practice and evidence informed and that a suite of tutor materials enables confident and consistent delivery of the content across regions. Post holders will ensure all interdependencies (such as professional and academic standards, regulatory requirements, quality assurance and feedback processes, teaching timetables) are carefully considered and the appropriate planning and communication mechanisms are in place to effectively deliver on these.

The PCLs will between them, manage the 6.5 highly skilled members of the multi-disciplinary curriculum team who design the content and teaching approach for of all Frontline's programmes. The team is focused on developing outstanding social workers who are skilled at using their personal leadership, through excellent teaching, assessment, feedback and coaching. The PCLs will work closely with the team, encouraging and supporting them to innovate in the approaches to teaching, coaching and assessing social workers. The PCLs will lead the team to produce an excellent training and development offer for over 800 social workers and managers annually. As the largest single provider of social work training, Frontline has significant potential to influence, so these posts offer an unprecedented opportunity to make a lasting contribution to the development of social work practice in England.

The successful candidate will have a clear vision of what constitutes outstanding social work practice, leadership and management. We are looking for social work qualified managers with experience such as:

- delivering social work (and/or leadership development) programmes to a high standard within stringent quality assurance and regulatory frameworks
 - holding responsibility and oversight for a broad brief with a clear vision for, and commitment to, developing social work practice and leadership.
 - coaching, teaching or mentoring social workers in a practice context including through direct observations of practice
 - managing a multi-disciplinary team and developing others' skill in the area of curriculum development
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- developing efficient, sensible systems and communicating clearly to ensure people are clear on expectations and standards and are supported to meet these
- confidently working within theoretical frameworks and building planning mechanisms to support with completion and compliance
- driving innovation and change with confidence, energy and enthusiasm

Frontline are committed to recruiting a diverse workforce so we are well placed to effectively develop social workers. We are particularly interested to receive applications from people who have an excellent understanding of the challenges that children and families can face as a result of race, religion or poverty, for example. This understanding may come from having worked within a relevant context or from personal experience.

Application:

Follow [this link](#) to apply for this position. Applications should be received no later than **10 October 2018 9am**.

Interview Dates (London):

First Round: **15 October**

Second Round: **TBC**

If you have any questions or queries about this role or wish to have a confidential conversation about the position, please contact Mary Jackson, Chief Programmes Officer (mary.jackson@thefrontline.org.uk; phone: 07766 501 971).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Josh MacAlister
Chief Executive



Principal Curriculum Lead

Background

Our mission is to transform the lives of vulnerable children by recruiting and developing outstanding individuals to be leaders in social work and broader society. We want to see a country where children's life chances are not determined by social or family circumstance and we know that social work is at the forefront of the effort to realise this.

The Frontline programme that qualifies social workers comprises an intensive Summer Institute, two years in a local authority frontline social work team, and leadership development throughout. Participants are placed in units of four in local authorities and are led by Consultant Social Workers (CSWs) in child protection teams. The first cohort of over 100 participants started the programme in July 2014 working in Greater London and Greater Manchester. We are now in our fourth year of running the programme, and 352 participants will start this summer, working across London and the South East, North West, North East and the Midlands.

Our Firstline programme develops the leadership skills of first line social work managers. The first cohort of 37 Firstline Leaders began the programme in autumn 2015, and by 2020 a further six cohorts will have completed the programme.

The Frontline Fellowship – which includes all individuals that complete extended leadership development programmes with Frontline – is a movement network that supports our participants to lead change in social work and broader society of outstanding individuals who are applying themselves to address social disadvantage in different ways.

Frontline is a Social work charity. We have an entrepreneurial approach, where constructive challenge is positively welcomed and a culture of feedback is actively promoted. Through strong pro-bono partnerships, Frontline is able to access excellent development opportunities for its employees. This includes training, mentoring and coaching from experts from the world of social work, charities, private sector and beyond.

The Opportunity

This is a unique opportunity to join the team of a pioneering organisation that develops social workers and leaders to transform the lives of vulnerable children and families. The position offers the opportunity to influence and shape curriculum design, practice approaches and teaching methods.

At Frontline, how you approach your work is as important as what you do in your role. We are looking for people who demonstrate the following competencies:

- **Analysis and Planning:** consistently understand and interpret complex areas of work and identify and implement simple, clear processes to solve problems. Able to maintain awareness of the wider organisational implications of decisions and keep the overarching goal at the forefront.
 - **Leadership:** Model an inclusive approach, consistently articulating a vision and plan on how to get there. Able to convey this to others in a compelling way and willing to have challenging conversations, clarify expectations, set appropriate standards to ensure goals are achieved.
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- **Communication:** Strong Interpersonal and communication skills. Able to build and maintain positive relationships and be assertive, curious and persuasive in a respectful way to ensure others are motivated, focused and held to account as required.

The Team

The curriculum team are accountable for the design of all education and learning across the organisation. The team work hard to keep programme content current and aligned to the evidence base for practice and leadership, whilst also ensuring the learning experience is relevant to the local authority practice context.

The team includes 6.5 curriculum leads, each of whom bring specific expertise relevant to the programme and focused specifically in the three practice models privileged by Frontline (systemic approaches to social work, motivational interviewing and parenting interventions). Curriculum leads work within their area of practice expertise and collaboratively across the programme as required.

Principal Curriculum Leads will support the team to work effectively with people across the organisation who are responsible for the high quality delivery of all our activity, including the Firstline programme, the Fellowship and the Frontline programme.

The Commitment

- Some evening and overnight work to support and facilitate programme delivery
 - Monthly travel to regions, teaching and residential venues
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Principal Curriculum Lead

Reports to:	Head of Curriculum
Start date:	ASAP (October)
Location:	Any Frontline regional office (London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Birmingham, Newcastle)
Travel:	Occasional (monthly) regional travel, at least monthly to London, Summer Institute (10 days Coventry)
Contract:	Permanent
Hours:	Full time
Salary:	£53,000 excluding London weighting + competitive pension

Principal Curriculum Leads (PCL) will work closely with our team of skilled curriculum leads to support and challenge the team to develop content and ensure practice tutors are equipped with the tools to effectively and consistently deliver programme content.

PCLs are responsible for the quality, cohesion and compliance of programme content, whilst ensuring that teaching staff are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge and that teaching techniques are effective, innovative and drawing on learning from social work and other fields. Principal curriculum leads will work closely with the curriculum team to support them to work creatively in designing content and developing approaches to teaching, so that participants are well prepared to thrive and lead change in social work systems.

Team Leadership

- Define and articulate your vision for the curriculum to the team and work with the other PCL to create regular opportunities for the team to discuss and explore how to achieve this vision
- Create a strong team ethos and ensure that curriculum leads have regular opportunity to share thinking on their different areas of work and understanding of the whole programme
- Define in detail the accountabilities across the team and regularly communicate with the team to ensure clarity is maintained
- Influence, develop and support curriculum leads to work with regional teams to ensure they are equipped to deliver the materials to the highest standard
- Grow the team's interest in learning from feedback across the organisation and encourage creative thinking on the application of this knowledge

Curriculum Development

- Hold accountability for the development of content, learning materials and teaching techniques (and their dissemination) for the Frontline curriculum, ensuring it aligns with the wider vision
 - Hold overall accountability for the governance of the University approved curriculum, ensuring (but not restricted to):
 - programme documentation is up-to-date and accurate (UIFs, CIFs, programme handbooks etc)
 - design and roll out of assessment and marking guidance happens in a timely way, so teams are well prepared (for example provide comprehensive information to regional teams well in advance of deadlines)
 - teaching is aligned to learning outcomes and mapped to relevant professional and regulatory frameworks
 - curriculum standards across all programmatic activity remain high
 - course/unit modifications are made in response to quality assurance activity and are appropriately fed into the approval cycle of the validating partner
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- Prioritise quality assurance, implementing plans which ensure a range of QA mechanisms are in place and that QA is at the heart of the teams' activity and programme development. This will include activity such as:
 - ensuring curriculum team members and practice tutors are regularly observing teaching and practice, and feeding back
 - practice assessment panels are observed, panel leads are briefed and there is consistency in tone and standards
 - academic achievement rates are analysed for themes and recommendations are actioned as a result
 - responses to external examiner reports are acted upon
 - Satisfaction results, feedback from recall days, the summer institute and participant representatives are all captured. The themes are systematically reviewed to highlight trends and areas of strength and development, and this learning informs programme improvements
- Lead sessions on teaching at course management meetings (and other relevant fora) for practice tutors, provide detailed accessible documentation with feedback and guidance, ensuring these are readily available
- Design and work closely with heads of region to run a comprehensive, rolling induction for practice tutors
- On occasion, model direct teaching techniques with practice tutors and work with curriculum leads to develop teaching resources to ensure there is a clear definition of 'good teaching' at Frontline
- Observe teaching (live and recordings), provide feedback and actively support the development of those delivering the curriculum to ensure high quality and consistency across all activity
- Provide challenge and support benchmarking of all teaching and learning activity to quality standards
- Work with curriculum leads and colleagues to constantly reevaluate the rigour and relevance of the curriculum with relation to its' focus on developing leadership skill and equipping participants with the skills to thrive in a local authority context
- Continually review data (and approach to gathering data and feedback) and speak to colleagues to ensure we have a true insight into the strengths and areas of development of the curriculum

Relationships

- Work together with the other PCL to ensure that relationships with the Head of Curriculum, curriculum leads, the Delivery Director and heads of region are collaborative and supportive the development of a strong and shared Programme Team identity
 - Work with the key stakeholders to instil a strong commitment to developing and delivering a coherent curriculum, in which the different components mutually reinforce each other
 - Grow organisational awareness (through relationships) of the ways in which the academic context influences programme delivery, ensuring this understanding is documented and widely understood
 - Develop excellent relationships with colleagues working for our regulatory and validating partners
 - Work closely with regional teams to ensure they are clear on expectations, they feel well prepared in advance and they have the necessary tools to deliver content to a high standard
 - Work closely with key people across the organisation to elicit high quality feedback and create the mechanisms necessary to ensure this feedback is channeled back to inform programme improvement
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Person Specification

Values and alignment

- Prepared to work in line with our values of being brave, showing respect, pioneering, keeping curious and always keeping in mind that what matters most is what works. You should be able to role model these values in all that you do and expect these of colleagues you work with.
- Committed to creating a culture of Freedom and Responsibility
- A willingness and ability to be fully aligned to, and be an advocate for, Frontline's purpose and theory of change across all areas of work including a:
 - focus on having the highest standards for recruiting top talent into social work including people who may not have considered a career in social work before,
 - belief that social work practice needs to improve so that it is more relational, purposeful and skilled and that clear models practice are central to this.
 - belief in the role leadership must play in improving social work at all levels and that rapid improvement will sometimes require disruptive acts of leadership
 - approach to our Fellows (alumni) that celebrates, encourages and recognises individuals who are improving safety and stability for children whether they remain in social work or work outside of the profession
 - and a commitment that every child should have a safe and stable home and that this is best supported by social workers who work alongside families

Experience and knowledge

- Experience and expertise in leading a team and/or developing others
- Experience of successfully applying theory and/or research to social work and practice leadership
- Extensive experience in social work management or leadership role
- Experience of teaching or facilitating learning and taking action to improve the quality of delivery
- Experience of implementing rigorous quality assurance mechanisms and a commitment to making changes to content and delivery based on evidence as a result of quality assurance processes
- A proven ability to challenge and develop others ideas (in this role this relates to areas such as content development and approaches to teaching aligning with current evidence on best practice)
- A clear understanding of working within regulatory frameworks and of the the complexity this introduces with relation to timelines and interdependencies
- A sound understanding of children's social work and awareness of current debates, developments and the policy context
- A vision of how Frontline will continue to be innovative and ground-breaking and the determination to continue to develop outstanding social workers and skilled practice leaders

Characteristics and skills

- A strong commitment to planning and implementing systems to ensure there is clear understanding across teams of responsibilities and interdependencies
 - Thoughtful and curious about problems as they arise and able to take a creative, positive approach to solving complex challenges
 - A deep interest in improving social work practice and leadership
 - A collaborative approach to team management and a keenness to develop others skills
 - An enthusiasm for developing an evidence-based and curriculum steeped in practice
 - Interest in developing different ways to translate theoretical models to social work practice and leadership
 - Confident, articulate and credible in conveying complex ideas to different audiences
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- Excellent relationship management skills
- Confident in delivering difficult but constructive feedback in a respectful way

Education and background

- Qualified social worker with current HCPC registration
 - Strong belief and enthusiasm for Frontline's aims and mission
 - Masters level desirable, or working towards Masters
 - Maintains currency in Practice Educator Professional Standards at Level 2 (desirable)
 - Right to work in the UK (this post is subject to an enhanced police check of previous criminal convictions with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS))
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Frontline's mission

Our mission is to transform the lives of vulnerable children by recruiting and developing outstanding individuals to be leaders in social work and broader society.

Frontline's values

- **Be brave:** be prepared to challenge and don't always reach for the easy answer
- **Show respect:** recognise and value the contributions of others
- **Pioneer:** generate new ideas and make ripples or waves by sharing successes and setbacks
- **Stay curious:** be continually reflective and open to adapting how we work
- **What matters is what works:** be practical, flexible and outcome-focused

Frontline's benefits

Frontline are committed to the professional development and wellbeing of all staff. Frontline offers a number of core benefits to all employees:

- **Flexible working:** Frontline offers a 'core hours' policy requiring staff to be in the office between 10:00 and 16:30, with flexibility on working hours around this;
 - **Pension:** Frontline offers a competitive pension employer contribution with Aviva.
 - **Annual Leave:** 25 days per year (in addition to bank holidays) rising by 1 day per year after 2 years of service up to a maximum of 30 days. In addition, we give all staff extra day(s) at Christmas as the office typically closes from 25 December to 2 January;
 - **Travel:** Frontline offers an interest free loan for season ticket or bicycle;
 - **Training and Development:** Frontline endeavours to offer coaching and mentoring to all staff where required to support development needs;
 - **Cycle to work scheme:** Frontline provides a tax efficient way to obtain a bicycle;
 - **Volunteering days:** All Frontline employees can take between 1 and 3 additional days to volunteer in a mission-aligned charity, depending on length of service;
- Employee Assistance programme: The EAP is a free, confidential service that offers expert advice, information and counselling for all Frontline employees on a wide range of issues



Recruitment process

Safe Recruitment Procedure

Frontline is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. In order to meet this responsibility, it follows a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants. This process is outlined below, but can be provided in more detail if requested.

Disclosure

This post is classified as having substantial access to children, and appointment is subject to an enhanced police check of previous criminal convictions (DBS). Applicants are required, before appointment, to disclose any conviction, caution or binding over including 'spent convictions' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar individuals from employment – this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred.

Shortlisting, interviews and reference checking

Only those candidates meeting the right criteria will be taken forward from application. We regret that we cannot respond individually to unsuccessful candidates so if you have not heard from us within four weeks of the closing date, please assume that your application has not been successful. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed. References from the previous and current employer may be taken up for shortlisted candidates, and where necessary employers may be contacted to gather further information. Please let us know about any sensitivity regarding the taking up of references prior to interview.

Applications from those working in partner organisations

Frontline has strong partnerships with Local Authorities and Trusts providing children's social care where there is a shared vision to transform the lives of vulnerable young people and their families. If you are applying for a role at Frontline from one of our partner authorities or trusts we therefore encourage you to be open with your employer about your application. This supports our partner organisations in planning and promotes trust across partnerships.

Probation

All new staff will be subject to a probation period of six months (which may, in certain circumstances, be extended). The probation period is a trial period, to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job for which they have been employed.

Questions or further information

If you require more information please contact hr@thefrontline.org.uk and a member of the team will get back to you. If you want further information on the programme please visit our website: www.thefrontline.org.uk
