Northumberland County Council

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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| **Post Title**: Child protection advisor / Independent Reviewing Officer | | **Director/Service/Sector:** Children’s Services / Safeguarding | | **Office Use** |
| **Band:** 10 | | **Workplace:** To be determined | | JE ref: 1926  HRMS ref: |
| **Responsible to:** Strategic Safeguarding Standards and Quality assurance Manager | | **Date:** March 2011 | **Manager Level:** |
| **Job Purpose:**   * Ensuring high quality performance through reviewing and planning systems that safeguard Children and Young people most at risk and within the Looked after system. * To scrutinise the operational safeguarding and planning performance of Social Workers and Looked after children services. * To provide safeguarding advice and consultation to staff in complex child protection cases * To chair Child Protection Conferences and Reviews including LAC Reviews and Foster Care**r** Reviews as directed and to ensure compliance with Directorate policies , procedures and national guidance, regulation and statute. | | | | |
| **Resources** | Staff | * Direct supervision of Child Protection Report Writers. * Oversight and scrutiny of multi-agency work undertaken as part of Child protection plans and care plans | | |
| Finance | | * Delegated powers to commission Specialist assessments from the specialist assessment budget | | |
| Physical | | * Post holder will contribute to data collection and analysis | | |
| Clients | | * Responsibility for safeguarding and protecting vulnerable Children and Young people in Northumberland through care planning processes. | | |
| **Duties and key result areas:**   * To chair inter-agency child protection conferences, strategy meetings and reviews in accordance with ‘Working Together’ guidance and procedure. * To chair reviews of arrangements for looked after Children in accordance with the IRO regulations, to review Pathway Plans of eligible young people as appropriate. * To chair Foster Care Reviews in accordance with the Fostering regulations. * To promote the involvement and participation of children and young people, parents and carers in planning and decision making. * To ensure well crafted and accurate records of meetings are produced and distributed efficiently and in timescale. * To carry out monthly visits to Children’s Homes in accordance with Regulation 33 of the Children’s Homes Regulations 2001. * To contribute to the work of the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board and its sub groups and provide reports. * To assist in the development of quality assurance and performance management arrangements within the Children’s Services Directorate. * To carry out audit and reviews of practice and outcomes for service users and contribute to service development. * To provide advice and consultation for staff in Northumberland working with children and young people. * To contribute to the training and staff development programme as required. * To provide supervision and support of administrative staff. * To act as Local Authority Designated Officer as required, chairing strategy meetings, making appropriate records of discussions and following cases through when appropriate. * To carry out reviews of children and young people who are the responsibility of Northumberland and are held in Secure Accommodation. * Promote and safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of clients in accordance with service systems, procedures and standards. * To develop and maintain systems and reviewing practices designed to ensure safeguarding is of the highest standard and capable of withstanding external scrutiny. * To address directly and decisively any safeguarding or planning/ performance issues that raise concern in accordance with the organisations policies and procedures. * Responsibility for peer evaluation of effectiveness of service provision and quality standards. * To undertake independent quality assurance programmes of front line Social Work practice and residential care * To produce reports for internal requirements and external scrutiny at FACT Board and LSCB level. * Develop integrated approaches with partner agencies in meeting the safeguarding needs of children subject to CP plans or looked after in accordance with statutory requirements and corporate directives. * To assist in the formulation, monitoring and development of policies and guidance relating to services.   The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis. | | | | |
| **Work Arrangements** | | | | |
| Transport requirements:  Working patterns:  Working conditions: | | * The post holder will be required to visit a number of locations across the County , region, and Country * Working patterns: 37 hours peer week * To include out of normal hours working as necessary to complete review requirements. * Various local authority office bases, other venues, foster carer’s homes, residential homes and homes of young people and their families. | | |

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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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| **Post Title** Child protection advisor / Independent Reviewing Officer | **Director/Service/Sector:** Children’s Services / Safeguarding | Ref: 1926 | |
| **Essential** | **Desirable** | | **Assess**  **by** |
| **Knowledge and Qualifications** | | | |
| * Degree or equivalent relevant professional qualification. * Recognised and appropriate professional qualification in Social Work e.g. CQSW/Dip SW * Current GSCC registration. * Strong working knowledge of Legislative frameworks and statutory guidance relevant to Children’s services * Solid understanding of Government drivers including Working Together etc. * Extensive knowledge of Child protection work, causal factors and Social Work methodologies * Knowledge of Risk assessment models and processes * Knowledge of Quality assurance methodologies * Knowledge of current research and academic theory relating to Child protection and looked after children * Extensive understanding of child care and development. | * Post Graduate level education in related subject * Post qualification training in work with children and families or child protection work. * An understanding of group processes. | |  |
| **Experience** | | | |
| * Minimum 5 years experience of working with children in the child protection and looked after system within a Social Care setting. * Experience in working with child care legislation including child care planning. * Extensive practitioner and front line management experience in Child protection work within a multi agency Team. * Experience of chairing a wide range of meetings including multi agency meetings. * Experience of supervising staff and addressing performance issues. * Experience of working within performance driven settings and raising standards to agreed targets. * Experience of working collaboratively and jointly with other agencies and organisations * Experience of developing policies and procedures * Experience of writing reports for a range of audiences. * Experience of preparing for inspections by external regulators * Experience of budgetary management and control. * Experience of working with IT systems. | * Experience of chairing child protection conferences and reviews. * Experience of delivering training/development programmes to a range of professionals | |  |
| **Skills and competencies** | | | |
| * Ability to make difficult decisions in a timely fashion. * Ability to work autonomously. * Ability to present verbal reports confidently and succinctly in a range of different settings. * Ability to negotiate, persuade and motivate. * Ability to write coherent, grammatically correct, and well formatted reports. * Ability to analyse complex information and explain complex issues succinctly. * Ability to make sound assessments of risk * Ability to work well under pressure and deliver to deadlines. * Ability to work flexibly to meet the needs of the service. |  | |  |
| **Physical, mental and emotional demands** | | | |
| * Commitment to children in need and their families and to working in partnership with them. * Commitment to improving life chances of vulnerable children and to philosophy of continuous improvement of services. * Energy and resilience to deal with demanding nature of the role. * Demonstrable leadership qualities * A commitment to high standards of professional practice. * A commitment to inter-agency working. * A commitment to providing effective services. * A commitment to user and carer involvement in planning processes. * A calm and measured disposition * A solution focussed and ‘can do’ outlook |  | |  |
| **Other** | | | |
| * Able to meet the transport requirements of the post. * IT skills including word processing * Satisfactory enhanced CRB clearance. |  | |  |

Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g. case studies/visits.