



Independent Reviewing Officer/ Child Protection Conference Chair

Grade L

Group: Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Service: Health & Social Care Commissioning & Quality Assurance

Location: Civic Centre

Line Manager: IRO Practice Supervisor

Car User Status: Casual

Job Purpose

- To ensure and promote high quality social work and multi-agency performance through reviewing and care planning systems which safeguard children and young people most at risk and those who are in our care.
- To chair Child Protection conferences and reviews including Children in our Care reviews and foster carer reviews as directed and to ensure compliance with policies, procedures, national guidance, regulation and statute.
- To provide scrutiny of the operational safeguarding and planning activity of Social Workers within the child protection and the looked after children's arenas.
- To provide safeguarding advice and consultation to Social Work staff in complex child protection cases.
- To ensure plans for children are appropriate and do not drift.

The key roles of this post will include:

1. To provide oversight and scrutiny of multi-agency work undertaken as part of child protection and care plans, promoting and governing excellent standards of practice ensuring effective and safe decision making.
2. To Chair reviews of arrangements for Children in our Care in accordance with IRO regulations and review Pathway Plans for eligible young people as appropriate ensuring purposeful and effective social work with confident analysis and decision making.
3. To chair and ensure the effective management of inter-agency child protection conferences and reviews in accordance with Working Together guidance and Gateshead's procedures.
4. To Chair foster carer reviews providing oversight and scrutiny in accordance with Fostering Regulations.
5. To act as Local Authority Designated Officer as required, chairing strategy meetings, making appropriate records of discussions and following cases through when appropriate.
6. To ensure well written and accurate records of meetings are produced and distributed efficiently and within timescale.



7. To ensure and promote the involvement and participation of children and young people, parents and carers in planning and decision making.
8. To assist in the development and implementation of quality assurance and performance management arrangements for Children's Social Work and the broader Care, Wellbeing and Learning Group Directorate.
9. To implement a QA framework and programme of audits which highlights areas of good practice ensuring purposeful and effective social work, and which contributes to service development, improves outcomes for children and young people and reports key information to the Service Manager, Director and key partners
10. To develop and maintain systems and reviewing practices designed to ensure safeguarding is of the highest standard and capable of withstanding external scrutiny.
11. To address directly and decisively any safeguarding or planning/ performance issues that raise concern in accordance with the organisations policies, procedures and by implementing the Issues Resolution process.
12. 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 Gateshead Local Authority directives.
13. To influence and oversee the delivery of high quality services by working effectively in collaboration with internal and external partners and service users.
14. Such other responsibilities allocated which are appropriate to the grade of the post.



Knowledge & Qualifications

Essential:

Knowledge

- 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
- Risk assessment models and processes
- Quality assurance methodologies
- Current research and academic theory relating to Child protection and looked after children
- Psycho Socio and economic factors impacting on children and families
- Assessment and Social work interventions, including systems theory
- Performance management approaches
- Extensive understanding of child care and development.
- Commitment to Equal Opportunities and Anti-Oppressive Practice
- Legislation and requirements of LADO function
- LSCB function, roles and responsibilities

Experience

- Minimum 4 years' experience of working with children in the child protection and looked after system within a Social Care setting.
- Working within child care legislative frameworks 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 writing reports for a range of audiences.
- Experience of preparing for inspections by external regulators
- Experience of working with IT systems.

Qualifications

- Degree or equivalent relevant professional qualification.
- Recognised and appropriate professional qualification in Social Work e.g. CQSW/Dip SW
- Current Social Work England (formerly HCPC) registration
- Current driving licence and access to a car, or means to mobility support.

Skills

- Effective communication and presentation skills
- Ability to form effective relationships with, and communicate effectively with, children and families.



- Ability to write coherent, grammatically correct, and well formatted reports.
- 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 analyse complex information and explain complex issues succinctly.
- Ability to undertake sound and well evidenced risk assessments
- Ability to work well under pressure and deliver to deadlines.
- Ability to work flexibly to meet the needs of the service.
- Think systemically
- Effectively challenge and influence Social Workers
- Improve the practice of others
- ICT Literate

Personal Qualities:

- Highly empathic, respectful and emotionally intelligent.
- Resilient and able to work autonomously under pressure.
- Highly reflective and enabling.
- Able to learn from experience.
- Decisive whilst recognising professional lines of governance and accountability.
- Able to recognise personal experiences that influence professional perceptions.
- Comfortable in applying authority implicit to the role which develops relationships and protects children.

Desirable:**Knowledge**

- Project and Change Management

Experience

- Management of a range of professional disciplines
- Contributing to quality audit and service evaluation
- Ability to develop and implement service developments
- Experience of chairing child protection conferences and reviews.
- Experience of budgetary management and control
- Experience of delivering training/development programmes to a range of professionals
- Experience of developing policies and procedures

Qualifications

- DMS (or equivalent)
- Post Graduate level education in related subject
- Post qualification training in work with children and families or child protection work.



Competencies

Customer Focus

Puts the customer first and provides excellent service to both internal and external customers

Communication

Uses appropriate methods to express information in a clear and concise way to make sure people understand

Team Working

Works with others to achieve results and develop good working relationships

Making things happen

Takes responsibility for personal organisation and achieving results

Flexibility

Adapts to change and works effectively in a variety of situations

Learning and Development

Actively improves by developing and applying new skills and knowledge and learns from past experiences