 Stockton-on-Tees BOROUGH COUNCIL	JOB DESCRIPTION
DIRECTORATE: Children's Services	SERVICE AREA: Strategy, Systems & Improvement – Strategy, Quality & Improvement
JOB TITLE: Independent Reviewing Officer	GRADE: N
REPORTING TO: Team Manager – Independent Review	

1. JOB SUMMARY
<p>To independently review a range of departmental and inter-agency plans and services within statutory Child Protection, Children in Our Care and Care Leaver's systems within defined timescales, ensuring that appropriate actions are identified and accurately recorded.</p> <p>The post holder will develop and maintain a range of quality assurance systems as defined in departmental policies and procedures and government guidance.</p> <p>To monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and wider service area level to ensure overall service quality and performance is maintained to a high standard.</p> <p>To ensure that all children have a voice and that their plans are meaningful and contribute to their safety and well-being.</p> <p>Work flexibly across Children's Services and with other agencies, partners and stakeholders to meet the needs of children, young people and families.</p> <p>You may be requested to lead on specific projects, take on responsibility for other areas of work and deputise for your line manager when required.</p>

2. MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS	
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the effective review of Children's Services to a specific group of clients, as defined by the Team Manager - Independent Review, and act as an independent chair in complex planning meetings, initiating the dispute resolution process where necessary. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Protection Conferences - Children in Our Care Reviews - The Review of children who are in an adoptive placement prior to an Adoption Order being made - Review of Children in short term breaks - Pathway Plan reviews - Foster Care Annual Reviews - Secure Accommodation Reviews • Promote the involvement and participation of children and young people, parents and carers in planning and decision making. • In line with the national IRO Guidance, monitor Care Plans and challenge, where appropriate, any issue such as drift or identified gaps in service provision. • Provide specialist advice, vision and leadership to Social Workers, Team Managers, partner agencies and other professionals across statutory and non-statutory services. • Assist the Team Manager with work allocation, target and performance setting and maintaining of systems to quality assure services to young people. • Contribute to the monitoring of performance and activity as part of the wider service area by undertaking a range of audits and reviews of practice. • Contribute to the work of the Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership and its sub groups, and provide reports as directed. • Promote professional development and quality and contribute to evidence-based practice through group/individual/ supervision and the development and delivery of training. • Participate in case audits, practice observations and file management as part of the quality assurance process.
2.	Contribute to managing the team and the achievement of service objectives.
3.	Contribute to the management of people in the team, support their learning and development and undertake your own personal development.
4.	Contribute to managing budgets and the achievement of financial objectives.
5.	Work flexibly across Children's Services and with other agencies, partners and stakeholders to meet the needs of children, young people and families.
6.	Promote a positive workforce culture that is focussed on delivering excellent customer service and ongoing service improvement.
7.	Support and promote the ongoing work, development and improvement of the Directorate and the Council.
8.	You may be requested to lead on specific projects, take on responsibility for other areas of work and deputise for your line manager when required.

3. GENERAL

Job Evaluation - This job description has been compiled to inform and evaluate the grade of the job.

Other Duties - The duties and responsibilities in this job description are not exhaustive. The post holder may be required to undertake other duties from time to time within the general scope of the post. Any such duties should not substantially change the general character of the post. Duties and responsibilities outside of the general scope of this grade of post will be with the consent of the post holder.

Workforce Culture and supporting behaviours and Code of Conduct – The post holder is required to carry out the duties in accordance with Workforce Culture and supporting behaviours, code of conduct, professional standards and promote equality and diversity in the workplace.

Shaping a Brighter Future – The post holder will embrace the Council's "Shaping a Brighter Future" programme.

Personal Development – As defined by the Council's Culture Statement, all employees will take responsibility for their own development


Customer Services – The post holder is required to ensure that all customers both internal and external, receive a consistently high quality level of service, commensurate to the standards required by Stockton on Tees Borough Council.

Policies and Procedures – The post holder is required to adhere to all Council Policies and Procedures.

Health and Safety – The post holder has a responsibility for their own health and safety and is required to carry out the duties in accordance with the Council Health and Safety policies and procedures.

Safeguarding – All employees need to be aware of the possible abuse of children and vulnerable adults and if you are concerned you need to follow the Stockton Council's Safeguarding Policy. In addition employees working with children and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults during the course of their work.


Job Description dated: July 2021

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CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	MEANS OF ASSESSMENT
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Work qualification and registration • Practice Educator or equivalent teaching/coaching qualification • Evidence of ongoing professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Qualifying qualification • Management Qualification 	Application
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitably qualified and experienced with some managerial / supervisory experience such as Team Manager / Practice Teaching • Substantial post qualifying experience of Child Protection and Children in Our Care work in accordance with the IRO handbook. • Experience of performance indicators and monitoring performance • Experience of monitoring situations of a complex legal / professional nature • Experience of a range of inter-agency planning and joint working situations • Experience of undertaking quality assurance and audit activity using performance frameworks. • Risk Management within a safeguarding context • Decision making • Supporting learning and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of operating management systems including benchmarking • Experience of chairing Child Protection Conferences, Looked After Children reviews and other complex meetings • Experience of the development of performance indicators related to quality standards 	Application / Interview

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership working • Promoting a positive culture • Customer focus • Improving services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of representing the department externally. • Experience of working in a corporate and political context • Experience of developing and delivering training • Managing teams and people • Managing performance • Decision making 	
Knowledge & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of Legal framework and multi-agency procedures • Knowledge of best practice • Effective communication skills • Negotiation skills • Setting and monitoring quality standards • Ability to communicate effectively both within and between organisations • Ability to chair multi-disciplinary meetings and maximise involvement of agencies and service users in the planning and review process • Ability to make decisions using sound professional judgement • Ability to challenge where appropriate • Problem solving • Effectively plan and prioritise workload • Microsoft Office technology solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of information systems and information technology applications • Information governance and security 	Application / Interview

Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate the behaviours that underpin the Council's Culture Statement• Demonstrate the behaviours that underpin the Children's Services Strategy• Leading by example• Collaborative team worker• Handle difficult situations sensitively• Pragmatic, flexible and resilient• Self-motivated, energetic, not easily discouraged		Application / Interview
Other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The role is delivering a service predominantly during office hours however an ability to flexibly work beyond core hours is essential to meet the needs of service users and/or the service		Application / Interview
Person Specification dated: July 2021			

 Stockton-on-Tees BOROUGH COUNCIL	KNOWN RISKS FOR THIS ROLE
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The following are the known risks for this role, more than one may apply. Where there are no known risks this will be indicated.

Known Risk	Yes/No
Is required to work at heights or on ladders	No
Is required to work in confined spaces or unusual environmental conditions where specialist equipment or breathing apparatus is needed	No
Is required to drive a Council vehicle or regularly transporting other person/clients/pupils in own vehicle as part of normal duties – occasional	Yes
Is required to drive an HGV/LGV/PCV/Minibus	No
Is required to undertake agriculture, horticulture or gardening work	No
At risk from noise that might affect an employee's health (will be required to wear ear protection)	No
Will be exposed to vibration likely to be above the exposure action level.	No
Is exposed to hazardous substances as detailed in Appendix 1	No
Is likely to be exposed to asbestos	No
Is at risk of a needle stick injury or human bite or could be exposed to blood, sewerage, bodily fluids.	No
May be exposed to lead or lead based products	No
Will handle food	No
Will require a health assessment for regular night working	No
Will be required to undertake the Display screen equipment training	Yes
Other known risks – please detail Direct contact with service users including home visits. Sometimes contacts may be emotionally charged, with users presenting a risk of harm to others. Activity is risk assessed and managed.	Yes
No known risks associated with this role	No

As the service manager of this post, I declare that the details above are an accurate reflection of the risks associated with the post.

Signature of Manager: Jane Smith
Date: 17.11.22