**Job Description & Person Specification**

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| **Post Title** | Practice Audit and Development Officer |
| **JE Reference**  | W1608 | **Grade**  | H | **SCP Range** | 33 - 35 |

**Reporting line:**

Quality Assurance & Practice Development Manager

Practice Audit and Development Officer

N/A

# **Job Purpose:**

The post holder will work under the leadership of the Quality Assurance & Practice Development Manager to develop and drive high quality, consistent practice through quality assurance and practice development activity focused on the monitoring, evaluation and continual development of practice improving the outcomes for children, young people and families. The postholder will promote good social work practice through a programme of audit to ensure practice meets internal practice standards and support the ongoing development and implementation of the authority’s strengths-based practice model and help to shape improvement activity.

# **Relationships:**

**Accountable to:** Quality Assurance & Practice Development Manager

**Accountable for:** N/A

**General Contacts:** Directorate teams; managers; partner agencies; members of the public

# **Key duties and responsibilities:**

1. Support the continual development of a systemic and strengths-based practice model to improve outcomes for children, young people and families through the development and delivery of practice development activities and projects to address areas for development through a range of methods, which may include briefing notes; written learning materials and practice guidance; practice development workshops and training; project task and finish groups; action learning sets; reflective group supervisions or coaching and mentoring.
2. Work within a robust quality assurance framework under the leadership of the Quality Assurance & Practice Development Manager to coordinate and conduct a range of audit and quality assurance activity as required; including but not exclusively limited to:
* Thematic and deep dive audits
* Dip samples and group auditing
* Multi-agency audits
* Collaborative case file audits
* Ad hoc “trouble shooting” audits
* Audit moderation
* Observation of a range of practice activities, providing constructive feedback, and modelling excellent practice
1. Support the direct learning loop from audit quality assurance to support practice development and improve outcomes for children by:
* Analysing findings and themes from quality assurance activity and producing high quality reports that communicate the outcomes of audit activity.
* Identifying any issues, changes and constraints which limit the effective operation and provision of effective social care services to children and families.
* Providing recommendations that identify practice development needed to drive improved outcomes and service improvement.
* Working in partnership with practitioners, managers and colleagues as appropriate to ensure that appropriate escalation and remedial action takes place where issues of concern emerge.
* Working with practitioners to ensure that learning from audit informs practice development and learning and development workshops/ programmes.
* Recording, tracking and taking action to ensure that audit actions / recommendations are completed and learning is achieved.
* Influencing the work of practitioners, managers and service leaders through providing constructive challenge.
* Coaching, mentoring and working with colleagues across the directorate to develop a culture of continual improvement and reflective practice through practice development activity and quality assurance processes.
1. Support the infrastructure of quality assurance including audit tools and processes, quality assurance framework, using tracking measures, collation of audit statistics and findings and sharing the findings in different formats and forums to monitor compliance with applicable standards, regulations and internal practice standards, policies and procedures through the use of quality management processes and checks.
2. Provide training and mentoring to practitioners conducting audits as well as developing and delivering training more widely to achieve best practice in all aspects of practice.
3. Contribute to and support the preparation for inspections, including assurance work, ad hoc requests during inspections, and post-inspection action plans to support continued improvement.
4. Engage and work in partnership with practitioners, supervisors and managers in practice development activity through the identification and provision of examples of good practice; sharing of learning; constructive challenge and ensuring that appropriate escalation and remedial action takes place where issues of concern emerge.
5. Undertake and disseminate the findings of regular reviews of research and horizon scanning of legislation, serious case and learning reviews, best practice and other information and intelligence to support practice development and quality assurance activity.
6. Contribute to the regular review of practice and quality standards ensuring that these are benchmarked and updated to meet local and national objectives and best practice in safeguarding children and young people.
7. Contribute to the review and update of local policies, procedures and practice guidance, informed by quality assurance activity that will support excellent practice in line with national initiatives and legislative frameworks.
8. Contribute fully to the developments within the team, departments, and the wider council, carrying out any other duties and responsibilities as may reasonably be required as directed by the Quality Assurance & Practice Development Manager and consistent with the grading, level and expertise of the post holder.

# **General/Corporate Responsibilities:**

1. To undertake such duties as may be commensurate with the seniority of the post
2. To ensure that the Council’s corporate Health & Safety policy is followed and training is undertaken in all pertinent health and safety procedures
3. To partake in the Council’s and Directorate’s staff training and development policies as well as the Council’s system of performance appraisal
4. To treat all information gathered for the Council and Directorate, either electronically or manually, in a confidential manner
5. All employees are required to demonstrate a commitment when carrying out their duties which promotes and values diversity and the equality of opportunity in relation to employees and service users which is in line with the Council’s Equality & Diversity Policy.
6. To be responsible for identifying and managing all risks associated with the job role through effective application of internal controls and risk assessments to support the achievement of Corporate and Service objectives
7. To ensure the highest standards of customer care are met at all times
8. To ensure the principles of Value for Money in service delivery is fundamental in all aspects of involvement with internal and external customers
9. To ensure that the highest standards of data quality are achieved and maintained for the collection, management and use of data.
10. To positively promote the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults and ensure that it is recognised that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; and to engage in appropriate training and development opportunities which enhance an individual’s knowledge and skill in responding to children, young people and vulnerable adults who may be in need of safeguarding.

**Last Updated:** March 2024  **Author:**  Amanda Baxtrem

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| **POST TITLE** | **GRADE** |
| Practice Audit and Development Officer | H |

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| **NOTE TO APPLICANTS**Whilst all points on the specification are important, those listed in the essential column are the key requirements. You should pay particular attention to those points and provide evidence of meeting them. Failure to do so may mean that you will not be invited for interview. |

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| **CRITERIA** | NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS | **\* M.O.A.** |
|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |  |
| **EXPERIENCE** | * Substantial (3 years +) post qualifying frontline experience in a social work setting
* Significant experience of working with vulnerable children and families
* Experience of developing/ mentoring/coaching staff
* Experience of development/delivery of training
* Experience of collecting, analysing and summarising data
* Experience of report writing
* Experience in practice of a range of practice models including using the Signs of Safety framework, trauma informed, restorative, relational Family Strength based & Solution Focused
 | * Auditing cases within Children’s Services
* Working with all levels of senior management across organisations and in a political environment.
 | A; I |
| **SKILLS AND ABILITIES** | * Ability to work independently and within a team
* Ability to establish positive working relationships with colleagues, delivering constructive challenge and having influence across boundaries, from senior management to frontline staff and with service users and partner agencies
* Delivery of a range of practice models including Trauma Informed, Restorative, Relational, Family Strength based & Solution Focused
* Delivering at pace - working to and meeting tight timescales through good time management skills
* Good analytical skills including the ability to critically analyse and synthesize complex data and information (qualitative and quantitative) from a variety of sources e.g. legislative, policy, research and service documents
* A skilled communicator, able to communicate complex information succinctly, in person and in writing, adapting to the audience’s needs.
* Ability to influence the work of practitioners, managers and service leaders through providing constructive challenge.
* Ability to design and deliver engaging workshops and focus groups
* A critical thinker who is able to be creative to work through problems and make decisions; is ambitious; embraces change; and is motivated to achieve the best possible outcomes - whilst being realistic about pressures and resource constraints
* Strong leadership and interpersonal skills
* A track record of maintaining exceptional professional standards and performance.
* Good IT skills - proficiency in MS Office packages, particularly MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
 | * Project Management skills
* The ability to link social care practice to the performance management framework
 | A; I |
| **EDUCATION/ QUALIFICATIONS/ KNOWLEDGE** | * Social Work qualification and Current SWE registration
* Highly developed knowledge of social work practice in children’s services
* In depth knowledge of practice models including the Signs of Safety framework, trauma informed practice and other systemic approaches.
* Knowledge of inspections frameworks for Children’s services
* Social care practice legislation, guidance and regulations
* A good understanding of the wider workforce in particular Social Care, Early Years and School Nursing & Health Visiting
 | * Practice Educator qualification/Practice Development Educator qualification
* Management qualification
* Project Management qualification
* Training/teaching qualification
 | A; I; C |
| **OTHER REQUIREMENTS** | * Flexible approach to work by responding to the needs of the services including, at times, requirements to work beyond normal working hours
* Commitment to own continuous personal and professional development
* Strong team player, committed to an ethos of continuous improvement
* Demonstrable commitment to the principles of confidentiality, information sharing and data protection
* Solution focussed approach
* Creative and enthusiastic
 | * Full driving licence
* Evidence of own continuous personal and professional development
 | A, I, C  |
| **COMMITMENT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES** | * Commitment to equal opportunities and the ability to recognise the needs of different service users
 | * Evidence of having completed training in equality and diversity awareness
 | A,I  |
| **COMMITMENT TO SERVICE DELIVERY/ CUSTOMER CARE** | * Commitment to provide a customer-focussed service
 | * Evidence of surpassing customer expectations or service targets / goals
 | A,I  |

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT: (\*M.O.A.)**

A = APPLICATION FORM C = CERTIFICATE E = EXERCISE I = INTERVIEW P = PRESENTATION T = TEST AC = ASSESSMENT CENTRE

R = REFERENCE