

 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
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. The post holder will develop and maintain a range of quality assurance systems as defined in departmental policies and procedures and government guidance. 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. To ensure that all children have a voice and that their plans are meaningful and contribute to their safety and well-being. Work flexibly across Children's Services and with other agencies, partners and stakeholders to meet the needs of children, young people and families. 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.

2. MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS	
1.	• 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: - 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: November 2024

 Stockton-on-Tees BOROUGH COUNCIL	PERSON SPECIFICATION	
DIRECTORATE: Children's Services	SERVICE AREA: Strategy, Systems & Improvement – Strategy, Quality & Improvement	
JOB TITLE: Independent Reviewing Officer	GRADE: N	

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	MEANS OF ASSESSMENT
Qualifications	• Social Work qualification/registration post 5 years • Evidence of ongoing professional development	• Post Qualifying qualification • Management Qualification • Practice Educator or equivalent teaching/coaching qualification	Application
Experience	• 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 operating management systems including benchmarking • Experience of chairing Child Protection Conferences, Looked After Children reviews and other complex meetings	Application / Interview/ presentation

	• Experience of undertaking quality assurance and audit activity using performance frameworks. • Risk Management within a safeguarding context • Decision making • Supporting learning and development • Partnership working • Promoting a positive culture • Customer focus • Improving services	• Experience of the development of performance indicators related to quality standards • 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	• 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	• Knowledge of information systems and information technology applications • Information governance and security	Application / Interview/presentation

	• Effectively plan and prioritise workload • Microsoft Office technology solutions		
Behaviours	• 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	• 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: November 2024			

PRE- EMPLOYMENT HEALTH – KNOWN RISKS

Job Details

Please complete in capital letters

Job Title	Independent Reviewing Officer
Job Number	
Service Group / Department	Information and Improvement- Review Unit
Line Manager	Jo Wren/Jeff Riley

Introduction

This form should be completed by the prospective Manager.

Ticking the relevant boxes below will indicate for Occupational Health purposes, those elements of fitness required for the proposed employment. The Occupational Health Service will then be able to advise on any required health surveillance both prior to and during employment.

Pre-employment health screening is to ensure that employees are fit to do the job for which they have provisionally been offered, and that their health cannot be damaged by the proposed occupation. It may be used to assist in identifying prospective employees who may be vulnerable to occupational hazards and those who may be a health and safety risk to themselves or to others.

Stockton Borough Council is an equal opportunities employer and recruits on the basis of ability. The information requested below will enable the Council to fulfil its obligations under the Equality Act 2010, and to consider (and implement if required) reasonable adjustments to the workplace where appropriate in order to assist the tasks of the role to be performed.

Please complete this form as part of the recruitment procedure

PLEASE NOTE that completion of this form does not fulfil the requirement to undertake a general risk assessment under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

OHS/C1b/V2/CLW

Known Risks

Please indicate which items below are included within the work of the above job – more than one item may apply.

Working at heights / on ladders	☐
Working in confined spaces	☐
Driving duties (Driving of Stockton Borough Council vehicles or regularly transporting other persons/clients/pupils in own vehicle as part of normal duties)	☒
Driving a HGV / LGV / PSV / Minibus	☐
Agriculture / horticulture / gardening work	☐
Wearing hearing protection	☐
Operating powered vibrating tools	☐
Prolonged or frequent exposure to machine generated wood dust, other heavy or excessive concentrations of mineral dust, solder flux or tar	☐
Working in unusual environmental conditions (where access, exit, or free flow of air may be restricted. Where there may be a build up of gasses, vapours or fumes. Where the use of breathing apparatus is required)	☐
Working with asbestos	☐
Contact with hazardous substances (COSHH Regulations, sewerage, body fluids, blood)	☐
Working with lead or lead based products	☐
Food preparation / catering	☐
Regular Night Working	☐
Display Screen Equipment	☒
Other Known Risks: Please detail: Lone working at times, fobs in place.	☐
No known risks associated with this role	☐

Signature of Manager: J Wren

Date 18.12.24

OHS/C1b/V2/CLW