

Job profile

Service and job specific context statement

Directorate:	Children and Young People's Service
Service:	IRO Service
Post title:	Independent Reviewing Officer
Grade:	M
Responsible to:	IRO Manager
Staff managed:	None
Date of issue:	December 2020
Job family:	P&T - Professional & Technical

Job context

The Children and Young People's Service provide services which follow from specific legislation, including the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004 as well as other Government guidance and policy. We are committed to providing good quality services to support children young people and their families.

The post holder will operate in an environment of transformational change and innovation, be able to manage change in a time of financial constraints and have the confidence to promote the voice of children and young people in both the delivery and development of services. Other key requirements are: -

- To have a commitment to shared values and the common purpose of developing a culture of interagency working; including statutory bodies, third and private sector organisations.
- To ensure that strategic visions are translated into local plans in collaboration with professionals, partners and service users.
- To be able to undertake the duties of the role within a very rural environment which will include regular travelling to meeting venues some of which may be in isolated rural settings
- To be able to provide the service in accordance with the needs of children and young people which may involve working outside normal office hours.

Enhanced DBS and registration with the regulator Social Work England (SWE) required..

Job specifics

The core and focus of the IRO role is to ensure that timely and effective plans are made to meet the needs of children and young people in need of care and protection; to ensure that their wishes and feelings are taken account in planning and decision making, in order that all children and young people are able to reach their full potential.

The post holder will chair looked after children's meetings and act as independent chairperson for child protection conferences as well as undertaking reviews of Foster Carers and other duties commensurate with the role. A key function of the role is to ensure that the plans for children and young people in need of care and protection are effective and progressing at a speed that is appropriate to the child.

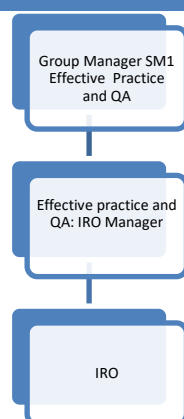
The post holder will monitor the progress of the child's plan and hold the Local Authority and partners to account, ensuring that social work practice and conduct of the case is good, therefore challenge poor practice; ensure plans are SMART; Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely; inclusive of the needs, views and wishes of the child. Where this is not the case, the post holder will ensure that the escalation process to resolve this is

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instigated in discussion with the IRO team manager in line with the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.

The post holder will contribute to the improvement and quality assurances of outcomes for Looked After Children by undertaking reviews of Foster Carers and contributing to monitoring and reporting with regard to the quality of the North Yorkshire County Council placement provision to ensure that services inspected comply with relevant regulations and National Minimum Standards; and chair other complex meetings commensurate with the role as required.

Structure



Job purpose

To ensure children and young people's wishes and feelings are taken account of both in individual decisions and the development and improvement of services. The monitoring of the effectiveness of children's plans ensuring the practice is good, timely and appropriate to the needs of the child. Where this is not deemed to be the case ensure a critical, robust, detailed and evidenced level of challenge is provided. The post holder will chair looked after children's meetings, act as independent chairperson for child protection meetings and foster carer reviews. A key function of the role is to improve outcomes for children and young people through challenge and through recognising and promoting effective practice.

Operational management

- To chair Child Protection Conferences, Looked After Reviews and Foster Carer Reviews
- To ensure that the views of children are taken into account within reviews for Looked After Children, Child Protection Conferences and Foster Carer reviews, including the views of the carers own children)
- To ensure that all meetings are conducted in accordance with statutory guidance and procedure as well as in accordance with NYCC policy on equal opportunities. The post holder will challenge discriminatory language or practice
- Ensure delivery of the IRO role in accordance with legislative requirements, national guidance and all relevant policies and procedures
- To raise any concerns that arise in respect of specific children in placement with the IRO Manager and operational/agency manager on a 1:1 and via the Quality Issue alert/multi-agency Quality Feedback/escalation processes
- To contribute to workforce development for foster carers and operational staff to support compliance with regulations, National Minimum Standards and best practice.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to quality assurance and quality control of services provided by the Local Authority and partner agencies to children and young people by providing quality feedback to the Local Authority and partner agencies. • Use reporting mechanisms for monitoring the role of the Local Authority as a corporate parent, the quality of the service children and young people receive and their collective experience. • Provide advice and support to colleagues in relation to complex cases. Ensure professional decisions are made according to the highest standards, using an evidence base.
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish rapport and respectful trusting relationships with children, young people and their families. • Ensure appropriate standards and practice regarding confidentiality are applied and maintained • Use systems such as LCS effectively to ensure appropriate information is recorded about cases, contacts and individuals. • To complete robust and analytical reports on cases, performance and outcomes as required. • Ensure that effective communications skills are utilised to engage with children, young people and families and to promote their wishes and feelings with regard to service delivery and development. • Ensure that children and young people understand how an advocate can help them and how to access one. • Ensure appropriate challenges are progressed and evidenced in compliance with local procedures.
Partnership / corporate working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In consultation with the line manager to identify potential breaches of the child's human rights and to instigate the dispute resolution protocol as appropriate. • To support and contribute to multi-agency working arrangements including contributing to LSCB sponsored processes such as learning lessons reviews • To liaise with senior managers and the Chairs of Fostering Panels in respect of quality of services delivered to children and young people, provision and practice standards, advising them on trends and issues arising.
Resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver good quality services within a context of transformational change and innovation and to be able to manage change in a time of financial constraint, for example, supporting innovative delivery of Family Time.
Systems and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that operational practice complies with statutory requirements and national and local procedures and guidance. • Effective and efficient use of technology and case management systems to ensure that there is accurate and proportionate record keeping of operational practice
Strategic management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To conduct reviews held in Secure Accommodation settings, Disruption Meetings, pre-placement adoption meetings and any other meetings required by an IRO Manager. • Develop and implement policies and procedures at service level including dispute resolution processes. This could include developing the practice model or implementing changes around Family Finding. • Contribute to the service business plan and wider annual service planning process in line with key performance objectives, priorities and quality assurance principles. • Contribute to the preparation of an Annual Report to be submitted to the Corporate Parenting Board and local Safeguarding Board.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to Directorate and cross-Directorate strategy and policy development as required by the IRO manager Ensure children's and young people's voices are heard in service planning and delivery.
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people for which you are responsible and come into contact with. Understand systems that are there to protect children and your role in their effectiveness. Involve children and young people as appropriate when taking action that affects them. Ensure that care plans detail the outcomes expected from actions and services to promote the welfare of children and young people. Be aware of government, local guidance and local procedures and your own role and responsibilities within these for safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare

Person Specification

Essential upon appointment	Desirable on appointment
Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge and experience of current research and good practice standards in relation to children & families at a local and national level. Knowledge of the legal framework for working with children & families, in particular the care planning, child protection and human rights Awareness of current national developments for children and families Knowledge of equality and diversity legislation / policy / guidance Knowledge of principles and models of Quality Assurance. Understanding of key stages of child development Understanding of Management Information Systems and performance indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued professional development in role through attendance at national, regional or local events (as directed/agreed with IRO manager) Keeping up to date with national, regional or local changes through effective environmental scanning Self-briefing through effective use of the intranet and the reviewing of disseminated material of relevance to role
Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant post qualifying experience in children and families work Case management experience of cases with complex, professional and ethical issues including child protection, court proceedings, case conferences and other formal processes. Experience of chairing professional, multi-agency meetings. Experienced in assessment, planning and delivering outcomes for children Experience of intra and inter-agency work. Experience of implementing / delivering against a performance management and quality assurance framework 	
Occupational Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisory experience of professionally qualified staff within a relevant professional setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to demonstrate good use of technology to

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to effectively challenge, across all levels within an organisation in order to ensure robust practice and delivery of positive outcomes for children, young people and families • Ability to monitor services and practices to ensure agreed standards are maintained and intervene constructively where necessary • Excellent communication skills, verbal & written, including the ability to use different methods according to service users' and professionals' differing needs. • Competent in word processing, manipulating spreadsheets, data inputting, accessing and interpreting information from databases and electronic communication. • Competent level of familiarity with ICT equipment & systems including ICS or equivalent. • Excellent organisation skills and the ability to organise and prioritise own workload. • Ability to plan and develop new ways of working, including integration with other key agencies. • Ability to chair complex multi-agency meetings • Ability to facilitate decision making in meetings • Ability to rapidly analyse and summarise information • Ability to communicate directly with children and young people and to promote their wishes and feelings • Ability to accurately and succinctly record meetings, decisions and to produce written plans • Negotiation skills and ability to problem solve 	<p>maximise efficiency and effectiveness in role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to effectively communicate with managers and teams (internal and external) to improve service provision and promote good outcomes for children
<p>Professional Qualifications/Training/Registrations required by law, and/or essential for the performance of the role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma in Social Work or equivalent • SWE Registered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A management qualification • PQ eg PQCCA, PE1 and 2
<p>Other Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to travel across the North Yorkshire • Ability to attend/Chair meetings outside of normal business hours 	
<p>Behaviours</p>	<p>Link</p>

NB – Assessment criteria for recruitment will be notified separately.

Optional - Statement for recruitment purposes: You should use this information to make the best of your application by identifying some specific pieces of work you may have undertaken in any of these areas. You will be tested in some or all of the skill specific areas over the course of the selection process.