

London Borough of Lambeth

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Independent Reviewing Officer
Grade: PO5
Division: Children's Social Care
Directorate: Children's
Reporting to: Team Manager

1. Main Purpose

- 1.1 Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) occupy senior consultancy positions within the Local Authority and carry the main responsibility for quality assurance of fieldwork services by:
- 1.2 Providing independent chairing of statutory reviews of Lambeth children looked after children and some strategy meetings.
- 1.3 Co-ordinating the investigations of child protection allegations against professionals, including foster carers.
- 1.4 Contributing to improved standards and outcomes for service users (children and their families) by giving consultation and expert advice on complex child protection cases and permanency planning to social workers, team managers and outside agencies.
- 1.5 Conducting regular inspections of fieldwork services for children to ensure statutory requirements are met and by making recommendations for action.
- 1.6 Contributing to policy and procedure development, training and working parties.
- 1.7 Maintaining professional independence from the line management of operational services and challenging practice when necessary.
- 1.8 Supervising Administrative staff in their roles within the Quality Assurance

2 Principal Accountabilities

- 2.2 Manage the formal review process of CLA and chair statutory reviews ensuring that government and departmental timescales are met.
- 2.3 Co-ordinate the investigation of allegations against professionals and make recommendations as appropriate, including suspension or disciplinary action.
- 2.4 Work with the Service Managers to conduct regular inspections of fieldwork services for children using file audit, feedback from service users, analysing statistical data and interviewing staff.
- 2.5 Undertake specific investigations into professional practice as requested, including in residential establishments, substitute family placements and on individual cases and make recommendations where necessary.
- 2.6 Rigorously monitor and track individual care and permanency planning and refer slippage directly up the line management chain, including to the Divisional Director. Implement the alert procedure for Children Looked After as necessary.

- 2.7 Chair case planning meetings and professionals meeting in respect of CLA and children at risk of harm as requested.
- 2.8 Chair multi-disciplinary mediation meetings and conflict resolution meetings involving families and professionals.
- 2.9 Take up any issues arising from the quality of social work practice and reports in CLA reviews and Child Protection conferences with the Service Managers, Head of Commissioning, Reviewing and Quality Assurance, the relevant practitioners and their managers.
- 2.10 Maintain strict independence from line management, including referring extreme examples of drift in CLA cases to CAFCASS as a last resort and challenge in Child Protection practice as appropriate.
- 2.11 Provide advice, guidance and expert consultation on all care planning and child protection matters to social workers, team managers and staff from other agencies.
- 2.12 Promote full and active participation of children and their families in review meetings and child protection conferences, including meeting with the child on their own.
- 2.13 Promote anti-discriminatory practice, equal access to resources, the understanding of difference and address equality issues for children looked after.
- 2.14 Attend Family Placement Planning Meetings as appropriate and advise on permanency planning.
- 2.15 Produce written minutes and decision sheets of Child Protection conferences within set timescales.
- 2.16 Ensure effective liaison with Family Placement Unit, Residential establishments, fieldwork services and commissioning services.
- 2.17 Contribute to policy and procedure development, and working parties.
- 2.18 Represent the Department as required at meetings; contribute to multidisciplinary training, working parties and government fora as requested.

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Person Specification

Independent Reviewing Officer

In your written application, you will need to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in each of the criteria marked essential. Evidence of other areas will be sought at interview and/or test (as highlighted).

Although the job description and person specification are generic to both reviewing officer posts, the vacancy we are recruiting is a child protection reviewing officer post. Please give evidence of your child protection knowledge and experience in your answers

If you are applying under the two ticks scheme, you will need to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in the areas marked with ✓✓ on the personal specification when you complete the application form.

	Code		Short-Listing Criteria
Qualification	Q1	A recognised Social Work or Social Care qualification.	✓✓ E
Key Knowledge	K1	Thorough knowledge of proposed and actual legislation, statutory regulations and Government guidance and Standards relevant to children in need, child protection and children looked after.	✓✓ E
	K2	Up to date professional and technical expertise in relation to children in need, child protection and children looked after.	✓✓ E
Relevant Experience	E1	At least 5 years post qualifying experience of working in a Social Care setting with children in need, child protection and children looked after.	✓✓ E
	E2	Experience of working collaboratively with other services e.g. Health or Education and service users to deliver a responsive and co-ordinated service.	
	E3	Experience of managing staff in child protection or children looked after work demonstrating the authority to challenge bad practice and promote good practice	✓✓ E
Behaviours		<p>Focus on Citizens – Level 3</p> <p>Systematically engages with citizens on a regular basis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages with and listens to citizens and stakeholders on a regular basis in order to understand their needs and concerns • Empowers and supports citizens and stakeholders to make informed choices and co-design future services 	E

		<p>Take Ownership – Level 3 Drives continual improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly thinks ‘how could we do this better?’ e.g. doing something faster, more efficiently or to a higher standard • Takes calculated risks to deliver better outcomes for service users • Shares lessons learned across the Borough 	E
		<p>Works collaboratively – Level 2 Works across teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works across teams or groups to raise or solve issues • Takes a consultative approach seeking out the views and opinions of others who are affected by issues • Encourages others to contribute to collaborative working 	E
		<p>Integrity – Level 4 Takes a stand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts on their values even when under pressure to do otherwise • Challenges powerful individuals or groups to act on their stated values • Goes out on a limb to defend what they believe in 	E
		<p>Committed to the Borough – Level 2 Supports the Borough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes action in own service area to support the vision and goals of the Cooperative Council • Gets involved in organisation-wide activities and activities not directly related to own service area 	
		<p>Empathy – Level 4 Understand underlying issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays an in-depth understanding of the ongoing reasons for a person’s behaviour or response to a situation • Is able to see things from someone else’s perspective and challenges own thinking as a result of this 	
		<p>Scans the environment – Level 3 Keeps up to speed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps up to speed on an ongoing basis with trends, new thinking, demographic and context issues • Uses this understanding to pre-empt issues, spot opportunities or develop innovative solutions 	

		Influences – Level 3 Takes multiple steps <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uses a range of tailored steps to build support and engagement around a issue• For example using indirect approaches such as asking experts to present the case, asking A to talk to B about an issue, alongside presenting a case personally	
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