

Job Description

Management group:	Children's Services
Department:	Professional standards and Quality Assurance
Team:	Independent Reviewing and Conferencing Team
Job title:	Fostering Independent Review Officer (FIRO)

Main Purpose of Job

- Monitor and review the quality and effectiveness of standards of care provided by the council's foster carers, in accordance with the legislation, statutory requirements, policy and procedures relating to the role, by chairing independent annual and ad hoc fostering review meetings.
- Identify strengths and gaps in the social work foster care assessment process and provision of support offered to carers. Identify practice that is not delivering good outcomes and constructively challenge, informally and formally to improve practice.

Principal Accountabilities

Direction

- To provide consistently good standards in the chairing of annual fostering review meetings and will be expected to develop effective liaison with Children's Fostering Team.

Implementation

- Support the continual development of children's social care services by actively contributing to training, quality assurance activity and the implementation of new statutory requirements and guidance, as well as sharing learning from evidence-based practice and reviews in relation to fostering.
- To hold pre-meetings where necessary with foster carers, their birth children, and young people and other professionals where needed to ensure full, positive and effective contributions to the review process.
- To produce high quality review reports within expected timescales which contribute to the promotion of a high quality care service and ensure all necessary reports are received prior to the review meeting.
- Promote good quality child care practice and contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the corporate responsibility to looked after children. To identify any gaps in the foster care assessment process or provision of service and suggest ways to address this.
- The Local Authority has introduced Signs of Safety practice model (SoS), the post holder will model and promote SoS principles and practice and develop the delivery of SoS across the service.
- To develop consistency of practice and interpretation in the implementation of fostering regulations and good practice in the care of looked after children.

- Promote the participation of all parties in meetings, seeking and listening to their feedback to inform service development.
- Establish links with all relevant social work staff, teams and effective lines of communication. Providing consultation and advice on fostering procedures, policies and practice.
- Keep abreast of research and developments in work relating to fostering, to inform carers and relevant professionals.
- To ensure good practice that arises from fostering reviews is shared and promotes a learning environment.
- Provide an annual activity report analysing strengths and weaknesses and contributing solutions to the service improvements and assist in the collation of statistical information as required by Children's Services, the DfE and the local safeguarding partnership.
- To ensure compliance with statutory obligations towards looked after children and young people who are leaving care, arising from DfE regulations and guidance.

Organisational control and development

Contribute towards the development of good practice guide for social workers, in relation to safeguarding children.

Undertake specific investigations where this is needed for independent reviewing officers as determined by senior managers.

Identify training needs and contribute to multi- disciplinary training. Assist the Service Manager in co-ordination, and monitoring of children subject to looked after children care plans.

Personal effectiveness

To deal promptly with all matters requiring the post holder's personal attention.

To be fully conversant with relevant statutory provisions and the council's constitution, processes and procedures: to develop the full range of managerial and professional skills and knowledge to satisfy the requirements of the post.

To establish and develop effective working relationships and productive partnerships with all the relevant partners and stakeholders as required to facilitate the development of standards and practice in work relating to children subject to looked after children care plans.

All staff working in the department have a responsibility for promoting and supporting the council's policies and procedures for safeguarding. You should ensure that you carry out your duties in a way that ensures the safeguarding and welfare of service users.

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SELECTION CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL/ DESIRABLE (E/D)	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT (see key)
(a) <u>Education and Formal Training</u>		
Relevant social worker degree e.g. DipSW or CQSW or Degree in social work.	E	A
Up to date registration with the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC).	E	A
Full clearance by the Disclosure and Barring Service at Enhanced level with a check of the barred lists.	E	A
Proficient in IT systems or programmes e.g. Liquid Logic or similar social care ICT systems.	D	A
Educated to good standard in the English language written and oral.	E	A
(b) <u>Relevant Technical Experience and Knowledge</u>		
Knowledge of relevant legislation, fostering regulations and statutory guidance related to the post and ability to translate to practice.	E	A, I
Have a clear understanding of what good practice looks like and ability to explain clearly to others.	E	A, I
Experience of statutory social work in the field of fostering and/or assessment of carers.	E	A, I
Experience of chairing formal multi-agency meetings to a good standard.	E	A, I
Experience of chairing formal multi-agency meetings to a good standard.	D	A, I
Experience of undertaking audit activity, collect, collate and analyse information to inform service planning and resource management.	D	A, I
Knowledge of the key performance indicators relating to looked after children and young people who are leaving care.	E	A, I
Ability to encourage the participation of others, particularly service users and carers in meetings	E	A, I
Promote fair access to services by challenging discrimination and oppression.	E	A, I
Ability to speak and write plainly and provide clear guidance & advice to others in relation to practice, policies and procedures.	E	A, I

Ability to contribute to staff development through activities such as presentations, training sessions, discussion groups, mentoring.	E	A, I
Maintain and update electronic records in accordance with departmental policies, write reports as required.	E	A, I
Good theoretical knowledge of child care practice and ability to relate theory to practice	E	A, I
Knowledge and understanding of the multi-disciplinary context in which the needs of looked after children and young people who are leaving care are met.	E	A, I
Knowledge of the Signs of Safety practice model.		
(c) Skills and Abilities (Essential)		
Able to demonstrate relevant capabilities against the Social Work Knowledge & Skills Statement at the appropriate level	E	A, I
<u>English Language Requirements for Public Sector Workers:</u>		
• Ability to speak with confidence and accuracy, using accurate sentence structures and vocabulary.	E	A, I
• Ability to choose the right kind of vocabulary for the situation in hand without a great deal of hesitation.	E	A, I
• Ability to listen to customers and understand their needs.	E	A, I
• Ability to tailor your approach to each conversation appropriate to the customer, responding clearly even in complex situations.	E	A, I

Applicants will be assessed against these criteria and high performance indicators throughout the recruitment process.

High Performance Indicators

Post Title: Child Protection Conference Chair		
Values	Behaviours for staff	Behaviours for managers
Innovation	I respond flexibly and adapt to changing demands I am prepared to take managed risks to achieve better outcomes I ask 'What if...?' to develop fresh thinking and innovative approaches to generate and implement solutions to improve performance and challenge the status quo	I routinely look for innovative and cost-effective ways to improve performance and customer service I champion change and deal successfully with ambiguity, enabling people to see positive and exciting possibilities for the future I take calculated risks based on available evidence and my professional judgement to learn and try new things

Leadership	I demonstrate a clear sense of purpose and direction, in line with organisational objectives I am willing to take difficult decisions My personal actions promote a positive image of Bexley	I take responsibility for my service and for making things happen to make a difference to my service users I create an environment where staff can thrive and show I value and trust staff, give praise and recognise good work I inspire, lead and encourage staff to move forward
Partnership	I show respect for others and value contributions from internal and external partners and customers I recognise the right solution, regardless of who initiated it I seek out and work with partners who can help me achieve the outcomes and objectives I need to deliver	I encourage the feeling that the team is a collective unit with shared goals I engage with service partners and other areas of the Bexley organisation to understand the demands on others and seek solutions as One Council I network internally and externally
Listening and Responding	I acknowledge other people's viewpoints and work with them to find a win-win solution I prepare and present information anticipating questions and problems I adapt my style to the audience and their needs, using the most appropriate communication channels	I seek regular service user feedback and review customer data to shape service improvements I ask staff for ideas on how to improve our service and how I can improve as a manager, listen to them and act on them I empower staff to make decisions and changes to improve value for money, customer service and productivity
Open and Accessible	I see issues from the customer / user perspective I monitor customer feedback and level of satisfaction with the service they receive, and use this to improve and pre-empt customer needs I seek to build and maintain positive relationships with customers and partners	I am accessible to my service users, customers, staff and Members I communicate and share a clear vision for the bigger picture as well as specific service areas I outline what is expected of individuals and their contribution to the whole, and am consistent in my expectations
Impact	I prioritise my activities and resources to focus on those which have the most impact for residents I take responsibility for making things happen and achieving my objectives I make decisions and clear recommendations based on my professional opinion, experience, and	I design services that provide value for money and deliver our outcomes, informed by evidence I produce, prioritise and adapt plans to meet changing requirements I set interim goals to achieve notable wins on the way to larger objectives I deal with poor performance

	informed by a range of information and evidence	
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