

Job profile

Job title:	Head of Practice Learning
Grade:	AfC spine 58-61 (£62,970 to £66,732)
Family:	Senior Leadership
Direcorate:	Quality Assurance and Review
Reports to:	Associate Director for Quality Assurance and Review

VISION FOR ACHIEVING FOR CHILDREN

Achieving for Children is passionate about ensuring the best possible outcomes for children and young people and will deliver the services they need to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives.

CONTEXT:

Achieving for Children was created by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames in 2014, and since then has been commissioned to deliver children's services on behalf of both local authorities. In August 2017, the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead became a third owner of the company, and also commission our services.

We support our social workers to undertake creative methods of intervention to ensure the voice of the child is at the centre of service development. Vulnerable children and families have a voice and their views will impact on how the service is shaped. Our staff are supported by an accountable and a professional management team. They are encouraged to work creatively, within the statutory framework.

Our vision for Achieving for Children is simple: by bringing together professional expertise from our owning local authorities, and by putting children and young people at the heart of everything we do, we will be able to deliver improved outcomes for families and give children and young people the best start in life.

Achieving for Children continually reviews its structure and business practices in order to provide the best possible services for children, young people and their families, in the most effective and efficient way. As a result, the key tasks in any job profile may be varied and

the post-holder will be expected to take on such variations and duties consistent with the level of responsibility of the post.

The Quality Assurance and Review Service is responsible for providing assurance on the quality and effectiveness of early help and social care practice, by coordinating a full programme of casework audit, themed audit and review. It will ensure that, audit and review findings are analysed and turned into intelligence about service effectiveness to help identify priorities for improvement. The Quality Assurance service is also responsible for delivering the independent safeguarding functions within Achieving for Children, including the Child Protection Conference Service, the Independent Reviewing Officer Service and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) service and the Education Safeguarding Advisor.

MAIN PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head of Practice Learning will work with services to ensure that the quality assurance processes we have in place are fit for purpose, this includes inspection readiness. They will lead some of the organisation's quality assurance processes, to ensure they are delivered to the highest professional standard, provide effective support and protection to children, and deliver the best possible outcomes for them.

The post-holder will work alongside social workers and other professionals to identify opportunities to improve social work delivery and provide independent scrutiny of practice and standards. The post-holder will be responsible for relating the views of social workers to senior managers and ensuring the views and experiences of children and families are fully considered in the planning and delivery of services across the company.

The post-holder will solely work within Kingston and Richmond and will report to the Associate Director for Quality Assurance and Review. However, the post holder will liaise with their counterpart in Windsor and Maidenhead to support quality assurance functions and best practice across the company. The post- holder will line manage the Quality Assurance and Improvement Manager.

Job content is listed below:

1. Ensure there is a comprehensive Quality Assurance Framework which results in an effective learning and improvement cycle, with effective engagement of all practitioners and managers.
2. To be part of the management team within the Quality Assurance and Review service and to directly line manage the Quality Assurance and Improvement Manager and manage other parts of the Quality Assurance and Review service in other manager's absence.

3. To deputise, when required, for the Associate Director for Quality Assurance and Review.
4. Ensure that the service is well prepared for inspection, including in producing self-evaluations.
5. Lead on the development of professional standards across the organisation so that practitioners are aware of their responsibilities and services are able to meet regulatory requirements, comply with statutory guidance, and learn from evidence-based interventions and innovative practice.
6. Champion professional social work practice within the company, and contribute to developments at a regional and national level including liaison with the Government-appointed Chief Social Worker.
7. Develop effective and representative forums for social workers and other social care practitioners to hear feedback on services and to gather information on the improvements or changes needed to improve social care practice, ensuring that this is fed through into workforce development and is reported to managers at all levels in the organisation.
8. Escalate concerns about specific children or young people to the Director for Children's Social Care (or an appropriate senior manager in Children's Social Care) where there are immediate safeguarding issues.
9. Provide professional advice and support to managers and partner agencies on, early help, child protection arrangements and care planning for looked-after children; provide advice and support to elected Members and senior council officers in their statutory role as corporate parents.
10. To lead and shape the strategic direction of a service area and to be accountable for the work of a service area. To interpret legislation and implement in relation to local needs and services, advising partners and other stakeholders and to continually produce high quality services, providing a clear sense of direction and purpose.
11. Contribute to the wider leadership of the service to ensure that business unit works flexibly and in a coordinated way to plan and deliver effective and efficient services; encourage the sharing of intelligence and skills across the business units so that the service is best placed to drive improvement and maintain high quality services.
12. Actively support a culture of innovation and enterprise within Achieving for Children so that individual services are flexible, adaptable, multi-agency and child-focused, and the whole organisation learns from its mistakes, shares knowledge about what works, challenges existing practice and develops new models of service delivery.

13. To be actively involved in the provision and delivery of information and services to organisations outside of the company, through external contract, as part of AfCs traded services.
14. To represent the service in developing and maintaining good inter-agency practice and standards by attending relevant meetings, forums and events. Disseminating information about all new and relevant changes in policy or procedures to practitioners.
15. Maintain relationships with partner agencies to create and share audit findings and performance information and develop intelligence about unmet needs, future demands and service effectiveness. This will include contributing to local and multi agency learning lessons reviews and developing effective partnership approaches to child protection arrangements and services to looked-after children through the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Corporate Parenting Group.
16. Contribute to local Performance and Innovation Board to ensure there is robust internal scrutiny of performance information and quality assurance activity, and appropriate actions are identified and taken to improve performance.
17. To initiate and participate in relevant development work, identify training needs and to take part in the provision of local staff briefings. Including contributing to internal and multi agency Learning Lessons Reviews.
18. Lead on social work models of practice including Signs of Safety to support practitioners and managers in embedding the approach in all aspects of their work with children and their families.
19. Take responsibility for the delivery of excellent quality assurance and standards of customer care to service areas so that they are able to operate effectively and deliver high quality services to children, young people and their families.
20. Ensure that local social care procedures, policies and protocols are fit for purpose, reflect legislation, statutory guidance and leading practice, and are well understood by practitioners and partner agencies.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Head of Practice Learning

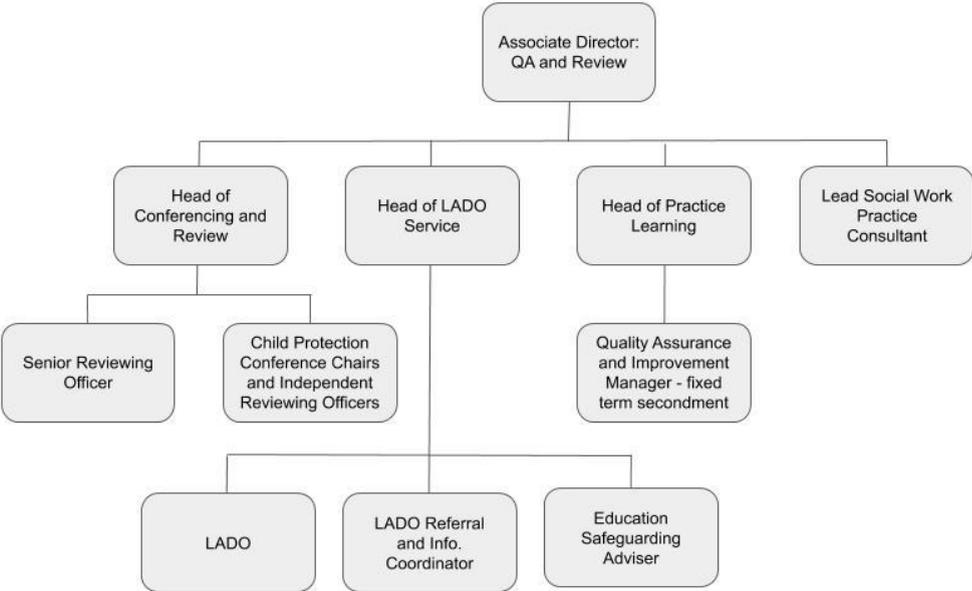
Values		A/I/T
Empower	You provide others with the freedom and confidence to do their best.	Interview
Respect	You appreciate or value others abilities, rights or views.	Interview
Trust	You have confidence and belief in others.	Interview
Promises		A/I/T
1	You embrace diversity and champion inclusion.	Interview
2	You demonstrate the value and investment in our staff that delivers innovative and quality services.	Interview
3	You work with customers to deliver the most effective solutions for them.	Interview

Qualifications and professional development		A/I/T
Please evidence how you meet the following key indicators		A/I/T
1	Educated to degree level in social work with proven evidence of continuing professional development.	Application
2	Post qualifying Practice Educator qualification or can provide substantial evidence of how you can demonstrate those skills and knowledge	Application
3	Appropriate management training/qualification or equivalent proven work experience.	Application and Interview
4	Coaching and or mentoring qualification or equivalent level of training and experience relevant to professional development.	Application and interview

Experience, knowledge, skills and ability Please evidence how you meet the following key indicators		Application/ Interview/ Test
1	Management experience in social or health care; preferably experience in children and families services. To include knowledge of best practice to support and develop staff.	Application and Interview
2	Proven experience of effective implementation of Quality Assurance frameworks in order to deliver practice improvement.	Interview
3	Proven experience of working collaboratively and in partnership with other agencies e.g. Education, Health, Police, the independent sector and with key internal stakeholders.	Application and Interview
4	Experience of presenting complex reports to a variety of audiences and proven analytical skills (quantitative and qualitative) and data rational. A good range of IT and report writing skills will be required.	Application
5	Proven experience of using user feedback to enhance services and to influence practice.	Application and Interview
6	Excellent knowledge of key challenges in social care particularly relating to children and families services, alongside very good knowledge of policy, guidance, legislation and best practice for children and families.	Application and Interview
7	Ability to confidently support and understand decision-making processes, including financial regulations and ability to produce and monitor business plans.	Application and Interview
8	Ability to plan, organise and use resources effectively and to apply best practice in moving the agenda forward to meet objectives.	Application
9	Ability to use appropriate leadership styles in different situations, dealing sensitively with people and influence and lead by example.	Application
10	Ability to deliver cost-effective planning for services which specify priorities, targets and performance indicators.	Application
11	Excellent communication skills and ability to communicate effectively with a range of people both verbally and in writing, internal and external, as individuals and in groups.	Application and Interview
12	Excellent knowledge and understanding of legislation, statutory frameworks, guidance, legal processes and national policy affecting services for children, young people and families,	Application and interview

	particularly in relation to child protection and services for looked-after children.	
13	Knowledge and understanding of current research and evidence which is used to inform analysis and decision making.	Application and interview
14	Creativity and strategic thinking skills, including the ability to improve services, develop new ways of working, and find appropriate solutions to complex issues	Application and interview
15	Strong organisational ability, including the ability to work on initiative and to prioritise workloads to meet agreed deadlines.	Application and interview
16	Ability to demonstrate a high level of determination, personal drive, energy and ambition to achieve challenging targets and improve outcomes.	Application and interview
17	Commitment to an organisational culture and the development of services that value equality and diversity.	Application and interview

STRUCTURE CHART



This job profile is provided for guidance only. It will be reviewed, updated and amended in accordance with the changing needs of the service and the specific requirements of the role.