



achieving
for children



Agency Fostering Panel Advisor

Scale point: 35-38 | Based in Kingston | Permanent | Full time

About the service

The fostering service has recently become an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) split into two branches but with a number of centralised functions. Operational Area 1 is based in Kingston and Operational Area 2 is based in Maidenhead. The main office base for this role will be at the Guildhall, Kingston. This role will be responsible to the Head of Fostering Service. The IFA is expanding as a service, growing in fostering households, services and functionality. As we are an IFA with two branches we are Ofsted inspected separately within the branches, we also engage in the iLAC's for the 3 owning councils; London Borough Richmond, Royal Borough of Kingston and Royal Borough of Windsor Maidenhead.

About the role

The postholder will act as the agency panel adviser (PA) and support the Agency Decision Making process and quality assure reports presented to the panel. They will provide communication and liaison between the panels, the branch managers, and the service and brief the agency decision makers on panel matters in both IFA branches. They will provide consistent support and challenge across both areas to ensure that prospective and existing carers receive a high standard of service and support, while upholding national minimum standards and fostering regulations of foster carers and fostering services. The PA will develop robust quality assurance mechanisms, which are independent of the team management structure. Ensuring the panel documents, meetings, minutes and agency decision maker decisions are compliant with fostering regulations, collaborates and works alongside the panel administrators to ensure the functionality of the panel. The role will deliver innovative improvement plans for the panel service, provide relevant training to services within AfC to ensure professional understanding of processes and requirements. There is no direct budget oversight, however consideration of budgeting restrictions for the panel service need to be considered and discussed with the budget holder. The PA is responsible for the safer recruitment of all panel members, ensuring that these documents, checks, and appraisals are up to date and collated together, as well as ensuring required or relevant training is offered to the panel members. The PA will attend relevant management level meetings including IFA board. Each panel will provide an annual report for the service which is collaborated by the panel chair, vice chair with contribution from panel members and advisor as appropriate; the PA will ensure this is done within required timeframes, and throughout the panel year raise themes, concerns or recognised patterns while

providing constructive feedback to supervising social workers, children social workers, fostering service and fostering reviewing officers. Ofsted inspections and assurance visits, will also require preparation and involvement from the PA.

About you: our role specification

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level with appropriate professional Social Work qualification.
- Active Social Work England registration and proven evidence of CPD.

Skills and experience

- Previous experience of acting as a fostering panel advisor and experience of acting either as a senior practitioner or team leader in a fostering setting.
- Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of Children Act 1989 and 2004; including awareness of current national policy, evidence based research and best practice that affects children's social care.
- Experience of keeping and maintaining records and producing accurate reports, presentations, written updates to a range of stakeholders.
- Strong analytical, and planning skills for assessing, and reviewing both foster carers and children and young people's needs, as well as investigating standards of care concerns.
- Demonstrated ability to explain professional reasoning, judgements, and decision making in a constructive and supportive manner through various communication methods.
- Experience of applying critical reflection and analysis to increasingly complex cases, and demonstrable knowledge and application of a range of interventions .
- Experienced in managing an allocated caseload, including complex cases; planning and organising workload to meet statutory timescales and local policy respond appropriately and independently (as appropriate) to unanticipated problems.
- Experienced in providing direct professional social work to children and their families; undertaking regular visits to clients homes, and care establishments.
- Experienced in the use of ICT, Liquid Logic, PARIS case record management systems, gmail, google share drive and google including applications as well as MS Word.
- Experience of addressing specific equality or diversity issues within your practice with colleagues/service users and taking action to solve them.

Personal attributes

- A passion for Achieving for Children's vision, mission and values (trust, value. respect) to support children and young people to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives.
- Strong organisational skills including: time management, problem-solving and multitasking.
- Able to work flexibly and independently with limited management oversight.
- Good communication skills, including the ability to use different communication styles and techniques to present ideas and influence others, with a commitment to resource-sharing and have a collaborative way of working with services and teams within Achieving for Children.
- Personal determination, drive, energy and ambition to achieve challenging objectives, celebrate

The post holder will be expected to undertake other duties commensurate with the grade of the post, including deputising or working flexibly across the week to meet the business demands. This job profile is provided for guidance only.

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success and deliver excellent outcomes for children using a strength based approach.

- Provide professional social work support, develop effective relationships and manage conflict.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills that are open, honest, persuasive and pragmatic, including excellent negotiation and influencing skills.
- Creativity and strategic thinking skills, including the ability to improve services, develop new ways of working, and find appropriate solutions to complex issues.

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