

Lancashire County Council

Job description for the post of: Independent Reviewing Officer

Directorate: Children and Young People		Location:	Countywide	
Establishment or team:		Safeguarding, Inspection & Audit		Post number:
Grade:	10	Line manager:	Quality & Review Manager	Car user: Yes
Staff responsibility: None		Number of staff directly supervised: None		Which business plan covers this post? Children's & Young People's Plan, Directorate Service Plan and Safeguarding, Inspection & Audit Service Plan

Core Purpose:

- The County Council's overriding goal is to make Lancashire a place where everyone matters. A place where everyone can enjoy equal and quality life chances and be respected in their communities.
- You will support the service managers and extended leadership team of the Directorate in achieving the county's vision and ambitions for children and young people and their families.
- You will be committed to a One County, One Directorate, One Team approach that makes the difference to the lives of children and young people. This is to be achieved by commissioning and delivering excellent services that focus on positive outcomes for children and young people, their families and their communities.

The purpose of this job is to:

On an allocated geographical basis, discharge the responsibilities of the IRO as set out in legislation and statutory guidance, quality assuring practice and monitoring the performance of the local authority, ensuring the Directorate fulfils its statutory responsibilities to Children Looked After and children in need of protection. In doing so the IRO provides leadership, professional advice, consultancy, training, oversight and guidance to practitioners and managers within Children's Social Care and partner agencies. The IRO also provides independent oversight and review of the child's case, ensuring their interests are protected throughout the care planning process.

Accountabilities/Responsibilities:

- Deputise as required for the Quality & Review Manager.
- Identify ways to improve practice, operations, performance and efficiency.
- Promote equality and diversity to make sure that all children young people and families are treated with dignity and respect when receiving children's services.
- Support and sustain a customer service culture and demonstrate personal accountability for performance and excellence in service delivery.

Specific Post Responsibilities:

- To ensure the authority is compliant with all relevant legislation and government guidance in relation to vulnerable children, young people and their families.
- To work constructively with senior managers, offering a critical perspective of the quality and effectiveness of local authority planning and support, providing appropriate challenge to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Monitor performance of the local authority, promoting good practice and identifying any areas of poor practice. This includes identifying patterns of concern emerging not just around individual children but also more generally in relation to the collective experience of Children Looked After or in need of protection of the services they receive. This intelligence will form the basis of the IRO Annual Report.
- To work across the multi disciplinary spectrum to engage service users and other stakeholders, championing the voice of children and young people.
- To ensure that the Authority fulfills its responsibilities in respect of the chairing, management and administration of case reviews held under the 'Review of Children's Cases (Amendment) (England) Regulations' 2004, in respect of children looked after by the County Council and child protection conferences in accordance with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018).
- To fulfil the County Council's responsibilities under the 'Adoption and Children Act', 2002 and the IRO Handbook, (2018). In particular monitoring the appropriateness of the care plan and ensuring its implementation without delay.
- To lead the child protection process where children and young people are identified at risk of significant harm and require safeguarding through formal child protection meetings. This includes chairing a range of complex multi-agency meetings, requiring a high degree of professional expertise:
 - Child Protection Conferences
 - Strategy Meetings in respect of fabricated or induced illness and the protection of children in public care
 - Missing from care/home 2nd stage intervention meetings.
- To maintain high standards of practice in respect of children looked after reviews, child protection conferences and strategy meetings, ensuring meetings are child centred and achieve positive outcomes for children and young people.
- Quality Assure Section 47 decisions, where a child is deemed to have suffered significant harm but no child protection conference is held
- To maintain and promote a high level of participation/involvement of children, parents and carer's in children looked after reviews and child protection conferences.
- To undertake a range of audit activities as part of quality assurance role to identify good and improve poor practice
- To provide leadership in the process of conflict resolution, ensuring problems are resolved in a timescale that meets the needs of the child/young person and that their human rights are protected.
- To undertake Regulation 44 Visits of Lancashire's Children's homes
- Demonstrate a high level of expertise and knowledge of the legal framework, national minimum standards and current research, providing a leadership and challenge function, holding professionals to account across the council and within partner agencies.
- To provide a quality assurance role, to ensure continuing high standards and improved outcomes for children. To undertake case file audits and quality checks on a regular basis and report findings to appropriate managers.
- To assist in the development and implementation of County Council policies in respect of safeguarding, child protection and children looked after and contribute to developments arising from changes in legislation and government guidance, including the delivery of training.

- Provide advice and consultation in relation to child protection and care planning, both within the Directorate and externally to other agencies.

Prepared by:	Q&R Managers	Date:	May 2025
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Equal opportunities

We are committed to achieving equal opportunities in the way we deliver services to the community and in our employment arrangements. We expect all employees to understand and promote this policy in their work.

Health and safety

All employees have a responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others when carrying out their duties and must help us to apply our general statement of health and safety policy.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Person Specification Form

Job Title: Independent Reviewing Officer	Grade: 10	
Directorate: Children & Young People	Post number	
Unit/team: Safeguarding, Inspection & Audit		
Requirements (on the basis of the job description)	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	To be identified by: application form (AF), interview (I), test (T), other (O)
Qualifications		
BA (Hons) / MA Social Work, DipSW, CQSW, CSS or other recognised social work qualification <u>and</u> current HCPC registration	E	AF
Advanced/Post Qualifying SW qualification in Child Care or Child Protection	D	AF
Experience		
Five years post qualifying experience in a front line statutory childcare setting, including experience of assessment, safeguarding and care planning	E	AF/I
Experience of complex assessment work and risk management with children and their families.	E	AF
Experience of working effectively with other agencies and professionals to build effective working relationships	E	AF/I
Supervisory experience within a service area of a diverse workforce to support excellence in service delivery	D	AF
Knowledge/skills/abilities		
A thorough working understanding of the legal framework and processes, national minimum standards and procedures relevant to the post.	E	AF/I
Clear understanding of the role of children's social work in the context of the current children and young people's services agenda	E	AF/I
Knowledge of the cultures and religions of the communities of Lancashire	E	AF
Analytical thinking to find innovate and creative problem solving solutions	E	AF
Good co-operative team working that is focused on driving forward, adding value and resolving issues	E	AF
Ability to set work objectives and standards and to monitor performance	E	AF/I
Ability to motivate and support staff development	E	AF/I

Strong written and verbal communication skills and active listening to views of stakeholders and partners	E	AF/I
Ability to operate and interpret management information systems to ensure ongoing review of performance and progress towards targets and objectives within the service.	E	AF
Ability to work to deadlines and meet set targets	E	AF
IT skills and the ability to record effectively	E	AF
Other (include special requirements)		
1. Commitment to Equality & Diversity	E	AF
2. Commitment to Health & Safety	E	AF
3. Commitment to attendance at work	E	AF
4. Must hold a full driver's licence and have a car available for work purposes. However in certain circumstances consideration may be given to applicants who as a consequence of disability are unable to drive.	E	AF/I
Criteria Relevant to Specific Posts		
Demonstrable evidence of having improved outcomes for children and young people	E	AF/I
Understanding of IRO responsibilities as detailed in legislation and the IRO Handbook.	E	AF/I
Demonstrable understanding of children's rights	E	AF/I
The ability to communicate effectively with children and young people and to champion the voice of the child	E	AF/I
Experience of quality assurance and audit and understanding of relevant inspection frameworks	E	AF/I
Direct Experience of assessment of risk in statutory child protection work	E	AF
Experience in management of child protection work and Children Looked After Services	D	AF
Experience in chairing/facilitating meetings	E	AF/I
Demonstrate understanding of anti-oppressive practice in social work	E	AF/I
Prepared by: Q&R Managers	Date: May 2025	
<i>Note: We will always consider your references before confirming a job offer in writing.</i>		