

Independent Reviewing Officer

Department: Children, Young People, Education and Skills

Division: Children's Services

Reports to: Head of Children's Services

Job purpose

To chair the Child Looked After reviews and Child Protection Conferences as required in statute.
To be jointly responsible for the maintenance of a system to ensure that the Child Looked After reviews and Child Protection Conferences are completed within statutory timescales and to high standards.

To contribute to the development and quality assurance of service standards in the Child Looked After field and children subject to Child Protection Plans.

To be involved in policy formulation and implementation, and the development and provision of services, staffing and budgetary controls, of an effective assessment and care planning process that includes child protection.

To act as a member of the Social Services Corporate Management Team, contribute to the development and implementation of policy and strategy for Social Services overall.

Job specific outcomes

To work as an Independent Reviewing Officer, carrying out the role in accordance with statutory guidance and departmental quality standards.

To ensure the effective participation of children, young people, their parents and wider families in Child Protection Conferences and review the Child Looked After meetings.

To chair Child Protection Conferences, ensuring that they meet the quality standards laid down by the department.

Responsibility for developing and quality assuring policies and procedures in the Child Looked After area and children subject to Child Protection plans in conjunction with other senior managers in addition to ensuring actions carried out comply with Council Policies and Procedures.

To input and maintain records of Child Protection Conferences and LAC reviews and other contacts relating to children on the children's electronic case recording system.

To contribute to quarterly and annual service reports and plans as required including collection, analysis and reporting of relevant data.

To work as part of Children's Services Management Team. E.g. contribute to strategic planning and development process and represent the service in interagency or corporate forums as appropriate.

To work in conjunction with operational managers and all other staff to ensure that child protection and Child Looked After systems are fully and effectively implemented within the service.

To provide training and information to operational staff as required.

To take the lead in providing specialist advice on their particular area of expertise to senior managers and relevant multi-disciplinary fora e.g. H&SS Governance, Joint Secretariat, Jersey Child Protection Committee, etc.

Statutory responsibilities

Active engagement, participation and compliance with any other statutory responsibilities applicable to the role, as amended from time to time.

Organisational structure



Person Specification

Specific to the role

It is an essential requirement that the post holder possesses a professional qualification in Social Work (Degree or Diploma in Social Work), and has social work experience including in-depth knowledge of Children's Services including Child Protection.

Independent Reviewing Officers must be registered with the appropriate UK professional governing body i.e. the HCPC and locally, must also register under the Health Care (Registration) (Jersey) Law 1995.

The post holder must possess a proven ability to work autonomously in their particular area of expertise, be highly motivated and conscientious, exhibiting the capacity for independent, responsible professional decision making, often whilst under considerable pressure. They must have considerable experience and confidence in prioritising and managing diverse caseloads based upon urgency, assessed level of need and risk.

The Independent Reviewing Officer must be able to provide evidence of and commitment to, relevant continuing professional development to an advanced level and will have developed considerable additional skills relevant to their particular specialist responsibilities, to ensure they meet the needs of the client groups and staff. This will include, for example, knowledge and understanding of child development, impact of trauma and risk analysis.

Independent Reviewing Officers must be able to demonstrate substantial personal, professional and social skills. Because of their role in developing care plans, they are reliant upon effective inter-professional and inter-agency communication and co-operation and the building of effective professional relationships with staff, other agencies, carers and service users. They must possess excellent communication skills, including an ability to effectively communicate at all levels with a wide range of individuals, groups and organisations some of whom may have issues which impact upon their ability to easily engage and communicate.

Core Accountabilities, Attributes and Behaviour Indicators

The Independent Reviewing Officer role requires the post holder to have the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders including other States Departments, voluntary organisations, private sector providers and clients, their families, and carers, some of whom may have communication, psychological or behavioural difficulties or disabilities which make the forming of effective and open relationships challenging.

The Independent Reviewing Officer performs their work role in a complex multi-disciplinary, multiagency context often managing high levels of individual and organisational risk. It is essential that they have a detailed knowledge of the broad range of professionals and resources they may need to call on. It is important that they maintain respectful relationships with senior managers who support critical challenges within these services in order that they can be effective in advocating for their own service and ensuring that appropriate resources are bought to bear to deliver the required outcomes for service users, carers and the service.

Individuals and agencies, which form an essential part of the Independent Reviewing Officer's network, include representative organisations advocating on behalf of particular client groups, advocacy workers, and service providers in the independent and private sectors.

Part of the Independent Reviewing Officer's role is to have oversight of care planning which is likely to include work within the legal arena and ensure timely progression of case plans.

The Independent Safeguarding, Standards and Quality services is directly responsible for drawing up the annual report and also the Quality Assurance Framework for Children Services in line with identified needs and service and State's strategic priorities. As part of the Quality Assurance Work, the Independent Reviewing Officer will be completing regular audits.

Patterns and priorities of work are set through annual performance review and the development of training and work plans, which become part of the specific team plan. Team Plans are agreed with Service and Directorate Managers at the beginning of each year and are monitored on a regular basis through Business Planning Days and service management team meetings.