

Job Description and Person Specification

Panel Advisor & Permanency Lead

A Lambeth to be proud of



London Borough of Lambeth JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Agency Advisor & Permanency Lead
Directorate:	Children, Families and Education
Division	Integrated Children's Commissioning & Youth Services
Grade:	PO7
Responsible to:	Service Manager – Fostering & Permanence (dotted line reporting to RAA Service Manager)
Responsible for:	Panel Advisor Advanced Practitioner x 2 Social Worker

Context

To hold the central operational and advisory role for securing effective permanency for children across Lambeth Children's Social Care and act as the designated operational interface with the newly formed Adopt London South Regional Adoption Agency (RAA).

To act as the statutory Agency Advisor providing quality assurance and advice to the Panels and Agency to ensure that outstanding permanence, adoption and fostering services are provided by Lambeth Council in compliance with the Adoption and Fostering Regulations and Statutory Guidance.

To collaborate with the RAA, partner Boroughs and Lambeth Children's Social Care workforce in the development and implementation of shared practice, procedures and pathways to ensure effective working relationships.

Job Purpose

1. To be the designated lead for supporting and developing outstanding Permanency practice across Lambeth children's services ensuring there is effective practice relationships, frameworks, guidance and permanence pathways. Providing leadership and advice to frontline social work staff, managers, Panel Chairs and Panel Members in delivering and implementing any future changes in permanency and panel policies, procedure or other developments.
2. Manage effectively the day-to-day operational business delivering Panel functions and progressing permanency plans for children. Ensure there are robust systems for identifying, tracking, reviewing and quality assuring:
 - The timely achievement of early permanence for children which meets their welfare and safeguarding needs

- Assessments, reviews and approvals of foster carers, connected carers, prospective adopters and permanence matches in accordance with the statutory framework.
3. To lead and manage the Panel Advisor and to be responsible for all line management aspects of Permanence staff and members to include recruitment, induction, training, regular supervision, performance management and appraisal.
 4. Effectively manage staff, members and resources to ensure that Permanency and Panel functions are delivered in accordance with the Government policy, (keeping up to date with new proposals and initiatives) legislation, National minimum Standards, statutory guidance, council policies and departmental procedures.
 5. Ensure that Permanency and Panel arrangements are inclusive of children, birth parents, adopters and carers; customer-focused; timely and of the highest possible quality. Seek and use child, parent, carer and professionals' feedback to inform staff and Panel member appraisal, service and practice improvements.
 6. To provide advice and guidance to the Agency Decision Maker in the effective discharge of their responsibilities, ensuring all the information necessary is provided to enable informed and safe decisions to be reached in compliance with the Adoption and Fostering Regulations, legislation, Statutory Guidance and Minimum Standards.
 7. Supporting Lambeth Social Care's senior managers by advising on permanency strategy, policy and future direction of the service, ensuring effective feedback from quality assurance and views of Panel users and translation into service delivery. Keep senior management informed of any issues or shortfalls in service quality and performance providing suitable action plans to address these matters.

Principal Accountabilities

8. To be responsible for the management and effective performance of staff, Chairs and Panel Members.
9. To ensure there are robust systems and processes in place to identify, record, track, analyse and review the progress and quality of children's permanence plans
10. To take action to highlight and address identified delays, practice and quality issues in the progression and achievement of children's permanency plans.
11. To ensure there are robust systems and processes in place to track approval, reviews, analysis and quality of prospective and approved foster carers, connected carers and adopters.

12. To take action to highlight and address delays, practice and quality issues in the assessment, support, supervision and reviews of foster carers, connected persons and adopters.
13. To ensure Lambeth Children's Social Care has effective practice frameworks, guidance and pathways to achieve timely permanence for children.
14. To be responsible for meeting the performance targets of the permanency and Panel functions and to provide regular performance reports and data sets to managers, the RAA and staff as required by the Council, RAA and statutory requirements.
15. To manage the Panel and permanency budgets and expenditure so as to ensure that resources are optimised in line with eligibility criteria and priority levels as prescribed in assessment and care planning policies and procedures, financial regulations, ensuring value for money.
16. To assist and where appropriate take the lead in planning, implementing and informing operational staff and other stakeholders of development in policy, procedure and practice.
17. To lead the effective gathering, analysis and dissemination of data, performance appraisal and outcome measurements in relation to permanency, Panel functions and quality assurance of Lambeth's Adoption and Fostering Agencies.
18. To contribute to the preparation for external inspections, external audits and reviews, leading on those preparations related to permanency which may include the preparation of reports and documents, supporting and advising staff and assisting the external auditors and inspectors with their schedule during the visit.
19. To maintain an overview of national policy and guidance and assist Children's Services in developing and implementing its response. To develop operational policies and procedures to support the development of services.
20. To have specific responsibility to keep up to date on any changes to the legislative framework or any key practice development and inform key operational staff of these changes.

Key Duties

21. To safeguard and protect vulnerable children and adults in accordance with Lambeth, pan-London and Government policies and procedures at all times.
22. To be the lead manager for ensuring effective permanency practice across Lambeth Children's Social Care.
23. To be the designated operational manager for the interface between Lambeth, the RAA and partner Boroughs.

24. To undertake all the statutory duties of an Agency Advisor. Provide professional advice for the adoption, permanency and fostering panels regarding panel procedures and practices, the impact of any recommendations made by the panel, and all relevant current and proposed Government legislation and guidelines.
25. To develop and implement policies, practice guidance and pathways to support social workers, managers and senior leaders in securing timely permanence for children.
26. To support and advise social workers and team managers on the actions required to address identified delay, practice and quality issues in the planning and progress of permanency plans.
27. To support and advise social workers and team managers on the actions required to address identified delay, practice and quality issues in the assessment, support, supervision and review of foster carers, connected persons and adopters.
28. To collaborate with the RAA, partner Boroughs and Lambeth Children's Social Care workforce to ensure there are effective relationships, processes and systems to ensure a timely and effective interface.
29. To represent Lambeth's interests in relation to permanency, adoption and fostering at partnership, regional and national events promoting positive relationships across the statutory.
30. To provide leadership in ensuring effective working relationships with other parts of Children's Services, the RAA, the Council Departments (in particular Education, Housing and Adult Social Care), external agencies (Health, police etc) and the third sector.
31. To lead and provide all aspects of staff management to the Panel Administrator, Panel Chairs and members. To recruit, induct, train, supervise, appraise and manage performance of the Panel Administrator, Panel Chairs and Panel Members.
32. To manage the Panel Administrators' daily work tasks, ensuring effective liaison with practitioners, Chairs, Panel members and the Agency Decision Maker, timely dispatch of papers in accordance to set deadlines, recording and provision of written correspondence to foster carers, adopters and children regarding Agency Decision Maker outcomes.
33. To be responsible for ensuring the smooth and timely running of the panels To manage the effective functioning, operation and performance of each Panel.
34. To maintain a sufficient Central List of suitably cleared and trained Panel Chairs and Members. To be responsible for, in consultation with the panel chairperson, the appointment, termination and review of members of the adoption, permanency and fostering panel.

35. To be responsible for addressing any concerns and re-assessing the suitability of Panel Chairs and Members to remain on the Central List.
36. Quality assures papers being prepared for panel to make sure they meet the necessary standards and that all relevant papers are available.
37. To read all reports submitted for Panel, advise practitioners on the information and structuring of panel reports and make the decision about whether the report is of a sufficiently high enough standard to be included on the Panel agenda and recommendations of the Panel.
38. To be responsible for ensuring the production of the annual Fostering Agency and Adoption Agency reports.
39. To provide professional advice to practitioners, managers, senior leaders and elected members on the quality and practice issues in relation permanency, fostering and adoption.
40. To respond on behalf of the agency to consultation documents from the Department for Children, Families and Schools and other agencies and to represent the agency on other local and national groups.
41. To provide and coordinate training on relevant legislation, practice and policy to staff across the Trust and/or to other agencies on behalf of the department as required.
42. To liaise and be the identified contact with other national agencies in relation to adoption and fostering e.g. inter-country adoption team, SLAC and BAAF.
43. To project manage specific service developments and activities in relation to policy, practice and procedure.
44. Ensure that and support the Panel in undertaking written reviews of the quality and timeliness of practice and outcomes as required and consistent with regulation and guidance.
45. To present Panel's written reviews to Lambeth's executive and scrutiny fora as required and consistent with the regulations and guidance.
46. To be the main reference point for Lambeth Social Care's workforce concerning panel policies, procedures, expectations and outcomes.
47. To be responsible for ensuring that applicants and workers attending panel are treated with respect and all questions / matters raised are appropriate and managed sensitively and that feedback is collected, analysed and fed back to panel and key staff.
48. To ensure that the panel process is completed to the point of decision making, all outcomes are recorded, and final versions of minutes and other documents are signed and filed.

49. Quality assure Panel minutes to ensure a high standard which accurately captures the deliberations, questions, recommendations and advice of Panel.
50. To ensure the agency decision maker receives final minutes, necessary paperwork and advice as requested in order that all decisions are informed, compliant with the regulations and guidance and made within timescales.
51. To ensure that applicants, foster carers, adopters and children receive written confirmation of the Agency Decision Makers decision and their rights in relation to that decision.
52. Take responsibility for and be committed to personal and professional development and keep up to date with law, regulation, guidance, standards, government policy and research relating to all aspects of the work.
53. Undertake any other duties deemed commensurate with this post as directed by the line manager.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

It is essential that in you can meet the following requirements for the role and be able to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in each of the short-listing criteria marked Application (A).			Shortlisting Criteria
You should expect that all areas listed below will be assessed as part of the interview and assessment process should you be shortlisted.			
If you are applying under the Disability Confident scheme, you will need to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in the areas marked with "Ticks" (✓) on the person specification when you complete the application form.			
For link/career graded post, please mark knowledge, experience, and behaviours clearly for each grade.			
Key Knowledge	K1	A high level and thorough understanding of current and relevant legislative and good practices guidelines, including childcare legislation that underpins current adoption and fostering work.	✓A
	K2	A comprehensive understanding of the external factors and key issues that shape and influence local partnership working within adoption and fostering services	
	K3	A comprehensive understanding of the key factors and issues that impact on the effectiveness and positive outcomes in adoption and fostering work, including the operation of the panels.	✓A
	K4	Relevant professional and managerial experience within children social care, adoption and fostering service.	✓A
Relevant Experience	E1	A minimum of 5 years' post qualifying social work experience (The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005)	
	E2	Relevant professional and managerial experience within children social care, adoption and fostering services	✓A
	E3	Evidence of relevant project management experience in children social care work, including the planning, managing and completion of projects and their subsequent review. Evidence of producing performance management reports and updates to senior managers and other key stakeholders.	
	E4	Evidenced and experience of planning, organising, monitoring, measuring and reviewing services for a quality approach. Proven ability to work to tight timescales and apply flexibility when faced with competing and changing demands and tasks.	
	E5	Evidenced and experience plus the ability to work in partnership with statutory agencies, the voluntary and private sector to help promote the best outcomes in the service. Ability to challenge sensitively yet effectively.	
	E6	Experience of planning, organising, monitoring, measuring and reviewing services. Evidence of good presentational skills including the ability to present complex information in a clear and concise format.	
	E7	The ability to keep up to date and contribute to practice development within the Adoption and Fostering Service and Children's Services as appropriate. The ability to offer relevant training to key staff to help enhance practice and promote positive development and outcomes within the service.	

	E8	Ability and experience of working to promote equality of opportunities and practices in service planning and delivery in a non-discriminatory way.	
Qualification	Q1	A recognised social work qualification	✓A
	Q2	Registration with the regulatory body for social workers practicing in England.	✓A
	Q3	A leadership or management qualification	

Core Values and Behaviours		Equity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the views of others and ask for their opinions making sure that everyone in my team inputs into the things that matter. • Ensure fairness and justice is at the heart of my decision making and support to my team and others. • Take time to build trust, building the respect of our stakeholders and ensuring as a team we take accountability for doing what we agree to do. • Develop others and ensure we work as one team for Lambeth, encouraging everyone to play their part • Take positive action to ensure everyone in my team has opportunities to learn and grow at work • Encourage everyone to be themselves at work and value who they are • I am inclusive and actively celebrate diversity, recognising everyone in my team as individuals. 	
		Kindness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat each member of my team with respect and dignity just as I would want for myself. • Encourage each member of my team to do their very best work and am available to them to provide support and guidance. • Personalise my support to each team members and look out for them, lending a hand wherever I can • Encourage everyone to try and learn from mistakes and use integrity to take action with my team to put things right together • Work with empathy seeking to understand each and every member of team, their unique perspective and circumstances and ensure everyone is heard • Take the time to communicate, being honest, open and genuine and taking the time to get to know team members as individuals. • Show compassion and patience recognising that everyone in the team has unique experience and celebrating the great work they do for Lambeth. • Look after the health and wellbeing of my team members and encourage open and regular 	

		discussions about the issues that impact on them, working together to find solutions.	
		<p>Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I encourage and support my team to do the right thing even when it's tough and we communicate our decisions in a timely way • I ensure my team and employees take individual and collective accountability for performance and delivery, making sure that they have clear plans and performance objectives. • I ensure my team plan ahead, getting the basics right and take swift action when problems arise • I encourage my team to be risk aware and ensuring that our decisions and actions are informed and understood and communicated to others. • I provide regular, timely and constructive feedback to my team members on their performance and behaviours and act quickly when performance is not on track. • I share my learning, knowledge and skills with others thorough coaching and mentoring and encourage others to do the same. • I ensure that my team and I put residents, communities, customers and their needs at the centre of everything we do. • I encourage my team to learn and grow and ask questions to find the information they need to do their jobs 	
		<p>Ambition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am proud of our borough and my team and encourage everyone in the team to aim for the highest possible standards of excellence in everything we do. • Encourage my team to be flexible and try new things when it's appropriate to do so and tell me what could be improved. • Promote a one team for Lambeth approach reaching out to our stakeholders to face our challenges together • Encourage and support my team to be courageous for our residents and communities and stop at nothing to ensure they have the best possible outcomes • I make time for the team to Innovate and look for creative ways to do things better, being curious about possibilities. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positively challenge and encourage the team to collaborate and look for solutions together across service and team boundaries.• Make time for my team to grow and develop taking advantage of opportunities to learn from each other and others. We plan our learning and career growth.	
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