Role profile

**Independent Reviewing Officer**

**Our values:**

**We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative. We are Milton Keynes City Council.**

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| **Service** | Childrens Services - Safeguarding and Quality |
| **Reports to** | Head of Safeguarding and Quality |
| **Job family** | Care and Welfare |
| **Grade** | K |
| **Political restricted?** | N |
| **DBS required?** | Y - enhanced |
| **Date** | July 2024 |
| **JE Code** | JE2594 |

Key deliverables

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| **1** | To ensure that the local authority is compliant with the responsibilities and functions laid out in relevant legislation and national and local policy and guidance relating to the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Handbook and Statutory guidance and legislation. The IRO will hold a caseload of Looked after Children and chair their reviews and over see their cases in accordance with the IRO handbook. |
| **2** | The IRO will establish and implement looked after children policy and practice in compliance with legislation, guidance and internal policies and procedures and leads on specialist aspects of the safeguarding process on behalf of the LA and MK Together supported by robust evidence-based decision making and planning. |
| **3** | The post holder will deliver a professional consultation service, providing advice and information to staff within MKCC, partner agencies and external organisations regarding looked after children processes and other specialist aspects of the child protection process. |
| **4** | To ensure that the child’s voice is heard; the children and family are appropriately participative in the looked after children process resulting in the children being able to achieve good outcomes. |
| **5** | The IRO will model and promote partnership with key agencies, ensuring collaboration, information sharing and integrated panning for the benefit of the children. |
| **6** | To ensure that robust quality assurance and scrutiny systems are in place and reported within Childrens Social Care, which demonstrably make a difference to professional practice and outcomes for children and families in Milton Keynes. |
| **7** | Role holders lead and contribute to activities requiring expert knowledge and specialist skills such as training and development, policies and procedures, projects and other tasks relating to child protection and children in care, on behalf of Children Social Care and partner agencies. |
| **8** | To cover for the Independent Child Protection Chair as the needs of the service requires. |

*Within reason these key deliverables may evolve to meet service need and it is expected that you will be flexible and adaptable in your delivery to meet both service and city council wide needs*

**Essential requirements** Key skills, expertise, and qualifications

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| **1** | Social Work Qualification, registered with Social Work England and meets the needs of ongoing registration. Post qualification award in subjects related to child or family work.  Significant experience, post qualification, undertaken in a statutory setting, to demonstrate a thorough working understanding of the Childrens Social Care agenda. |
| **2** | Extensive theoretical, practical and procedural knowledge of safeguarding and childcare issues, legislation, policy and research. |
| **3** | Able to chair complex meetings, analyse, summarise and write/record relevant information clearly and concisely so that it is easily understood by users and colleagues. |
| **4** | Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including communication with children, young people, their families and professionals at a range of levels. Ability to analyse complex information and make decisions including high risk situations, challenging, questioning and solving complex problems. |
| **5** | Evidence of ability to effectively manage workload to ensure effective performance and outcomes, using discretion and initiative to make difficult decisions and supporting colleagues in complex work. |
| **6** | Able to focus on the identified needs of children and young people, whilst advising, planning and prioritising in the context of ensuring the best use of available resources. |

Job family

**Care and Welfare (Grade K)**

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| **Colleague expectations**   * Be professional at all times * Work together for the good of the team, city council and local people * Promote a supportive culture * Challenge assumptions * Take ownership * Be willing to change and do things differently * Always work in a safe manner | **Manager expectations**   * Be a role model by displaying positive behaviours at all times * Make well-considered decisions * Support, coach and communicate with my team * Be accountable for my team’s performance |

Care and Welfare family jobs have as their primary responsibility the vulnerable members of our community who depend upon the city council for direct advice, guidance and practical assistance. They may personally carry out caring related tasks, or manage those that do, but it is personal interactions with those in our care that are at the centre of these roles.

This element of the profile, taken from the job family descriptor for this grade, provides a general understanding of the level of work and demands required.

**Role characteristics**

At this level roles are team managers whose deep knowledge of their Social Work or Public Health specialism sees them dealing with a combination of highly complex strategic and operational issues. Expected to deliver innovation and service development, these jobs make an important contribution to shaping the city council’s response to the demands made upon it related to the care and welfare of vulnerable members of our community.

**The knowledge and skills required**

The expertise that underpins job holders’ decisions and authoritative recommendations is grounded in either an advanced level of theoretical understanding of a very wide range of social work issues and/or associated disciplines with an equivalent level of very lengthy practitioner level experience.

Most roles will require specific qualifications in order to comply with the legislative and regulatory requirements of their job.

Roles at this level will engage with others in assisting with physical tasks requiring some modest manual dexterity. Computer use is also a day to day feature of these roles.

**Thinking, planning and communication**

Problems at this level will include fast-paced operational decision making where juggling resource priorities, client needs, and procedural or regulatory limitations will combine to add considerable complexity to the process. But in addition to this, job holders must take a long-term view of their team’s targets and performance and will be expected to drive improvement through innovation and policy development.

With highly developed communication skills usually within the social work/public health arena at practitioner level, these roles will add to this the need to influence others at a corporate level in order to achieve team aims. They will also be dealing regularly with complex and contentious information which will require potentially difficult interactions both inside the city council and with external partner organisations and other stakeholders.

**Decision making and innovation**

Roles are constrained only by very high-level management oversight. Job holders are expected to shape their team’s operational priorities and methods in line not only with city council policy guidelines but according to national standards. Job holders will be required to use discretion and their initiative over a broad area of social work/public health activity.

**Areas of responsibility**

Job holders will have a major and critical responsibility for assessing the complex needs of large groups of vulnerable individuals and shaping the city council’s response to these needs, devising entire programmes of care and welfare. Their decisions and actions will impact directly on individuals and groups and have potentially long-term consequences.

Job holders will have formal management responsibility within their team or centre or be the lead in their field.

Job holders will have discretionary budget responsibility and may also contribute to budget setting by assessing financial need in relation to delivery of team aims.

Job holders will create and maintain work records, both written and electronic. There will, in addition, be sole or shared responsibility for the safe use and basic maintenance of a range of equipment, premises and/or vehicles.

**Impacts and demands**

The requirement for greater than normal physical effort is modest, although there will always be a need for limited standing, walking and the lifting/carrying of equipment and other items.

Awareness of the actions of children, vulnerable adults and others will call for long periods of sensory attention, while tasks such as report writing and attending case meetings will call for lengthy periods of concentrated mental attention.

Given the range of case work involved, job holders will also experience high level pressures of deadlines and conflicting demands. The nature of these roles is such that most of the client relationships job holders are required to develop and maintain may need them to exert greater than normal emotional resilience, with particularly challenging service users.

Working directly with vulnerable service users will result in some exposure to disagreeable, unpleasant or hazardous environmental working conditions. This may extend to dealing with odours, intimate care and bodily fluids, and will also see job holders exposed to unpleasant or even threatening people related behaviour from time to time.