

JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

Director Area: Children's Services	Job Ref Number: 02871
Service Area: Performance Assurance	Grade: 11 (click here for value)

Job Title:
Independent Chair/Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)– Quality and Standards

PURPOSE OF JOB:

The Independent Chair/LADO is responsible for monitoring and challenging the Local Authority's (LA) statutory review of the care plan for Looked After Children (statutory title -Independent Reviewing Officer). They have the power to refer a case to the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFASS) to take legal action where a child's Human Rights are considered to be in breach.

The Independent Chair/LADO must ensure that the Local Authority's care planning policy and procedures meet the holistic needs of Looked After Children in the present, immediate and long term future. This will include needs in relation to their health, education/training, legal status, placement and contact with birth family.

The Independent Chair/LADO is responsible for chairing multi-agency child protection conferences, reviews and other meetings such as Child in Need meetings, strategy meetings, Disruption meetings etc. as appropriate. The Independent Chair/LADO is accountable to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for ensuring that decisions and recommendations address identified risks and the needs of the child.

The Independent Chair/LADO will undertake inspections of childrens homes within the functions of Regulation 44 of the Children Homes Regulations 2015.

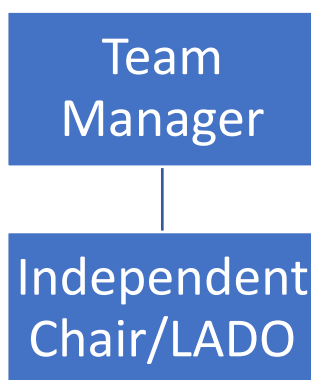
The Independent Chair will fulfil a quality assurance role that informs senior management and members, of the effectiveness of the care planning system, the assessment, planning and review of child protection processes, including giving advice on necessary improvements and addressing any concerns through agreed protocols.

The Independent Chair/LADO will have the operational responsibility for the effective coordination of activity in relation to the management and investigation of allegations made against individuals who work with children across all agencies.

The Independent Chair/LADO will work with the LSCB to co-ordinate strategic work to safeguard children and will take a lead role in developing systems to monitor the effectiveness of all partner agencies in safeguarding children within the work place setting.

The Independent Chair/LADO will contribute to the strategic planning for child protection, looked after children and management of allegations against individuals who work with children working alongside the LSCB and within the Performance Assurance Team.

Although flexibility within the role is required it is not expected that the Independent Chair/LADO will be expected to undertake all elements of the role simultaneously, the service will determine the focus and scope for each individual staff member.

TEAM STRUCTURE:**MAIN DUTIES:**

1	To independently chair and manage Looked After Children review meetings, Child Protection Conferences and Reviews, LADO Initial Evaluation Meetings within statutory and procedural timescales as monitored through National Performance Indicators and local policy. To chair other meetings as appropriate and agreed by the Line Manager.
2	Be the LADO for Allegations which involves taking responsibility for ensuring that all agencies operate procedures for dealing with allegations in accordance with Working Together 2006/18. Work with partners to publicise policies so staff affected have access to high quality information on process.
2	To ensure that Chair's reports from Looked After Children Reviews, and the minutes of Child Protection Conferences and LADO meetings are accurate, of a good standard and distributed within the required timescales.
3	To ensure that conferences and reviews make explicit decisions relating to the care needs of children as required by current legislation, national guidance as well as the Directorate's standards, LCC policies and procedures, indicating by whom these should be actioned and setting appropriate timescales.
4	To ensure that participation of children and their carers in the conferencing and reviewing processes, as appropriate and in line with national performance indicators and guidance. To consult with children and carers regarding their views and wishes, to facilitate their participation in meetings, where this is appropriate and to ensure representation of their views in meetings where they cannot attend or do not wish to attend. This should be completed in a manner which is anti-discriminatory and facilitates all other participants being able to contribute fully to the review including ensuring that the needs of children and parents with disabilities, and issues around communication, language and culture are met, for example through advocacy and interpreting services.
5	To be responsible for developing and instigating processes to improve the role and effectiveness of conferences, reviews and LADO processes, for example through the implementation of quality assurance systems in respect of Looked After Children and children subject to child protection plans and investigations relating to allegations against adults who work with children. This will include: convening quality assurance meetings with team managers to discuss concerns, formulate effective solutions and make explicit decisions around the development of policies and procedures, and to escalate any unresolved issues to senior managers. Where appropriate to refer child protection cases to the Interagency Case Review Panel, Looked After Children cases through the Dispute Resolution Process and LADO issues through the LSCB. To contribute to monitoring processes, reporting on necessary policy and organisational improvements, and make specific recommendations. To ensure compliance and the meeting of performance indicators.
6	To promote the development of good practice in relation to conferences, reviews, Care Plans and Child Protection Plans and investigations by providing feedback to practitioners and Practice Managers where the quality of practice gives cause for concern and where statutory responsibilities are not being fulfilled and remain unresolved. To communicate these to the Reviewing Manager, Operational Managers and to escalate more serious or

	unresolved concerns through the agreed Directorate, National protocols and OFSTED where appropriate. To highlight good practice and create a learning environment in which good practice is shared and developed.
7	To manage any complaints that arise from conferences/reviews. To ensure that service users are aware of the complaints process and have all the necessary information and help if required (for example an advocate) to access the process.
8	To provide expert advice in respect of "Child Protection", "Looked After Children" and "LADO" matters to practitioners, managers and members within the Council and other agencies. To identify and recommend areas for targeted training and development in practice teams in relation to the child protection, care planning processes and employers in relation to allegations against adults who work with children. To ensure these training and development needs are identified within annual reports to senior managers, members and the LSCB. To play an active role in the training around identified needs.
9	To maintain an up to date knowledge base of the law, research and social care practice in relation to child protection, Looked After Children, LADO and be responsible for continuous professional development.
10	To ensure that Pathway Plans for Care Leavers are being formulated and implemented in accordance with current legislation. To ensure that Personal Education Plans are in place. To liaise with those who have responsibility for auditing these processes. To contribute to the monitoring of contracts and service level agreements with statutory organisations and the voluntary sector.
11	To quality assure reports/assessments/plans etc. which are presented at conferences and reviews and inform the care/child protection plan. To ensure that all aspects of a child's welfare and development are given due consideration in conferences and reviews.
12	To robustly monitor the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements, and bring any deficiencies to the attention of the agencies concerned, and where appropriate the LSCB. To contribute to the development of appropriate plans including the Quality Assurance annual plan and the LSCB Business plan.
13	Required to undertake a quality assurance role and be involved in workforce development including induction and training where appropriate. Required to manage difficult people and situations addressing the emotional impact of the meeting and circumstances for those present, for example providing minute takers with a de-brief where necessary and advising staff of available counselling services if required.
14	Required to develop a range of solutions, to resolve issues of likely negative outcomes for Looked After Children and children subject to child protection plans, which may not have been previously tried. The post holder will identify and formulate necessary improvements to policy, procedure and practice which combat service deficiencies and reflect emerging legislation.
15	Within meetings required to demonstrate tact, diplomacy and initiative for example when chairing emotive child protection conferences and to implement a range of mechanisms for communication and participation, including the appropriate exclusion of people from meetings when required. Within meetings the ability to assess, summarise and analyse large quantities of information and make decisions on evidenced based practice.
16	To undertake the functions of Regulation 44 Children Homes Regulations 2015, regarding the inspection of care homes.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Requirements	Where identified*	Essential	Desirable
Qualified Social Worker with at least 5 years post qualification experience	A	✓	
Thorough knowledge and understanding of a number of disciplines including Children and Family work, knowledge of National	A/I/T/P	✓	

and Directorate policies and procedures relating to children and families, including Looked After Children, child protection and their statutory base. Allegations against adults who work with children.			
Ability to provide professional and expert advice to practitioners and managers within the Local Authority and to other agencies, including employers and the voluntary sector.	A/I/P	✓	
Ability to manage meetings dealing with very sensitive information and attendees who may be upset/angry	I/P	✓	
Ability to deal with a variety of complex problems, analyse large quantities of information and develop effective solutions	I/T/P	✓	
Experience of working in partnership with service users, carers, and other agencies	A/I	✓	
Ability to effectively chair meetings of professionals and service users while maintaining a focus on the needs of the child	A/I	✓	
Ability to communicate at all levels from a child to senior officer and members and to possess the relevant interpersonal communication skill e.g. negotiation and influence	I/P	✓	

*A = Application form T = Test/Assessment I = Interview P = Presentation

GENERAL

The postholder is required to take personal responsibility for contributing to organisational transformation and changes in ways of working, maximising the benefits and efficiencies for both internal and external customers, including the promotion and use of self-service to achieve maximum cost effectiveness.

The postholder is expected to work to the [Lincolnshire County Council Core Values and Behaviours](#) and to carry out the duties in accordance with Lincolnshire County Council policies.

Other Duties - The duties and responsibilities in this job description are not exhaustive. The post holder may be required to undertake other duties within the general scope of the post. Any such duties should not substantially change the general character of the post. Duties and responsibilities outside of the general scope of this grade of post will be with the consent of the post holder.

Safeguarding - All employees need to be aware of the possible abuse of children and vulnerable adults and if you are concerned you need to follow the Lincolnshire County Council Safeguarding Policy. In addition employees working with children and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults during the course of their work.