



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**  
**CHILDREN, SCHOOLS & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**JOB TITLE:** Permanency and Fostering Panel Advisor

**DEPARTMENT:** Corporate Parenting

**GRADE:** ME16

**DATE:** September 2021

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** Service Manager (Resources)

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:** Team Support Worker

Support and train the Fostering Panel Chair, Fostering Panel Members.

**Overall Purpose of the Job**

To demonstrate all the skills, knowledge and experience of an Advanced Social Worker within the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF): <https://www.basw.co.uk/professional-development/professional-capabilities-framework-pcf/the-pcf/advanced-social-worker>

The Permanency and Fostering Panel Advisor primary role is to lead on Quality Assurance for Permanency Planning in relation to Children in Care across all the relevant services in Children's Social Care. To be responsible for promoting and developing good practice in Permanency Planning and to establish systems to ensure that monitored milestones are set and adhered to.

To lead on ensuring the LA achieves timely permanence for Children in Care across the full range of legal options including Adoption, Special Guardianship, Residence Orders, Family and Friends care and permanent/long term foster care.

To lead on close collaboration with Team Managers, Independent Reviewing Officers, and Children's Social Workers to develop and maintain relevant Management Information systems, and to lead on the analysis and

interpretation of such information, reporting on outcomes to a variety of audiences, including the LSCB, Senior Managers and frontline managers.

To assume lead responsibility for the design of direct audits of work relating to permanency and to undertake the analysis of such all such audits including those carried out by Senior Managers.

To lead on the development and embedding of permanency policies and practice across Children's Services.

To be responsible for the development of user feedback processes and to ensure that outcomes from this process are incorporated into service developments and practice.

To Manage Merton's Fostering Panel and establish systems to support the new decision making process including the direct management of the Team Support Worker and training and development administration.

Act on behalf of the Council as the lead expert on permanency and placement matters, for example during OFSTED inspections and with the DfE, BAAF and other internal and external agencies.

To be the link person with Adopt London South and be responsible for the LA statutory reporting on Adoption. To be the lead person for matters regarding adoption within Merton.

To have financial responsibilities for staffing and Training and Development (Fostering and Adoption/Permanence)

To deputise for the Service Manager as necessary and appropriate

To work as part of a management group and deputise for other Team Managers were necessary and appropriate.

## **KEY RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERDEPENDENCIES**

### **INTERNAL**

In order to conduct your business within the framework of best value, you will be expected to develop and maintain relationships with:

Senior Managers in Children Schools and Families  
Other managers and practitioners in Children Schools and Families particularly the Children's Social Care Division.

### **EXTERNAL**

LSCB partner agencies  
Service Users  
Voluntary Agency's

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### General

Use computers and other items of information technology in the normal performance of the duties of the post.

To ensure that within the scope of the job purpose, the Council's aims in relation to customer service are achieved.

Demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.

Ensure that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons, and to comply with the policies and procedures relating to health and safety within the department.

Carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of this job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.

All Social Work staff are required to adhere to the appropriate professional standards, including those framed by the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework and the Social Work England professional standards for social workers

**The duties and responsibilities outlined in this job description are indicative of the role; however they are not exhaustive and may be subject to change. In addition, you will be required to undertake other reasonable duties as directed by your manager.**

### *Equalities*

Knowledge, understanding and commitment to implementing the social GRAACCES

Commitment to challenging and reflecting on own unconscious and conscious bias and developing cultural competence

Commitment to challenging structural; societal and institutional discrimination

Awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs

### ***Special Requirements/other considerations***

1. Able to work outside standard office hours to respond to the individual needs of the team, children, families and academic study requirements
2. Able to travel inside and out of the borough for the purposes of the role

Able to undertake the role in a variety of services and settings as the needs of the service requires

Specific: **Permanence and Fostering Panel Advisor.**

1. To identify, in conjunction with senior managers, areas of shortfall and excellence in service delivery and professional practice, and to take the lead in identifying necessary changes to policy and practice.
2. To lead on establishing and operating ongoing forums for the involvement of service users, including carers and diverse groups, in feedback and audit processes. This will involve some unaccompanied home visits to get feedback from service users.
3. To lead on the collation and reporting on management and qualitative information for the DfE and other Central Government agencies.
4. To lead on and establish systems to support direct audit processes and to have lead responsibility for the analysis of aggregated and individual data with recommendations for service development.
5. To contribute to the work of the Children and Young Person's Strategic Partnership by ensuring that relevant management information is collected and collated and that policies and practice reflect identified QA information and initiatives.
6. To have the lead responsibility for organising and managing focus groups and working parties to identify, drive and implement specific changes to policy and practice
7. To have lead responsibility for the production of the reporting on Permanency Activity within Children's Social Care focussing on trends and outcomes for children and young people and their carers.
8. Responsibility for the statutory reporting of Adoption performance.
9. To undertake any other quality initiatives identified as necessary by Senior Managers.
10. To lead on the strategic development of new processes to monitor the permanency planning arrangements for children who are looked after.

11. To lead on the provision of support and advice to social work staff ensuring high standards are set and maintained in the compilation of permanence plans across all services in Children's Social Care. To attend case tracking meetings advising on the best way to achieve the most appropriate outcome for the child.
12. To act as Merton's link person to Adopt London South and take the lead on all matters relating to Adoption.

### **Management of the Fostering Panel.**

13. To act as the expert Panel Advisor for Merton's Fostering Panel, the decisions of which have substantial impact on the Service and the Council. This will involve complex and contentious issues regarding placements and carers.
14. To have the lead responsibility to quality assure and sign off Children's Permanence Reports for presentation to Merton's Fostering Panel.
15. To ensure that the decisions of the Agency Decision Maker are implemented in a timely fashion. Contribute to the training of fostering and adoption panel members and giving advice to panels where this is required. Contribute to the training of staff in conjunction with the training manager.
16. To manage the delivery of the Fostering Panel and monitor the outcomes for children who have been presented. To direct and supervise the effective administration of the Panel and ensure the quality assurance of the Panel records and their distribution.
17. To manage the provision of Fostering and Adoption training.
18. To attend Permanence Planning Meetings for Children in Care and drive the development permanence plans at the earliest possible stage and in line with Central Government guidance.
19. Take lead responsibility for the identification of children at risk of drift bringing such concerns to the attention of Senior Managers and attend Court as required to give opinions in respect of particular children.
20. To take lead responsibility for developing new strategies and policies to embed effective permanency planning across the service and lead on the provision of progress reports to Senior Managers at CSMT, DMT, SLT etc.



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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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**Grade:** ME16

**Date:** September 2021

<b>Qualifications &amp; Education</b>	<b>Application Form</b>	<b>Interview</b>
<p>Social Work Qualification; Degree; recognised training/qualification in audit work; training/qualification in management.</p> <p>Social Work England registration</p> <p>This post requires satisfactory clearance of an enhanced Disclosure &amp; Barring Service disclosure</p>	<b>X</b>	
<b>Experience and Knowledge</b>		
Experience (preferably in a management capacity) of work with children and families or policy development, gained in a Social Services context.	<b>X</b>	
Experience of working within a complex organisation.	<b>X</b>	
Understanding of the internal and external drivers which influence and dictate service provision in the local government setting.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Experience of Quality Audit processes and their application within a service focussed environment	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Experience and skill in audit design to include some or all of; Data collection by means of file review,	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

review of management information; user survey; focus groups.		
Experience and skill in quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis	<b>X</b>	
<b>Skills &amp; Abilities</b>		
Ability to relate and communicate effectively verbally and in writing, with a wide range of audiences including service users, professional staff and senior managers in various agencies.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Ability and skill to act as change agent, driving forward changes indicated as necessary by the audit/Quality Assurance process.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Experience and competence in word processing, spreadsheet use, database management and presentation software.	<b>X</b>	
Ability to work creatively, on own initiative.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Experience and understanding of diversity issues and impact on total quality of services.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

### COMPETENCIES

The competencies described reflect the level of knowledge, skills, abilities and personal characteristics required for you to effectively perform the role Permanency and Fostering Panel Advisor.

<b>Skills and Abilities</b>	<b>Application Form</b>	<b>Interview</b>
<p><b>Leadership and Strategic Vision</b>  Able to lead project groups of staff from different agencies, motivating towards completion of project brief. Identifies continuous improvement and motivates others towards the attainment of organisational goals.</p>	X	X
<p><b>Analytical Thinking and Decision Making</b>  Able to diagnose themes or patterns of information through consultation and analysis of audit data and management information, in order to make interpretations. Effectively evaluates risk and the consequences of certain decisions.</p>	X	X
<p><b>Corporate Working (People)</b>  Is able to establish rapport with key stakeholders. Able to accurately assess capability to meet existing and future needs. Creates, maintains and actively develops appropriate relationships based upon mutual respect and trust across diversity. Recognises the need for constructive feedback, interprets the motives, concerns and behaviour of individuals/groups. Demonstrates support, resolves conflicts and responds positively to challenge.</p>		X
<p><b>Enabling change</b>  Ability to manage change and promote/achieve a continuous improvement cycle. Takes responsibility for own learning and seeks new sources of knowledge and development. Demonstrates creativity in solving problems, identifying new opportunities and producing innovative proposals, ideas and structures, within appropriate limits.</p>	X	X
<p><b>Customer Focus</b>  Constantly strives to achieve customer satisfaction. Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the impact of delivering services within a diverse environment. Injects a strong customer focus to all staff working with the postholder.</p>		X
<p><b>Communication</b></p>		X



High level written and oral communication skills and the ability to convey complex information in a readily accessible form, including presentations to large internal/external groups, Member briefings and report production.		
<b>Priorities</b> Able to prioritise both current and incoming work, to achieve outcomes required, using a range of skills and resources.		X

<b>Quality Assurance</b> Ability to employ recognised Quality Assurance techniques and drive forward identified organisational changes	X	X
<b>Audit</b> Ability to design and implement audits	X	
<b>Change agent</b> Able to act as a positive change agent and role, including with senior managers and key members of the council	X	X

Revised September 2021