Role Profile

Part A - Grade & Structure Information

Job Family Code	**11SW**	**Role Title**	**Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)**
Grade	PS11SC	**Reports to (role title)**	**Service Coordinator, Independent Reviewing Service**
JE Band	439-518	**Directorate / School**	**Children, Families and Lifelong Learning**
Date Role Profile was created	**Sep-26**	**Service / Department**	**Quality Assurance**
Agile	**Community**	DBS Requirement	**Enhanced with Adults and Children**

Part B - Job Family Description

The below profile describes the general nature of work performed at this level as set out in the job family. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities which may be required. The role will be further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed with the role holder. The Council reserves the right to review and amend the job families on a regular basis.

Role Purpose including key outputs	To provide expert permanence leadership, challenge and practice development for children who are looked after, ensuring that children receive effective, timely and child-centred care planning in accordance with statutory requirements, the IRO Handbook and local policy. To ensure that for the children to whom they are the IRO, there is a robust and ambitious permanence plan which promotes safety, stability, positive relationships and lifelong outcomes, and that plans are effectively implemented within agreed timescales in line with relevant statutory requirements and departmental policies. Provide specialist consultation, quality assurance, mentoring and professional challenge to practitioners, managers and partner agencies to support high quality care planning, strengthen decision making and improve outcomes for looked after children. Chair and facilitate looked after children reviews, professional consultations and other forums that support effective planning and progression towards permanence. Provide quality assurance, professional challenge and practice oversight in relation to care planning, permanence planning, risk management and safeguarding decision making. Support workforce development through informal coaching, mentoring, reflective consultation and practice modelling. Identify themes, barriers to permanence and practice learning from live work and contribute to service improvement, audit activity and partnership learning. Record and report information required to support assurance, performance monitoring and practice improvement activity. Ensure that all meetings involving children, young people and their families are child and family focused and enable their fullest participation possible and operate in line with the Families First principles. Liaise effectively with operational managers and resolve disagreements or conflicts between themselves and case practitioners effectively and efficiently, alerting and escalating to senior managers issues which cannot be resolved.

Work Context	The Quality Assurance Service comprises an integrated set of strategic services which support and inform operational services in the department, better engage with our partners and service users and contribute significantly to our continuous improvement ambitions. IROs play a key role in strengthening care planning and permanence practice across Surrey. Working within the Independent Reviewing Service, they provide expert advice, challenge, consultation and practice leadership to practitioners, managers and partner agencies. The role operates across organisational and professional boundaries, supporting consistency of practice, effective multi-agency working and continuous improvement. IROs contribute to assurance, professional development and learning activity whilst maintaining a child-centred focus on permanence, stability and achieving positive outcomes for children who are looked after. They are deployed flexibly across the service to ensure high quality planning for some of Surrey's most vulnerable children. Regular travelling/driving may be required across the county area and, where required, beyond Surrey to review arrangements for children placed at a distance. Meetings could be held in a range of venues including area offices, schools, foster homes, residential settings and secure accommodation. They work closely with senior and operational staff in the council and across key partners in the delivery of safe and effective support for children who are looked after.
Line management responsibility if applicable	Provides specialist professional leadership, coaching, mentoring and reflective consultation to practitioners and managers. The role does not have direct line management responsibility. Oversees and has responsibility as IRO within the role capacity for the children allocated to them. Maintains independence from operational case management whilst providing robust scrutiny and challenge regarding care planning and permanence arrangements.
Budget responsibility if applicable	N/A

Representative Accountabilities Typical accountabilities in roles at this level in this job family	Casework Management • Provide leadership and professional support to colleagues and other professionals in situations of high complexity. • Apply extensive knowledge of practice, theory and legislation to enhance practice, procedures and policies, promote innovation, and introduce new ways of working from recognised sites of excellence. • Make use of sophisticated, critical reasoning and both model and facilitate reflective and evidence-informed practice. Assessment and Review • Support and encourage professional decision-making in others, to enable assessment procedures to be used discerningly in response to the presenting needs. • Maintain and provide expertise in specialist assessment and intervention and support others to develop these skills. • Model the effective assessment and management of risk in complex situations, across a range of situations, including positive risk taking situations. Safeguarding • Provide professional leadership on safeguarding issues in collaboration with other senior members of the team. • Provide support to resolve concerns about practice. People Management • Manage a defined team or area providing clear organisation, direction and development. • Provide professional support, advice and/or supervision. • Monitor and support the performance management and development of team members using a coaching approach, to support individual development and ensure that individual contributions are maximised. • Manage complaints where required, and verify assessments and authorise when appropriate. Work with others • Promote positive working relationships in and across teams and with partners in statutory, voluntary and third sector organisations, using strategies for collaboration and arbitration. • Contribute to and provide professional leadership of organisational change and development and address performance management issues that arise. • Ensure that all staff in the team are adhering to the requirements of data quality legislation. Finance/Resource Management • When required, monitor, analyse and manage delegated budgets, funding and resources in accordance with council policies and procedures, or have indirect influence on wider service budget. Duties For All Values: To uphold the values and behaviours of the organisation. Equality & Diversity: To work inclusively, with a diverse range of stakeholders and promote equality of opportunity. Health, safety and welfare: Responsible for ensuring health & safety policies, procedures and legislation are fully implemented, communicated and managed including making sure that health and safety responsibilities are fully understood and carried out by employees within their service area.

Education, Knowledge, Skills & Abilities, Experience and Personal Characteristics	• Relevant professional qualification and registration where required. • Extensive, sophisticated and up to date working knowledge of relevant national and local policy, statutory guidance and legislation in relation to the provision of Health and Social Care services. • Ability to promote positive working relationships in and across teams, using strategies for collaboration and arbitration. • Ability to contribute to and provide professional leadership of organisational change and development and address performance management issues that arise. • Ability to communicate effectively in highly charged, complex or challenging situations to a wide range of audiences for different purposes and at different levels, including public speaking. • Ability to model and promote a culture of clear communication, supporting the development of effective communication skills in others. • Ability to influence organisational development pro-actively using feedback from your area of responsibility • Ability to gather information to inform judgement for interventions in more complex situations and in response to challenge. • Ability to routinely explain professional reasoning, judgements and decisions made and record these in a clear concise way. • Ability to use knowledge to make complex judgements in uncertain and ambiguous situations, supporting others to do the same. • Excellent partnership working skills with an ability to communicate and collaborate effectively with partners in statutory, voluntary and third sector organisations. • Competent in the use of basic IT skills. • Demonstrable experience in successful recruiting, performance managing, coaching and developing staff. • Good problem solving and analytical skills with the capacity to devise and implement innovative solutions.
Details of the specific qualifications and/or experience if required for the role in line with the above description	* Professional social work qualification and registration with Social Work England. * Extensive working knowledge of looked after children practice, corporate parenting responsibilities, permanence planning, care planning regulations, the IRO Handbook and relevant statutory guidance. * Significant experience of quality assurance, professional challenge, permanence planning and multi-agency working relating to children who are looked after. * Experience of providing support and guidance through informal mentoring, coaching or professional consultation to practitioners and managers. * Comprehensive understanding of permanence planning including reunification, kinship care, long-term fostering, special guardianship and adoption. * Knowledge of equal opportunities and human rights legislative framework. * Comprehensive knowledge of roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved with children. * Ability to manage complex situations including conflict, disagreement and escalation whilst maintaining focus on the child's needs and timescales for permanence. * Effective chairing skills for meetings involving children, families and professionals. * Enhanced DBS clearance. * Willingness and ability to travel around the county and countrywide and work outside normal office hours where required.
Role Summary	Roles at this level assist with leading, motivating and managing a team ensuring the service provided is consistent, effective and delivers positive outcomes for individuals, their carers and families. They contribute to and support the development of practice, procedures and policy and specifically the professional development of the team. They are accountable for the provision of effective professional practice within the team, the provision of effective, reflective professional supervision, as well as line management and appraisal. These roles provide expert guidance in situations of complexity, where there is conflict or resistance and enable others in the team to manage complex and challenging situations. They deputise for the team manager when required (where appropriate).
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