

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Service Improvement Officer		
Directorate	Children & Families		
Reporting to	Service Manager – Quality Assurance Team		
Grade	9		
Evaluation ref:	AG0657	Job Family ref:	
Role purpose			
<p>The Service Improvement Officer plays a pivotal role in driving continuous improvement across Children’s Services. The postholder is responsible for designing, facilitating and managing a comprehensive range of quality assurance activities, drawing together research and evidence to analyse information and identify strengths and areas for development.</p> <p>By providing expert guidance to the wider workforce on using evidence to inform practice, the role supports strategic decision-making and advises Senior Management on operational planning, commissioning, policy matters and service delivery. The position requires building and maintaining effective multi-agency partnerships, demonstrating strong analytical skills and fostering collaborative solutions to complex system challenges.</p> <p>The postholder will also co-ordinate statutory inspection activity, ensuring effective preparation and delivery, and will significantly influence the quality and effectiveness of services provided to children and families. This includes contributing to a culture of continuous improvement and ensuring that initiatives are embedded across services to achieve better outcomes.</p>			
Responsibilities			
<p>Lead the development, delivery and implementation of service improvements ensuring that strategic links are made with other services and appropriate partnership agencies and ensuring the change is embedded across the service</p> <p>Drive and ensure the implementation of complex, high profile improvement programmes and projects within Children’s Services and associated partners, to improve performance across the service.</p> <p>Design, implement and maintain management systems and processes to ensure a continuous improvement culture across Children’s Services. Co-ordinate quality assurance framework, and use to best effect in enhancing professional practice and improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.</p> <p>Champion an improvement and performance management culture that is focused on outcomes, and rigorous in offering challenge, so that improvements can be</p>			

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made. Ensure that the organisation measures outcomes and sets itself ambitions and suitably challenging goals – and achieves them.

Contribute to the achievement of the Council's objectives by securing continuous improvement in Children's Services performance and by leading on all aspects of strategic performance improvement and quality management for Children's Services.

Support a timetable for audits throughout CSC, ensure this is implemented and reports are produced providing recommendations to improve practice and performance against recognised standards and targets.

Ensure Service/Strategic plans are provided and are complementary to the overall direction of the Service, ensure reporting on progress is timely. Identify, propose and implement efficiency changes in order to realise budgetary savings whilst improving performance.

Critically appraise practice, systems, processes and procedures and offer advice on re-engineering and organisational design to maximise outputs and outcomes.

Support inspection and planning activity and monitor the delivery of identified action plans arising from audit, review and inspection activity.

Ensure that all learning from complaints, participation, exit interviews, and other sources is captured and considered by Performance Management forums alongside more formal sources such as audit reports and performance data.

Research and analyse other organisations' practice and explore how this can be applied or implemented within the Somerset Council environment to improve the overall service to children and families. To keep up to date with relevant policy and professional developments at a national and local level and make good use of good practice examples.

Project manage and implement specific programmes and projects under the leadership of the Director of Children's Services, Strategic Managers or Assistant Director and Strategic Manager for Safeguarding, Care and Quality Assurance.

Maintain accurate and accessible information on the website and intranet about Children's Social Care policies and procedures for public, staff, partners and providers.

Impact

Contacts & Relationships

The Service Improvement Officer has contact with Senior Managers across the Authority as well as externally such as Ofsted, Department for Education Intervention Team, Auditors, etc. The purpose of such contacts is to ensure that

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there is a co-ordinated and coherent approach to implementing improvements and provides a single point of contact.

The postholder has a significant role with policy and practice areas that are key to successful performance in the quality assurance framework.

Contact with the Senior Leadership team to keep them fully briefed on progress against service improvement plans.

Liaison with colleagues in Education, Early Help and Adult Services to ensure co-ordination and alignment of policies.

Engage with partners to provide working practical protocols between organisations that clarify responsibilities and enable a fully accountable service to be operated for the benefit of children and families, including cost effective criteria.

Resources

The Service Improvement Officer has a key role in informing how specific budgets or grants are used to meet service objectives and ensuring that they become mainstreamed within the Council's wider services to secure sustainability.

The management of specific budgets or grants may be delegated to this post up to circa £500k when they are within the post's work programme.

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Experience in the development and implementation of service improvements and quality assurance activities.	X	
Demonstratable experience in supporting policy and practice changes	X	
Demonstratable experience of working with a range of stakeholders	X	
Understanding of policy relevant to Children's Service and within a complex political organisation	X	
Demonstrate a high level of understanding of the issues and practice involved in implementing policy within day to day practice in Children's Services		X
Experience		

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Have considerable experience in a relevant professional post	X	
Demonstratable experience of managing complex projects and project based work	X	
Experience of working with service users and partner organisations	X	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
Level 3 qualification or equivalent	X	
Evidence of continuing professional development	X	
Project Management qualification		X
Degree level qualification or equivalent		X
Skills		
Have excellent presentation, communication and interpersonal skills	X	
Sound planning and organisational skills to determine a clear specification, smart objectives and a realistic, achievable timetable	X	
Be able to think creatively and critically	X	
Ability to support the learning of others	X	
Be confident in offering support and challenge to senior management levels as well as the wider workforce, to address practice concerns.	X	
Strong budget development and resource planning skills to identify costs and resources needed to achieve objectives		X
Working Conditions		
Working Arrangements		
Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.		
Corporate Responsibilities		



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Understand, uphold and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Date: June 2025