JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Adoption Agency Advisor		
Directorate	Children & Families		
Reporting to	Operations Manager – CLA & Leaving Care (West)		
Grade	9		
Evaluation ref:	AU0661	**Job Family ref:**	

Role purpose

The responsibility of Children's Services is to promote and ensure the safety, well-bring and learning of children and young people.

This specific role has the following purpose:

- Provide advice and support to the Operations Manager for CLA & LC with a lead role for Adoption and contribute towards the planning, delivery and performance of Somerset's adoption service in relation to children.
- Undertake a quality assurance role in reports presented to the Agency Decision Maker for Adoption.
- Provide advice and guidance on adoption matters to Social Workers and Team Managers and provide supervision on specialist aspects of adoption casework, as required.
- Provide expert advice and assistance as required to support the ADM to make the required adoption decisions on behalf of Somerset Council.

Responsibilities

1. Provide advice and support to the Operations Manager for CLA & LC with a lead role for Adoption, and contribute towards the planning, delivery and performance of Somerset's adoption service in relation to children. Undertake a quality assurance role in reports presented to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM).
2. Provide/contribute to detailed written reports on the work and performance of Somerset's adoption service in relation to children to the Senior Leadership Team.
3. Work with Somerset Council's regional adoption agency Adopt South West (AdoptSW) in relation to the Agency Advisor duties and responsibilities. Attend and contribute to regional Agency Advisor meetings to support the regional adoption agency. Use influence to support staff in Somerset Council's Safeguarding and Children Looked After teams understand adoption work in relation to children and the role of AdoptSW.
4. Provide advice and guidance on adoption matters to Social Workers and Team Managers and provide supervision on specialist aspects of adoption casework, as required.
5. Provide advice and guidance to support with consideration of adoption allowances, when requested.

6. Work with AdoptSW to provide an annual rolling programme of adoption training to social workers in Children's Social Care. These sessions should develop and promote good practice in adoption work.
7. Keep own adoption practice knowledge up to date and respond to changes in adoption guidance and legislation to ensure Somerset's adoption service in relation to children remains compliant with statutory guidance.
8. Take a key role in the revision of policies, operational instructions, procedures and practice guidance.
9. Assist administrative staff and others to maintain effective information systems to monitor the performance of the adoption service.
10. Engage with Social Workers and Team Managers to support and quality assure the child's permanence report. Make decisions about whether reports are adequate for submission and ensure improvements are made as required.
11. Ensure the ADM receives reports, and any other papers required for adoption decisions to be made. Ensure that all the appropriate people receive written notification of the agency decision.
12. Work closely with AdoptSW; Somerset Council legal advocates; Designated Nurse for CLA and Agency Medical Advisor to ensure permanence plans for children, including adoption, are progressed in a timely way. T
13. Provide expert advice and assistance as required to support the ADM to make the required adoption decisions on behalf of Somerset Council.

Impact

Contacts & Relationships

The Agency Advisor has considerable responsibility to provide expert advice and guidance to a range of professionals including ADM, Social Workers, Team Managers, Independent Reviewing Officers, and the agency Medical and Legal Advisors.

Establish, and maintain effective working relationships with:

- Agency Medical and Legal Advisor.
- Agency Decision maker Service Director for Children's Services.
- Social Workers and Team Managers.
- Independent Reviewing Officers.
- Regional adoption professionals in AdoptSW.

Liaise with national organisations such as Coram/BAAF for advice and guidance as required for specialist information.

	Essential	Desirable	
Knowledge			
Legal framework and procedures relating to care planning including Adoption	x		

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Legal framework and procedures relating to Fostering For Adoption (Early Permanence Placements)		x	
Understanding of social care resources and provision available beyond statutory agencies.		x	
Experience			
At least 3 years' post qualifying experience in child care social work, including direct experience of adoption work (Restriction on the Preparation of Reports Regulations 2005).	x		
Evidence of partnership working with other agencies including Social Care Services, Health Services, Voluntary Agencies and/or Education	x		
Experience of giving feedback or supervising work undertaken by Social Workers	x		
A variety of experiences working with relevant client group.		x	
Experience of preparing children for permanence and considering their life story.		x	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications			
Possession of recognised Social Care Qualification – Degree in Social Work, DipSW, CQSW, CSS or equivalent.	x		
Registration with Social Work England.	x		
PEPS Stage 1 (or experience of supervising and mentoring others).	x		
Studying or willingness to participate in PQ study.		x	
Skills			
Ability to provide feedback, advice and guidance to Social Workers, Team Managers and other professionals with confidence.	x		
Ability to facilitate training.		x	
Ability to contribute to care planning discussions at Legal Panels.	x		
IT skills to enable effective input, manipulation and retrieval of data and information.	x		

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Ability to speak fluent English as stated in Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016).	**x**		

Working Conditions

Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position. This post will involve hybrid working, including a presence at an office base.

Corporate Responsibilities

- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practice.
- Deliver 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, ensuring team members are also aware of their responsibilities and maintaining their understanding that 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: 01/05/2025