



Cumberland Council

Post Specification

Date	September 2026
PG Number	9080
Post Title	Senior Manager – Fostering Adoption and Resources
Job Family	PCD
Job Family Role Profile	PCD19
Final Grade	19

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile

Service Area description

To work within Children's and Family Wellbeing as a Senior Manager providing strategic leadership for fostering, adoption services and residential provision to ensure high-quality, sustainable and value-for-money services for children, young people and families. The role will also contribute to transformation activity where this supports high-quality, sustainable and value-for-money services for children, young people and families.

Purpose of this post

- To provide strategic leadership and management for fostering, adoption services and permanence arrangements, residential provision and related resource management within Children's Services, ensuring services are high quality, safe, effective and deliver value for money.
- The post holder will provide strategic oversight and leadership for fostering, adoption services, including direct line management responsibility for the Service Manager of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), and will ensure permanence planning is supported by effective partnership working and sufficiency arrangements.
- The post holder will act as the Responsible Individual for Cumberland Council children's homes and lead the establishment, registration, governance and ongoing strategic development of residential provision. Transformation activity will form part of the role where it supports improvement, sufficiency and future delivery arrangements for fostering, adoption, permanence and residential services.
- The post holder will ensure that resources are deployed effectively to improve outcomes for children and families, strengthen fostering and adoption/permanence pathways, increase sufficiency within local care arrangements and reduce reliance on high-cost external placements where appropriate.

Key job specific accountabilities

1. Provide strategic leadership and management of fostering services, ensuring sufficient, high-quality foster care provision that meets the needs of Cumberland children and young people.
2. Provide strategic leadership and oversight of adoption and permanence services, including direct line management and professional support to the Service Manager of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA).
3. Lead the development and delivery of sufficiency strategies across fostering, adoption, permanence and residential care, ensuring the Council can meet the needs of children as locally as possible.

4. Provide strategic leadership and oversight of children's residential services, including acting as Responsible Individual for Cumberland Council children's homes and ensuring services are safe, effective, financially sustainable and compliant with regulatory requirements.
5. Chair resource panels and decision-making forums to ensure appropriate allocation of resources for children and families and to promote consistency, proportionality, permanence planning and value for money.
6. Ensure delivery of value for money across fostering, adoption, permanence, residential and associated resource activity while maintaining a focus on improving outcomes for children and young people.
7. Manage and optimise the use of resources, including financial, staffing, commissioning and operational assets across fostering, adoption, permanence and residential services.
8. Lead strategic planning for placement sufficiency, permanence and resource utilisation across Children's Services.
9. Contribute to and support Children's Services transformation activity where this strengthens fostering, adoption, permanence, residential provision, sufficiency and resource management.
10. Drive continuous improvement, service redesign and innovation across fostering, adoption, permanence and residential services, ensuring services are effective, safe, legal and financially sustainable.
11. Provide expert advice, challenge and guidance to senior leaders, elected members and partners on fostering, adoption, permanence, sufficiency, service development, transformation activity and resource management.
12. Be responsible for the delegated budget for the area, including staffing budgets, fostering, adoption, permanence, placement and residential care budgets and associated service expenditure.
13. Work positively with partners to promote a whole-system approach to meeting the needs of cared for children, care experienced young people and children on the edge of care.
14. Develop and maintain effective partnerships with Ofsted, Regional Adoption Agency partners, health colleagues, education providers, independent providers and neighbouring authorities.
15. Ensure the use of performance management, quality assurance, audit and benchmarking activity to improve service quality, compliance and outcomes for children.
16. Promote Cumberland's Practice Model and *Language That Cares* approach throughout service delivery, commissioning activity and workforce development.

Please note annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process

Key facts and figures of the post

Budget Responsibilities	- Responsible for significant budgets within Children's Services, including fostering, adoption, residential care, permanence and transformation budgets forming part of the role where relevant to the service area. - Responsible for ensuring compliance with financial regulations, achieving value for money and supporting delivery of agreed savings and savings and improvement programmes across the area of responsibility
Staff Management Responsibilities	- Direct line management of senior managers and oversight of multidisciplinary teams across fostering, adoption, permanence, residential and associated resource functions. - Direct line management responsibility for the Service Manager of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). - Strategic leadership and oversight of fostering, adoption, permanence, residential and associated resource services. - Leadership of service managers and operational leads across areas of responsibility, including support for transformation activity where this

	relates to fostering, adoption, permanence, residential provision and resource management.
Other	• To work closely with colleagues and partners leading the whole system. • To act as Responsible Individual for any Cumberland Council children's homes as required. • To represent Cumberland Council in regional, sub-regional and national forums relating to fostering, adoption, permanence, residential care, sufficiency and relevant transformation activity. • To contribute to inspection readiness, strategic planning, transformation and service improvement activity across Children's Services, particularly where this relates to fostering, adoption, permanence and residential provision.

Essential Criteria - Qualifications, knowledge, experience and expertise

- Professional Social Work qualification recognised by Social Work England.
- Current registration with Social Work England.
- Degree-level qualification or equivalent experience in a relevant field.
- Significant senior leadership experience within Children's Services.
- Extensive experience of strategic leadership within fostering, residential care, permanence or adoption services.
- Extensive experience of statutory children's social care practice and decision-making.
- Strong understanding of children's social care sufficiency responsibilities, placement commissioning and permanence planning.
- Experience of managing substantial budgets and delivering value for money whilst improving outcomes.
- Experience of managing complex partnerships across local authorities, health services, education and external providers.
- Experience of leading service improvement, transformation or redesign activity within Children's Services, particularly where this supports fostering, adoption, permanence, sufficiency or residential provision.
- Strong understanding of relevant children's social care legislation, regulations and statutory guidance.
- Experience of performance management, quality assurance and audit activity to drive service improvement.
- Excellent leadership, communication, influencing and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Demonstrable experience of managing complex projects, organisational change and continuous improvement, with the ability to align transformation activity to service priorities.
- Ability to analyse complex information and translate this into effective strategic and operational plans.
- Ability to lead services through change whilst maintaining a focus on outcomes for children, quality of practice and workforce wellbeing.

Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS Checks

- This post requires a DBS check.
- The level of check required is:
- DBS Enhanced – Children & Adults

Job working circumstances

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| Emotional Demands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work in a demanding environment subject to extensive regulatory, political and departmental scrutiny. • Ability to make complex decisions impacting vulnerable children, young people and families. |
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	• Ability to respond to urgent, sensitive and high-risk situations, often requiring difficult decisions and balancing competing priorities. •
Physical Demands	• Normal. •
Working Conditions	• Ability and willingness to travel within and outside the area of Cumberland Council. • Willingness to work flexibly, including participation in senior management and emergency decision-making arrangements for children. • Occasional attendance at evening and weekend meetings as required. •
Other Factors	
• May be required to act on behalf of the Director or Assistant Director as delegated. • Expected to lead strategic responses to inspection, regulatory activity and significant service developments. • Expected to provide visible leadership across Children's Services and model Cumberland Council's values and behaviours. • Required to build and maintain effective relationships with elected members, partners, providers, regulators and stakeholders to support the delivery of high-quality services and improved outcomes for children and families.	