

Corporate Director Children's Services

Role Profile



Service: Children's Services

Band: SM2

Reporting to: Chief Executive

Responsible for: Children's social care, early help and family support, education and inclusion, SEND, youth services, fostering, adoption, children in care, care leavers, care-experienced young people, sufficiency and safeguarding assurance.

About Us

Trafford is a great place to live, work, learn and visit. From its leafy suburbs to its more urban areas, the borough takes pride in its strong, diverse communities, its cultural and sporting heritage and its position at the heart of the region's economic powerhouse.

Trafford Council and its partners in the public, private and third sectors have a Vision which sees us working together to close inequality gaps and maximise Trafford's huge potential.

Our vision: Trafford – where all our residents, businesses and communities thrive

At the heart of our vision is a common cause – we want to make Trafford a better borough. We want to make it a place where everyone has a chance to succeed and where everybody has a voice. Through our new vision, we are making a commitment to work together across different services and agencies to make the best use of our resources.



Our Culture

Trafford Council employs around 2300 non-school members of staff and as one of the biggest employers in the borough, we work hard to make Trafford Council an employer of choice. We care what you think and believe you are more than just a job role. We have a great benefits' package and a real focus on your health and wellbeing, as well as extensive learning, succession and development opportunities.

For us, it's not just about *what* we achieve as an organisation, but *how* we do it. Therefore, all employees are expected to display our **EPIC** values.

At Trafford Council we are EPIC

We EMPOWER – We inspire and trust our people to deliver the best outcomes for our customers, communities and colleagues.

We are PEOPLE CENTRED – We value all people, within and external to the organisation and give those around us respect. We will act with honesty and integrity in all that we do and create an environment that enables everyone we work with to thrive and succeed.

We are INCLUSIVE – We are committed to creating an environment that values and respects the diversity and richness differences bring.

We COLLABORATE – We build relationships, collaborate; treat people as equal partners and work together to make things happen.

About the Role

This Role Profile outlines the key responsibilities, priorities and leadership expectations of the Corporate Director of Children's Services, providing an overview of the role and its contribution to the Council's strategic objectives.

The 'About You' section sets out the qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be successful in the role.

As a values-led organisation, we are looking for a leader who demonstrates our EPIC values and can evidence how their experience and approach align with both our values and the requirements of the role.

Overview

Trafford Council Children's Services supports, safeguards and improves outcomes for children, young people and families across the borough, from birth through to adulthood. As Corporate Director of Children's Services, you will be the Council's statutory officer for education and children's social care. You will provide clear professional leadership and accountability for children's safety, wellbeing, learning and outcomes. The service includes children's social care, early help and family support, education-related support, special educational needs and disability (SEND), fostering, adoption, youth services and support for children in care and care-experienced young people.

This is a pivotal opportunity to lead Children's Services at an important point in Trafford's improvement and reform journey, shaping services that are preventative, relationship-based, inclusive and focused on better outcomes for children and families. Working with Elected Members, the Corporate Leadership Team, schools, health, police, safeguarding partners across Greater Manchester, you will provide visible leadership and act a key place-based and system leader, influencing collective priorities, shared accountability and resource alignment to improve the outcomes for children, young people and families.

Your Main Priorities

- Provide statutory leadership and single professional accountability for Children's Services, ensuring the Council meets its education and children's social care duties.
- Lead sustained improvement, inspection readiness and stronger outcomes for children, young people and families through clear governance, assurance and practice learning.

- Position Trafford at the forefront of children's services reform, leading the successful implementation of Families First, SEND and inclusion reforms, youth justice developments and wider national policy changes to improve life chances and outcomes for children and young people.
- Provide strategic leadership for education, SEND, inclusion, attendance, school sufficiency, alternative provision and fair access, reducing inequalities and improving outcomes.
- Work collaboratively with the Chief Executive, Corporate Leadership Team, elected Members, statutory officers and partners to shape and deliver the Council's strategic direction, providing senior corporate and system leadership, advice and assurance. Act as a visible place-based leader, influencing and strengthening partnership working across Trafford and Greater Manchester to drive shared priorities, collective accountability and improved outcomes for children, young people and families. Ensure statutory, safeguarding, financial, organisational and reputational risks relating to children's services are identified, understood and managed.

Key duties

- **Statutory leadership and accountability:** Discharge the statutory responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services as the single clear professional point of accountability for education and children's social care, providing advice and assurance to the Lead Member, Chief Executive, Cabinet, Scrutiny and wider Members, colleagues and stakeholders.
- **Improvement, assurance and inspection readiness:** Lead a clear, evidence-based improvement and inspection readiness approach, supported by robust self-evaluation, performance information, audit, quality assurance, learning reviews and feedback from children, families and practitioners. Ensure leaders at all levels understand the quality and impact of practice, take timely action where improvement is needed, and can evidence sustained progress and improved outcomes.
- **Whole-system reform and transformation:** Lead whole-system transformation in response to national reform, including the development of an effective Family Help and multi-agency child protection system. Ensure effective front-door arrangements, thresholds and decision-making so children and families receive the right help at the right time and risk is identified, escalated and responded to confidently. Ensure education, SEND, Family Help, safeguarding, youth justice and partnership arrangements are aligned around prevention, inclusion, family networks and improved outcomes for children and young people.
- **Education, SEND and inclusion:** Provide strategic leadership for education, SEND, inclusion, attendance, school sufficiency, alternative provision and fair access, ensuring that children with additional needs are visible within whole-system planning and that schools, health, social care and partners work together to improve outcomes, reduce exclusion and strengthen inclusion.

- **Children's voice, rights and corporate parenting:** Champion the voices, rights and lived experiences of children, young people and families, embedding participation and co-production, and leading the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities for children in care, care leavers and care-experienced young people.
- **Commissioning, sufficiency and financial sustainability:** Lead strong financial grip across Children's Services, ensuring that demand, cost, quality and statutory risk are understood and managed through effective commissioning, sufficiency planning, transformation and partnership working. Oversee placement sufficiency, permanence, fostering, adoption and support for care leavers and care-experienced young people, balancing quality, stability, safety and value for money.
- **Workforce, practice model and culture:** Lead a stable, skilled and supported workforce through a clear practice model, high-quality supervision, manageable workloads, effective recruitment and retention, and reduced reliance on agency staff where possible. Ensure that supervision, management oversight, assessment, planning and direct work are consistently strong, purposeful and focused on children's safety, stability, lived experience and outcomes. Create a culture of learning, relational practice and trauma-informed leadership so practitioners can deliver consistent, high-quality support for children, young people and families.
- **Partnerships, professional challenge and system leadership:** Build trusted and effective relationships with schools, health, police, safeguarding partners, Greater Manchester colleagues, the voluntary and community sector and wider system partners. Provide visible system leadership that brings partners together around shared outcomes, promotes collective accountability and enables collaborative solutions to complex challenges affecting children, young people and families.

About You

Qualifications and Professional Development

- Education to degree level with a relevant professional qualification in social work, education or a related discipline, together with substantial senior leadership experience across children's services.
- A recognised social work qualification is essential, particularly where supported by demonstrable experience of leading children's social care improvement.
- Commitment to ongoing professional learning, leadership development and reflective practice, with a strong understanding of the statutory role of the Director of Children's Services.

Experience and Knowledge

- Extensive senior leadership experience in an organisation of comparable scope and complexity, with a strong track record of delivering improved outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Proven experience of leading improvement in a regulated children's services environment, including inspection preparation, post-inspection improvement, quality assurance, service transformation and sustained practice improvement.
- Strong knowledge of statutory DCS responsibilities, Ofsted inspection expectations, safeguarding partnership arrangements, national children's social care and education reform, including Families First, SEND and inclusion reforms, youth justice developments, relational practice and trauma-informed practice.
- Strong understanding of Family Help, multi-agency child protection, family networks and Family Group Decision Making, and how these support earlier help, safer decision-making and stronger family-led solutions.
- Proven understanding of what good looks like for children in care, permanence, care leavers and care-experienced young people, including placement stability, loving relationships, education, employment, housing and preparation for adulthood.
- Experience of leading whole-system improvement across children's social care, education, SEND, inclusion, safeguarding, placement sufficiency, commissioning and corporate parenting, with a focus on prevention, family help and better outcomes.
- Evidence of using performance data, audit, quality assurance, risk information, financial management and learning from practice to improve outcomes, manage statutory risk, strengthen sufficiency and ensure safe, lawful care arrangements.
- Evidence of inclusive leadership, creating a culture of belonging, equity and respect, supporting consistently good practice and removing barriers in employment, service delivery and partnership working.

Skills and abilities

- High degree of political sensitivity and awareness, with the ability to operate within the democratic process and build trusted relationships with elected Members, senior leaders and partners.
- Able to lead with resilience, sound judgement and clear professional oversight in a high-profile statutory service, maintaining focus on practical solutions, improvement and outcomes.
- Able to turn inspection findings, performance information and children's lived experience into clear improvement priorities, practical action and sustained improvements in practice.

- Able to provide clear, evidence-based advice, assurance and professional challenge to senior leaders, Members and partners where children's safety, statutory duties or service quality require action.
- Excellent interpersonal, influencing and communication skills, with the ability to explain complex issues clearly and build confidence, trust and shared ownership across a wide range of audiences.
- Able to provide calm, credible and visible leadership, supporting staff, leading change with care and modelling respectful, relationship-based leadership.
- Strong personal commitment to improving children's lives and outcomes, with the ability to keep children, families, care leavers and care-experienced young people at the centre of strategic decisions.

Special Conditions

- Willing and able to travel to sites within the Trafford Borough.
- Enhanced DBS check, including Children's Barred List check.
- Politically restricted.
- Unsocial hours/weekend work may be required.

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Prepared/revised by	T Sefton / C Gardner / R Pollard
Job Evaluation	N/A

Health and Safety

To operate safely within the workplace with regard to the Council's health and safety policies, procedures and safe working practices. To be responsible for your own Health and Safety and that of other employees.

Equalities & Diversity

To work within the Council's Equalities and Diversity Policy, embracing through personal example, open commitment and clear action that diversity is positively valued, resulting in access for all by ensuring fair treatment in employment, service delivery and external communications.

Customer Care

To continually review, develop and improve systems, processes and services in support of the Council's pursuit of excellence in service delivery.
To recognise the value of its people as a resource.

Training and Development

To identify training and development needs with your manager, taking an active part in your Personal Development and Review Plan. To access development opportunities as they arise and share learning with others and where appropriate, actively encourage a learning environment and development within others.

Policy

To work at all times within the established policies and practices of the Council, within the framework established by the Council Constitution and associated guidance.

Information Governance

Confidentiality is of prime importance. In the normal course of duties, the post holder will have access to personal and or sensitive information relating to service users, staff and contractors, as well as information of a commercially sensitive nature. Such information should not be communicated to anyone outside or inside the Council unless done in the normal course of carrying out the duties of the post. Disciplinary action will be considered where a breach of confidence and or data breach has been established.

All information obtained or held during the post-holders period of employment that relates to the business of the Council and its service users and employees will remain the property of the Council. Information may be subject to disclosure under relevant legislation.

To ensure information is shared safely and complies with information governance standards and associated legislation.