Your job

Job Title: Adoption Social Worker

Service: Children and Families

Grade: 9

Reporting to: Team Manager

You will join a well-established, busy and creative team as an adoption childcare social worker. You will have an active role in permanence planning for children and will track those children whose plans may become adoption, beginning family-finding at an early stage and, where adoption plans are confirmed, become the allocated caseworker from the point of Placement Order onwards.

You will have responsibility for all family-finding, linking, matching and placement tasks for the child and will need to be creative and inventive in preparing children for the changes that will affect their lives, as well as undertaking the statutory requirements for looked after children. You will support the child and their adoptive family up to the making of an Adoption Order.

Whilst adoption remains the preferred permanence plan for many children, practitioners must respond to changing circumstances and emerging family options. The role includes family finding, court work, assessing birth family, undertaking Special Guardianship assessments, exploring alternative permanence arrangements and supporting Placement Order revocation applications where appropriate. Practitioners retain responsibility for statutory Children in Care duties and must ensure children's welfare, identity and long-term outcomes remain central to decision-making until the making of an Adoption Order.

You will need to liaise with a variety of adoption agencies, including our own Regional Adoption Agency, to ensure our children have the best opportunity to be matched with the right family. You will also work with children's

families, foster carers, education, health, and other agencies to ensure we give Wigan children the best opportunities for permanence.

Mandatory Statement

The Council is committed to complying with European General Data Protection regulations (UKGDPR) and meeting the requirements of the Information Commissioner's office (regulating data protection compliance in the UK). It is your responsibility to ensure that the work you undertake is compliant with the General Data Protection regulations.

Wigan Council is an active, strong, and committed corporate parent. As a priority, all employees have a responsibility towards the children we look after and care leavers, not just those employed by the Children's Directorate.

In this job you will:

In the next 12 months, you will:

- Gain experience in, and have responsibility for, each stage of a child's journey to adoption including permanence-planning, family-finding, matching, and placing children in their adoptive family
- Represent the adoption team in permanence planning meetings and give advice and guidance on planning and timescales for adoption plans
- Achieve permanence in a timely manner within the expected timescales as laid out in the Adoption Scorecard.
- Build a knowledge base around adoption legislation and guidance and add to the knowledge of the adoption team
- Build working relationships within Locality teams and with partner agencies to best represent Wigan Council and Wigan children whose plans are adoption
- Be competent and confident in working directly with children to help them understand the changes in their lives brought about by adoption
- Develop experience in permanence planning and assessments, including adoption, Special Guardianship and alternative permanence options.
- Contribute to court proceedings by preparing high-quality assessments and reports and presenting evidence where required.
- Fulfil statutory responsibilities for Children in Care whilst progressing permanence plans.
- Work creatively to reduce delay and achieve timely permanence for children, recognising the increasing complexity of family finding and matching.
- Adopt the Signs of safety principles through day-to-day practice.

On an ongoing basis you will:

- Undertake direct work with children to explore wishes, feelings, identity, loss and permanence.
- Work collaboratively with Locality Social Work teams, Legal Services, CAFCASS, the courts and the Regional Adoption Agency.
- Contribute to permanence tracking and monitoring to ensure children do not experience unnecessary delay.
- Support children and carers through periods of uncertainty where permanence plans are being reviewed or challenged.
- Maintain up to date, detailed and accurate records of all cases through Liquid Logic and other recording tools
- Contribute to the overall development of services for children and their families
- Maintain up to date registration with Social Work England and uphold and promote the high standards of the social care profession outlined in Social work England
- Ensure you operate within GDPR guidelines by regularly reviewing data held and destroying information in line with retention schedules

In this job you will need:

You must be able to demonstrate the following essential requirements:

- To be a qualified social worker with current registration with Social Work England
- To demonstrate a good knowledge and experience in looked after children processes and the statutory framework around both looked after and adoption practice.
- To bring the voice of the child to life and find them the right adoptive family.
- To work with birth family members, foster carers, and other professionals as part of the team around the child.
- Experience of undertaking assessments that inform permanence planning, including parenting and Special Guardianship assessments.
- Knowledge and understanding of care proceedings, adoption legislation, permanence planning and Special Guardianship.
- Ability to provide analytical recommendations and produce high-quality assessments and court reports.
- Understanding of the impact of delay, trauma, loss and uncertainty on children in care.
- Ability to balance statutory Children in Care responsibilities alongside permanence planning and family finding activity.

- Resilience and adaptability when supporting children whose care plans may change because of assessment findings, court decisions or emerging family options.
- Adoption is about stories – the child's story, the parent's story the adopter's story. Stories children tell us about what they know and sometimes what they think they know. Stories help us all make sense of what can sometimes be too scary, or too powerful or too complicated. You will therefore need to be able to tell a clear and cohesive story, not only in direct work with children but also in meetings with adopters and in report writing for colleagues, senior managers, and the court.
- To bring creativity, spontaneity, and empathy to the task of adoption.
- To provide contemporaneous record keeping and the knowledge and use of the case management system.
- To have good report-writing skills.
- Although being able to drive is not an essential part of the role, children can be placed at a distance from Wigan.

Our Culture

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

Be Positive	"Take pride in all that you do and support and develop yourself and others."
Be Accountable	"Be responsible for making things better, enabling change and supporting improvement."
Be Courageous	"Be open to doing things differently and working collaboratively with others."
Be Kind	"Be helpful, generous and thoughtful towards yourself and others."