

Job Description

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| Job title | **Head of Advice and Information** |
| Accountable to | Director of Practice and Scotland |
| Objectives | Lead the delivery of The Fostering Network’s advice and information strategy across the UK.  Manage, develop and support the 4 nation advice and information services for foster carers, fostering service staff and others across the sector, plus prospective foster carers needing advice and information about fostering related issues.  Provide strategic leadership to ensure the development and delivery of high quality information and advice provision across the UK.  Inform and work closely with policy, campaign and practice colleagues to ensure our policy, campaigns and practice priorities are underpinned and driven by accurate information and evidence. |
| Hours per week | 36 |
| Location | Flexible, may be based in any of our UK offices or home working |
| Status | Permanent |
| Disclosure required?  (The post involves contact with children and/or access to confidential information about children and families) | Yes |

## Responsibilities and accountabilities

1. Leading and managing specialist support of the 4 UK helplines, including staff, budgets and financial resources, ensuring the operational delivery of a high quality and responsive advice and information service provision in line with the principles of Customer Service Excellence and in adherence with internal policies and standards.
2. Ensuring the effective management, collection and analysis of data relating to the 4 UK helplines and setting a clear framework for evaluation working in partnership with colleagues across the organisation to identify opportunities to further develop information service to meet the needs of members of The Fostering Network.
3. Providing strategic input and working collaboratively with colleagues, including but not limited to the policy and research officer and Head of Campaigns to ensure data gathered from the helplines is used when identifying policy and campaign priorities, training and publications and areas of future work across TFN.
4. Creating content to be used by 4 UK helplines to ensure a consistent response and to ensure content can be accessed beyond the helplines via our website.

Developing accurate and up to date content for publications, magazine, website etc

1. Exploring, developing and expanding the ways in which members can access information and advice, including publications, magazine articles, videos, webinars and online content, and work with internal colleagues to ensure members have access to a range of different sources of advice which meet identified needs.
2. Be responsible for bringing together The Fostering Network’s member facing staff from across the UK to share information and best practice and to identify gaps in the provision for members.
3. Maintain and develop technical specialist expertise to ensure that the information and advice provided by The Fostering Network is accurate and high quality and work in partnership with internal and external practice colleagues to support the development of policy and guidance.

## Management

Lead, manage and develop the advice and information teams by delivering sound personnel management in accordance with The Fostering Network policies, procedures and practices in line with the organisation’s values.

Line management of the Members Helpline Advice and Information Manager (England), Fosterline Scotland advisors, Fosterline Wales (including sessional workers) and Advice and Information staff (NI). In addition, provide support to volunteers and external advisers and consultants as required.

## Budget

Responsible for the management of all budgets relating to The Fostering Network’s Advice and Information services across the UK, including reporting to funders.

## General statement

It is the nature of The Fostering Network that tasks and responsibilities are in many circumstances unpredictable and varied. All employees are therefore expected to work in a flexible way when the occasion arises and undertake tasks that are not specifically covered in their job description.

Person Specification

## Our Values

As an organisation, we believe that we make a difference to foster care and our people values are expressed in the work that we do:

We are TRUSTED

We are TOGETHER

We are VITAL

## 

**Knowledge and Experience**

***Essential***

* + Significant experience of writing high quality information resources in a range of formats and for a variety of audiences
  + Experience of leading and managing a staff and/or volunteer team
  + Experience of setting and managing customer service standards
  + Knowledge and understanding of confidentiality, data protection and its application and implications.
  + Experience of developing integrated plans in collaboration with colleagues

***Desirable***

* In-depth knowledge of foster care, including the legislative and regulatory framework, differences across the UK and current research evidence
  + Experience of user engagement and working with service users to develop resources
  + Experience of working in a membership organisation
  + Experience of writing formal publications
  + Experience of designing and delivering webinars, web content and producing information in a variety of formats.
  + Experience of maintaining/achieving/working towards externally accredited service delivery standards and kitemarks
  + Experience of contributing to funding bids and developing income generation activities.

**Skills and abilities**

***Essential***

* Excellent inter-personal skills, with the ability to build and maintain collaborative working relationships with colleagues, volunteers, members, families and stakeholders
* Excellent communication skills with the ability to provide useful and accessible information verbally and in writing
* Budget design and management
* Analytical skills with the ability to distil and disseminate information from a variety of complex sources to a range of audiences.
* Ability to use research for developing evidence based practice advice and information.
* Ability to manage and prioritise a varied workload and deal with conflicting demands and meet tight deadlines
* IT skills, including proficiency in using Microsoft Office packages and membership databases.

***Desirable***

* Personal experience of foster care
* Knowledge and a good understanding of social care for children and young people and the issues that affect them
* Presentation and facilitation skills

## Qualifications (Professional, Technical)

*No specific professional or technical qualifications required.*

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## Additional Information

**Pay and conditions of service**

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| Band | The Fostering Network Band 3 |
| Salary | £31,744 - £47,616 per annum (pro rata as necessary) plus £3,737 London Weighting per annum (pro rata as necessary) |
| Annual Leave | 25 Days plus 5 Fostering Network days (pro rata, as necessary). |
| Probationary period | 6 calendar months. |
| Notice period | 12 working weeks  One week during probationary period. |
| Hours of work | 36 hours per week |
| Pension | Optional. Money-purchase scheme and salary sacrifice option is available with AEGON:  Employee contribution is 3% of gross annual salary  Employer contribution is 5% of gross salary. |
| Season Ticket Loan | An interest free season ticket loan is available to all staff immediately. |
| Trade Union | The Fostering Network recognises the trade union Unite  and members of staff can join if they wish. |