

Role Profile

Head of Practice

Role Details:

Department:	Practice & Innovation	Team:	Practice Services
Reports to:	Director of Practice & Innovation	Responsible for:	Practice Consultants & Senior Practice Consultants
Contract:	Permanent	Hours:	Full-time, 35 hours
Salary Range¹: (+ London weighting added if eligible)	£47,000-£52,000 per annum	Salary Band:	D
Base Location: (London, Cardiff, Belfast, Glasgow or home)	Hybrid, with some travel requirements. Office base is optional.	DBS Check Required?	Yes, enhanced
Budget Holder?	Yes	Policy Owner?	Yes

Core Purpose:

The Head of Practice will provide leadership and oversight of the day-to-day operations of the Practice Team, including the key services of Advice and Mediation, Training and Practice Consultancy Services.

Primary Objectives:

1. Provide leadership to a team of Practice Consultants, delivering practice services across the UK, overseeing the development and delivery of exceptional practice advice, guidance, learning, development and consultancy to enhance and improve fostering for all.
2. Contributing to the organisation's income generation activities through the delivery of practice services and creation of innovative services.

¹ Please note our policy is to offer at the bottom of the salary band for new starters.

3. Providing strategic leadership and management for specialist input into the development of fostering policy and practice across the UK ensuring The Fostering Network maintain its role as a sector leader and continues to provide high quality support and advice to its members.
4. Assist with the creation and delivery of robust business proposals, tender responses and applications, with a focus on increasing the range, quality and offer of The Fostering Networks' publications portfolio.
5. Work in collaboration with the Head of Membership and relevant wider stakeholders to review our membership offer, exploring opportunities to enhance it and to incorporate our practice consultancy offer.

Responsibilities:

1. **Provide leadership to a team of Practice Consultants, delivering practice services across the UK, overseeing the development and delivery of exceptional practice advice, guidance, learning, development and consultancy to enhance and improve fostering for all.**
 - Leadership and management of practice training and support, advice and mediation and functions, including management of people and financial resources.
 - To act as a Designated Safeguarding Lead.
 - Management of two Senior Consultants.
 - Monitor and report on the team's key performance indicators in line with the organisation's processes.
 - To be responsible for the quality assurance of the team's work. Complete and monitor annual reports and user satisfaction surveys.
 - In partnership with team members and internal colleagues, provide technical advice to support members and stakeholders in respect of fostering policy and practice, ensuring all advice and activities are line with legislation, regulation, statutory guidance and national minimum standards and the promotion of best practice across the fostering sector.
 - To produce high quality, timely reports for a variety audiences, including Senior Leadership Team and Governance Board.
2. **Contributing to the organisation's income generation activities through the delivery of practice services and creation of innovative services.**
 - Contribute to the identification, development and delivery of new commercial services and initiatives, in partnership with colleagues and external stakeholders, in response to identified need, the organisation's strategic plan and in line with agreed income targets.
3. **Providing strategic leadership and management for specialist input into the development of fostering policy and practice across the UK ensuring The Fostering Network maintain its role as a sector leader and continues to provide high quality support and advice to its members.**
 - Represent The Fostering Network, raising awareness of the needs of looked after children, foster carers and fostering services, maintaining the organisation's reputation as a sector leader, identifying emerging themes and ensuring the organisation plays a leading role in shaping policy and practice.
 - Work collaboratively across the organisation making links between practice training, support and mediation and policy and campaigns work.
 - To assist in the learning and development of internal staff and respond to the needs of the organisation.

4. Assist with the creation and delivery of robust business proposals, tender responses and applications, with a focus on increasing the range, quality and offer of The Fostering Networks' publications portfolio.

- To work with the Head of Business Development to monitor contracts for services, seek new contracts and further develop and promote the practice, learning, development and consultancy services.
- To work with relevant Heads of Departments to design and deliver the organisation's publications strategy and the fulfilment of this strategy, to generate revenue, improve profitability and help the organisation grow.

5. Work in collaboration with the Head of Membership and relevant wider stakeholders to review our membership offer, exploring opportunities to enhance it and to incorporate our practice consultancy offer.

- Work in partnership with colleagues to develop practice-based projects and programmes aligned with The Fostering Network's strategic objectives and specifically of the delivery of the organisation's membership strategy.

Team Working:

- Work closely with the Practice & Innovation directorate to ensure that plans and priorities align with wider organisational plans and strategies.
- Effectively represent the team and actively contribute at internal meetings and external events.
- Understand and adhere to The Fostering Network's policies and practices.
- Engage with and demonstrate commitment to The Fostering Network's mission, vision, values and strategy.
- Proactively engage with the performance development approach, taking responsibility for seeking appropriate development opportunities and taking part in learning.
- Take a relationship-based approach to your work, understanding that creating positive relationships with our internal and external stakeholders is central to achieving our objectives.
- Undertake any other duties appropriate to the level in accordance with agreed procedures and guidelines.

Main Stakeholders

In addition to their immediate team, this role-holder will particularly work with:

Internal	External
Senior Leadership Team Heads of Teams Assistant Directors Engagement & Influence Directorate HR and Finance	Members, fostering services staff and foster carers Associates Other third sector organisations Local Authorities and Trusts Private providers (IFPs) Inspectorates Suppliers (LMS) Forums

What we're looking for:

Essential Knowledge, Experience & Qualifications

- Social work degree or degree level social work qualification (for example, Dip.SW, CQSW) and full social work registration.
- In depth working knowledge and experience of managing or supporting fostering services with a current understanding of fostering and the issues facing foster care.
- An excellent working knowledge, understanding and working experience of the legislative and regulatory framework that governs foster care and emerging evidence from research.
- Experience of providing management and supervision to professionally qualified staff.
- Experience of working to budgets and managing resources effectively.
- Experience of providing consultancy and/or of developing and delivering training.
- Experience of strategic planning and managing change.

Essential Skills & Attitudes

- Effective people management and an ability to motivate and inspire teams of staff, volunteers, and external stakeholders.
- Ability to role model excellent customer service and to develop and build strong working relationships with internal and external groups.
- Creative thinking, problem-solving and the ability to identify opportunities from existing activity.
- Strong communication skills and the ability to listen to and empathise with different stakeholder groups.
- Strong budgeting and financial management skills.
- Excellent written communication skills with the ability to write good practice guidance and information for fostering services and other audiences.
- Proven computer skills including knowledge of Microsoft Office and database packages and willingness to learn and use new software as required.
- Ability to work flexible hours, travel, mainly within England and work evenings and occasionally at the weekends, including overnight stays with adequate notice.
- Commitment to maintaining the confidentiality of information held by The Fostering Network.
- Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Commitment to The Fostering Network's mission, vision and values.

Desirable

- Care experienced and/or lived experience of foster care
- Experience of leading and managing projects
- Management qualification
- Practice Education Award