

WHERE
CAREERS
THRIVE

When potential
is unlocked,
talent *thrives*



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Participation Lead and Co-ordinator

Children's Services, People Directorate

Thank you for your interest in this role. Our vision at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is: 'to make West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive'.

We truly stand by this and work hard every day to make this a reality, and at WNC it's about our people. People who thrive with ambition, bring new ideas, demand better ways of working, care about every detail, and who never shy away from a challenge.

Our culture is a gateway for new experiences. A place to forge new opportunities. To empower you in your career and unite you with like-minded people. When potential is unlocked, talent thrives.

Purpose and impact:

The Participation Lead and Co-ordinator is a strategic system-leadership role with responsibility for ensuring that the lived experiences, perspectives and insight of all children and young people



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(CYP) directly inform decision-making and service improvements. The role ensures that CYP voice and lived experience are embedded consistently across partnership activity.

The postholder will lead the design, development and coordination of the CYP participation infrastructure, providing a partnership-wide mechanism through which insight from CYP informs strategic priorities, commissioning, service planning and evaluation. Acting with a high level of autonomy and professional judgement, the role connects participation activity across education, health, social care and commissioned services, ensuring coherence, quality and shared standards. The role ensures that participation is robust, ethical, safe and representative, and that the insight gathered from children and young people is translated into evidence that influences strategic planning, commissioning, governance and service improvement and development.

The role has system-wide impact, shaping how the Partnership understands need, identifies priorities and measures improvement. By leading participation models and coordinating a multi-agency network of participation leads, the postholder provides assurance that statutory expectations around participation and coproduction are met, risks relating to safeguarding and information governance are managed appropriately, and that children and young people's voices are embedded rather than isolated or tokenistic.

Accountable to:

This role is accountable to a Family Hub Lead. The role sits within Family Hubs part of the Children's Directorate in West Northamptonshire Council. It is noted the post holder have a strong dotted line to the SEND Service.

Responsibilities:

1. Provide strategic leadership for the design, coordination and continuous development of participation and coproduction arrangements for children and young people (CYP) across children's services.
2. Lead the implementation and ongoing development of the participation models as a service-wide mechanism for gathering, synthesising and using CYP insight to inform strategic priorities, service development and system improvement.
3. Design and develop a robust system for storing and sharing engagement information.
4. Ensure that participation activity across the partnership is aligned to shared priorities, reflects statutory expectations, and supports evidence-based decision-making.
5. Operate with a high level of professional autonomy to shape participation approaches, resolve strategic challenges and recommend improvements to partnership leaders and governance forums.
6. Coordinate and support a multi-agency network of participation leads across education, health, social care and commissioned services, enabling consistent and joined-up participation practice across the partnership.

7. Chair and facilitate partnership participation forums and steering groups, ensuring effective collaboration, shared learning and accountability.
8. Maintain strong working relationships with all relevant partnership boards, workstreams and senior leaders, ensuring CYP insight is appropriately used to inform strategic and operational decisions.
9. Provide coordination, facilitation and support to other participation leads and CYP representatives from across participation groups, enabling them to contribute confidently and effectively to strategic discussions and presentations.
10. Lead the innovation, development and operation of participation systems and processes, including survey-based engagement, expressions of interest for coproduction activity and consistent feedback mechanisms.
11. Ensure participation activity is planned, coordinated and delivered consistently across the partnership, reducing duplication and fragmentation and improving efficiency and impact.
12. Contribute to the ongoing refinement of participation guidance, templates and tools in response to learning and emerging need.
13. Provide leadership and assurance that all participation activity involving CYP is safe, inclusive, ethical and developmentally appropriate.
14. Ensure robust safeguarding practice within participation work, including responsibility for proportionate risk assessment, timely escalation of concerns, and full compliance with organisational and multi-agency safeguarding procedures.
15. Champion inclusive practice, accessibility and reasonable adjustments, working with partners to remove barriers to participation for under-represented or marginalised groups.
16. Maintain oversight of participation performance and impact, including participation metrics, themes, recommendations and evidence of change.
17. Prepare reports and summaries for senior officers, partnership meetings and governance boards to support assurance and decision-making.

18. Support partnership review processes, including contributing to the review and refinement of participation agreements, frameworks and service specifications.
19. To maximise personal productivity, minimise duplication and errors; and manage our information efficiently and securely to reduce risk, through effective use of Office 365 and our internal IT systems and applications.
20. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.
21. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs and ensure that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

Person specification:

The requirements for the role are outlined below and will be part of the selection process. Each of the criteria listed below will be measured by:

(**A**) Application Form, (**T**) Test, (**I**) Interview, (**P**) Presentation, (**D**) Documentation.

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills experience and qualifications required for this job.

Skills and abilities:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
High level of oral and written communication skills and experience of presenting information in a variety of forms, including written reports and presentations to a range of audiences	Essential	A, I
Highly effective communication skills, with the ability to engage confidently with children and young people including those with SEND, families, professionals and senior leaders.	Essential	A, I, P
Strong influencing, negotiation and relationship-building skills, including the ability to challenge constructively and navigate differing professional perspectives.	Essential	A, I, P
Ability to design, coordinate and maintain participation systems and processes that are robust, ethical, inclusive and proportionate.	Essential	A, I, P
Skilled in gathering, analysing and synthesising qualitative insight and lived experience, translating it into clear evidence that informs strategic decision-making.	Essential	A, I, P
Ability to exercise sound professional judgement, manage competing priorities and operate with a high level of autonomy.	Essential	A, I, P
Strong organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to work independently in a fast-paced and evolving environment.	Essential	A, T, I, P
Ability to create safe, inclusive and psychologically supportive spaces for children and young people, including managing distress, disagreement or dysregulation appropriately.	Essential	A, T, I, P
This is applicable to all roles in WNC that are required to use IT equipment: Demonstrate effective use of Office 365 (incl. Teams, OneDrive, etc.) or willingness to undertake training during the probation period.	Essential	A, T, I, P

Knowledge:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
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In-depth understanding of participation, coproduction and person-centred practice, particularly in relation to children and young people with SEND.	Essential	A, I, P
Knowledge of statutory guidance and national policy expectations relating to participation and governance.	Essential	A, I, P
Understanding of partnership working and governance within a multi-agency local authority context.	Essential	A, I, P
Knowledge of safeguarding frameworks, thresholds and escalation processes relating to work with children and young people.	Essential	A, I, P
Understanding of information governance and data protection requirements, including data minimisation, secure handling and the use of de-identified insight.	Essential	A, I, P
Awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion principles and how these apply to participation with children and young people with diverse needs and experiences.	Essential	A, I, P

Relevant experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Experience of leading, coordinating or delivering participation and/or coproduction activity involving children and young people	Essential	A, I, P
Experience of working across organisational boundaries and with multiple partners to achieve shared objectives.	Essential	A, I, P
Experience of influencing strategic planning, service design or improvement activity through the use of lived experience or qualitative insight.	Essential	A, I, P
Experience of working independently, managing workload and priorities and responding flexibly to changing demands.	Essential	A, I, P
Practical experience of safeguarding, risk assessment and supporting children and young people before, during and after participation activity.	Essential	A, I, P
Experience of working with senior leaders, boards or governance groups, including preparing reports and presenting evidence or findings.	Desirable	A, I, P

Education, training and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
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Educated to degree level or equivalent, or able to demonstrate equivalent level knowledge and skills through relevant professional experience.	Essential	A, I, D
Evidence of ongoing continuing professional development, including learning relevant to leadership, participation, coproduction or system change.	Essential	A, I, D
Specialist training or development in participation, coproduction, codesign or person-centred practice.	Essential	A, I, D

All appointments are subject to standard pre-employment screening. This will include identity, references, proof of right to work in the UK, medical clearance and verification of certificates.

Additional pre-employment checks specific to this role include:

Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check,

Day-to-day in the role:

Job family & salary band:	WNC Band 7	Worker type:	Flexible
People management responsibility:	N/A	Budget responsibility:	N/A

Current pay scales and other benefits are published on the [Jobs and Careers](#) section of West Northamptonshire Council's internet.

Working conditions & how we work:

This role has been identified as a flexible worker type, this means that you will be able to work flexibly dependent on business needs (e.g. attending CYP participation groups) and work from a range of locations, including the office.

Our organisational values and behaviours

Everything we want to achieve for West Northants depends on having the right people in place and doing the right things and we want all colleagues to THRIVE, both personally and professionally. Our values and our behaviours framework underpin how we work and what partners and customers can expect from us. We want to do our very best for our residents, service users and businesses and for our staff – we want everyone to THRIVE.

T Trust	We are honest, fair, transparent and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will.
H High Performing	we get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently.
R Respect	we respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment.
I Innovate	we encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area.
V Value	We continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness
E Empower	we believe in people, will listen, learn and trust them to make decisions. We help people to realise their ambitions.

“Valuing colleagues as individuals and encompassing our different perspectives to deliver our collective ambitions. One West inclusive culture.”

Should you require this document in another format or language, please contact: Careers@westnorthants.gov.uk

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Choose a career that offers you a true sense of achievement, fills you with pride and challenges you in a positive way, everyday.

The benefits of a career at WNC include:

- **People** are at the centre of everything we do. Without our people, we wouldn't be able to deliver services to the people in our community.
- **Ambition** runs through everything we do at West Northants Council, we nurture and develop our people's ambition and willingness to succeed, to continually improve the service we provide to the community.
- **Care** is at the heart of West Northants Council, we care in so many ways; seen and unseen, helping our colleagues and community to thrive.
- **Flexibility** is key, we know work-life balance is critical to wellbeing, so we work hard to make sure our benefits package promotes and improves wellbeing; from annual leave, sick pay, family leave and flexible working, financial security offered by a local government pension scheme and life assurance, and discount schemes which make a difference to your day-to-day life, through to employee helplines offering free legal, health, financial and wellbeing advice and support.

We want you to have balance and be happy.

