



## Job Description

Job Title: Designated Officer (DO)

POSCODE: 2835

Grade: TM

### Overall Purpose of Role

Please write one or two sentences about why the job exists. Focus on the achievement of the key end results of the job.

### Main Accountabilities

The Designated Officer (DO) - formerly LADO) is a specialist independent role with professional accountability enshrined in statutory guidance to deliver Northamptonshire statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the welfare of children.

The DO works within the Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Service (SQAS) and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Main Accountabilities	
1	<p>To respond confidently and comprehensively to allegations against people who work with children within the Local Authority from all organisations who offer a service to children. This will include: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• co-working and direction to Police if the allegation is subject to criminal investigations;</li> <li>• co-working and direction to Child Protection Children's Social Care staff, if the allegation relates to suspected abuse of a child and;</li> <li>• co-working and direction to agencies Human Resources (HR) functions, if the allegation raises concerns about a person's fitness to work with children.</li> </ul> <p>There are times when all 3 investigative strands of the role are present in DO case-work, it is the role of the DO to ensure that these run concurrently, always making sure that safety and welfare of the child is the paramount principle, but also ensuring there are effective, timely outcomes to all investigation elements.</p>
2	<p>To ensure that statutory timescales are met in holding Strategy Meetings and Joint Evaluation Meetings (JEMs) and to make sure that investigative processes are conducted and completed in accordance with statutory guidance; to provide active monitoring of the wider children's workforce to ensure investigations are progressed as required and that all evaluation procedures are adhered to. This requires significant forward-planning capability by the DO to coordinate this across the full range of partners.</p>

	<p>The level of complexity involved in DO casework is significantly more complex than standard single strand (criminal / Child Protection / Human Resources) investigations; the DO must be able to handle a large volume of significantly complex detail, including historic allegations of abuse and act to make sure children are effectively safeguarded whilst agencies systems are demonstrably effective in managing their internal safeguarding arrangements.</p>
3	<p>To work in collaboration with a wide range of organisations from the wider children's workforce to promote and develop good practice and to ensure optimal effectiveness of safeguarding and protection of children and young people. This will include anticipating changes to legislation and guidance in line with current requirements (e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation / Female Genital Mutilation etc.)</p> <p>To provide advice and direction for staff in specified settings and other organisations on the availability, use and application of legislation, guidance and resources in order to improve that agency's safeguarding practice; this can be specific to a case or as part of wider, generic DO accountability / process training. This can include directing independent investigation reports are commissioned to inform DO investigation outcomes.</p>
4	<p>To undertake a quality assurance function in relation to compliance by specified settings and /or their safeguarding / child protection functions.</p> <p>To ensure that current practice is evaluated and development plans are implemented in accordance with identified service need. This is not a direct line management role, but is completed through monthly audit and completion of an annual report and requires the DO to engage with multiple systems across the children's workforce to ensure actions identified are implemented – including procedure change.</p>
5	<p>To ensure training opportunities are made available and to lead and participate in multi-agency training as appropriate. To work with relevant colleagues to develop and implement comprehensive child protection training and professional development strategies for staff in specified settings.</p> <p>To deliver training to staff in specified settings, as required, in partnership with Learning and Development, in order to raise awareness of allegation management and safer recruitment / workforce issues. To hold all agencies to account for effective implementation of safer recruitment and allegation management, including notice to regulatory bodies if there are significant concerns that have not been effectively managed.</p>
6	<p>As well as management of work at case-level, the DO must collate, analyse and report on all confidential and sensitive data relating to allegation management in order to identify issues and trends and to ensure that standards are met and performance targets are achieved.</p> <p>To make specific recommendations to the Strategic Manager for Quality Assurance and Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's (NSC) with regard to identified individual cases or identified themes of work where changes to practice are needed as a result of DO activities.</p> <p>To produce an annual report and present this to Corporate Parenting Board, NSC and other management / governance forums.</p> <p>To advise on media coverage of incidents and coordinate plans in line with relevant organisations.</p>
7	<p>To actively coordinate investigations with Department for Education (DfE), Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC) and other relevant national regulatory professional bodies when there are process or reporting recommendations, particularly when suspension or dismissal is considered. This will include making sure that notifications to national bodies takes place as agreed within DO procedures.</p> <p>The impact of DO case management is critical in maintaining the integrity of agencies' safeguarding arrangements.</p>

	The outcomes from DO investigation oversight can / does result in actions leading to dismissal of individuals & onward reporting of that individual to regulatory bodies.
8	To support the co-ordination and implementation of effective strategies in relation to Child Protection, safeguarding and safer recruitment across all establishments in the wider children's workforce. The impact of effective DO management of agencies' safer recruitment ensures that the children's workforce is maintained at the highest possible standard.
9	To manage and maintain highly sensitive information arising from DO referrals and outcomes within a confidential database, as required by statutory guidance and best practice. To manage, organise, support and maintain the use of information technology, systems and software to constantly refine the database to meet changing reporting requirements.

**Safeguarding commitment** *(Include for roles involving work with children/vulnerable adults)*  
We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults. We require you to understand and demonstrate this commitment.

## Person Specification

### Qualifications, Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Minimum level of qualifications needed for this post

Qualifications Required	Subject	Essential/Desirable
Social Work Degree / DipSW		Essential

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills and experience required for this post

Identify	Details	Essential/Desirable
<b>Knowledge:</b>		
Specialist knowledge, to degree level, of social work with children, young people and families.	Professional Social Worker qualification & registration. Significant experience & capacity to act as an independent worker.	Essential
Significant knowledge, experience and understanding of a wide range of legislation, statutory guidance, policy and procedural frameworks that inform child care practice in specialist social work Children's Services and the wider children's workforce.	Wide-ranging experience & knowledge across all aspects of staff / volunteers within the wider children's workforce, specifically with regard to safeguarding.	Essential

Knowledge & understanding of multiple regulatory and legal frameworks in which services operate, including criminal, child protection, performance management and effective use of data.	Working within the criminal justice system. Working within HR / employment legislation. Working within Children's legislation – CA (1989)	Essential
<b>Skills:</b>		
Ability to convene, chair and manage complex and sensitive strategy meetings relating to allegations against people who work with children, including maintaining accountability / responsibility for any actions arising in these meetings. To ensure appropriate representation by agencies and professionals at meetings, including the involvement of Ofsted and other relevant regulatory bodies where appropriate. To hold partners to account for actions agreed.	Responding within statutory frameworks. Ensuring safeguarding is the primary focus. Fair & transparent processes. Role of regulatory bodies. Enhanced mediation / communication skills & abilities. Confidence in own experience / practice.	Essential
Good IT skills for report writing, e-mails and data recording. High quality written skills are needed to ensure quality reports, records and correspondence are produced, kept and maintained.	Maintaining confidentiality at all times. Secure recording / communication systems. Accurate reporting inc. anticipation of emerging themes & planning for these. High level data / reporting (LSCB etc.)	Essential
Good understanding and knowledge of performance management and analysis, in addition to the ability to offer high support / high challenge to partners and colleagues within the Local Authority following analysis of information.	Practice equivalent to experienced Team Manager. Individual accountability for JEM outcomes. Confidence in managing diverse parallel agendas / processes. Ensuring work / investigations are conducted in a timely manner & challenging this if not.	Essential
Ability to provide training and support to a wide range of partners, adapting training content and style to suit the audience.	Communication skills with diverse audience. Ability to synthesise data into succinct messages. Experience / confidence / gravitas to deliver critical messages to a wide audience	Desirable
<b>Experience:</b>		

<p>Extensive experience and understanding of child protection systems and how they inter-relate in practice.</p>	<p>Wide-ranging experience &amp; knowledge across all aspects of the children's workforce, specifically with regard to safeguarding; how these interact with other statutory guidance.</p>	<p>Essential</p>
<p>A thorough understanding of pertinent legislation and its application including: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (2018); Handling Allegations of Abuse made against Adults who work with children 2009; safeguarding and safe recruitment 2006; The Education Act 2002; The Education (Independent Schools) standards 2010.</p>	<p>Understanding all legislative drivers for actions and ensuring that focus is maintained on the child, without there being unfair detriment to the worker. Seeking to learn &amp; respond to emerging themes.</p>	<p>Essential</p>
<p>Extensive experience of working successfully at a senior [management] level in Children's Social Care with a wide range of contacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of the public</li> <li>• Children, young people and their families</li> <li>• Staff across all services and specialisms within Children's Social Care and wider family services</li> <li>• Foster carers</li> <li>• Staff from partner agencies in the statutory, community and voluntary sector, including the Police.</li> <li>• Staff within the council</li> <li>• Elected members</li> <li>• Members of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Children and Young People's Partnership Board and sub-groups.</li> </ul>	<p>Equivalent to experienced Team Manager within Children's Social Care and capable of working with the full range of Children's Social Care Teams, as well as all teams in the wider children's workforce. Capacity to address all audiences – including senior management of Children, Families &amp; Education, partner agencies. Wide range of knowledge in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable children in all settings across the whole of the children's workforce.</p>	<p>Essential</p>
<p>The DO should have experience equivalent to a Children's Social Care Team Manager / Independent Reviewing Officer / Child Protection Conference Chair and have a wide range of knowledge and skills in order to understand that children can be subjected to abuse by those who work with them in any setting</p>	<p>Wide ranging experience. Confidence in safeguarding knowledge / responsibilities. Capacity to make sure that all processes are followed in the face of challenge.</p>	<p>Essential</p>
<p>The DO should have a wide ranging level of experience,</p>	<p>See above.</p>	<p>Essential</p>

<p>status and knowledge to be able to challenge the full range of practice across the whole of the wider children's workforce; this cannot be achieved with a junior graded post.</p> <p>The DO oversees that all safeguarding duties are adequately followed whilst undertaking this role – including ensuring that: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection procedures are followed</li> <li>• Human Resources procedures are followed</li> <li>• Criminal &amp; / or civil investigations are pursued as required and to be able to hold individuals &amp; organisations to account in doing so.</li> </ul> <p>This is not achieved via simple direct line management direction, but requires the DO to use their skills, experience, knowledge and relationship-building to ensure all safeguarding actions are followed as required.</p>		
<p><b>Safeguarding</b> (<i>include for roles working with children/vulnerable adults</i>)</p>	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of the safe working practices that apply to this role.</p>	
	<p>Ability to work in a way that promotes the safety and well-being of children and young people/vulnerable adults.</p>	
<p>Be able to identify and manage situations which pose a high level of risk to a child, or may invoke media interest or where the reputation of the Council is at stake and then to take action to ensure senior managers are informed and kept up to date with developments; this includes opportunities for local and national interest as a result of location of significant agencies within Northamptonshire (e.g. St. Andrews /Jesus Fellowship / Rainsbrook).</p>	<p>Understanding of reporting duties / requirements. Provision of advice / guidance to agencies in respect of regulatory responsibilities.</p>	<p>Essential</p>
<p>The nature of the work may place high levels of emotional</p>	<p>Working within a highly confidential environment.</p>	<p>Essential</p>

<p>demand on the post-holder, dealing with often stressful situations, making Judgements and decisions which may have a profound effect on an individual child's and family's future. The Designated Officer has to successfully manage meetings which are highly sensitive, emotional, challenging and / or threatening in which passivity, resistance, conflict and anger can be generated.</p>	<p>Ensuring investigations are progressed in a timely manner. Being independently accountable for decision-making. Ability to manage complex investigations across a range of regulatory &amp; legislative frameworks.</p>	
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**Disclosure Level**

<b>What DBS Level is required for this post?</b>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enhanced Child Only	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enhanced Child/Adult Bar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Working Arrangements**

What work type does this role fit into? (tick one box that reflects the main work type, the default workers type is flexible)	
Fixed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Field	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home	<input type="checkbox"/>