

Role Profile

Role Code	Unique	Role Title	Advocate (Child Care)
		Reports to (role title)	Children Adults and Education Group Manager
		Directorate	LDC
		Service	Legal Services
		Team	Legal Child Care Team
		Date Role Profile was created	Jul-16
Role Purpose	To provide legal advice and representation to the County Council in order to ensure an excellent and continuously improving legal service for the County Council in accordance with its values, specifically as an advocate in litigation on behalf of the County Council at all levels, including hearings of several days and those involving issues of particular complexity.		
Work Context	<p>The post is court based, but also involves case preparation. The person should be able to work from home and assistance will be given for this (laptop, blackberry etc). Administrative assistance and hotdesking facilities will also be available at County Hall.</p> <p>The Group manager/principal lawyers will allocate hearings to the advocate following requests from team lawyers. The advocate will be responsible for managing their own diary. They will have regular supervision sessions with the Group Manager. The post holder will be required to develop a good working relationship with the client and other team members and to keep the client and relevant team lawyer regularly updated on the progress of a matter. They will be obliged to keep up-to-date with relevant law and technology and to meet their CPD training requirements, for which training courses will be made available to assist the person in achieving this.</p> <p>The nature of the work will require attendance at Court and preparation of cases at times and on some occasions that are outside of normal office hours. The advocate will need to be flexible to accommodate these requirements.</p>		
Representative Accountabilities	<p>To act as an advocate on behalf of the County Council primarily in relation to child care and related court proceedings, and also in other proceedings as required. To provide advocacy at all levels, including the High Court. To provide advocacy for cases, including hearings of several days and involving issues of complexity where required and to take such cases at short notice as necessary.</p> <p>To act as an advocate in cases prepared by team lawyers within the child care (or other) team and to take on responsibility for all matters related to the conduct of the hearing and of reporting actions and outcomes to the client and the relevant team lawyer. This will include the drafting of court documents such as case summaries, skeletons and legal position statements.</p> <p>To provide expert legal advice to the team and the client on the quality of evidence, the strength of cases and other legal or technical issues which need to be addressed in the context of the proceedings or any potential proceedings.</p> <p>Providing training, in conjunction with other team members, to other members of Legal Services and clients to ensure that they are kept up to date and are acting in accordance with the law.</p> <p>To assist the Service in achieving the targets set out in the Service Plan, including participating in projects and cross team working as required.</p> <p>To support the Head of Legal Services in her role as Monitoring Officer in her duty to advise the County Council of illegality and procedural default.</p> <p>Conduct all work in accordance with practice management standards laid down by the Law Society (Lexcel) and all other departmental and corporate performance standards in order to maintain a standard of excellence.</p> <p>Keep up to date with any changes in the law by use of relevant software, internet and other resources to ensure that clients receive effective and efficient legal advice.</p> <p>To provide office cover as required by the Group Manager from time to time.</p> <p>Promote equality issues to ensure equality, fairness and dignity to service delivery and employment and promote a learning culture that supports excellent standards of service, innovation, partnerships and continuous improvement.</p>		

Duties For all:	<p>Values: To uphold the values and behaviours of the organisation</p> <p>Equality & Diversity: To work inclusively, with a diverse range of stakeholders and promote equality of opportunity</p> <p>Health, Safety & Welfare: To maintain high standards of Health, Safety and Welfare at work and take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others</p>
Line management responsibility if applicable	N/a
Budget responsibility if applicable	N/a
Education, Knowledge, Skills & Abilities, Experience and Personal Characteristics	<p>Solicitor or Barrister or FCILEX, fully qualified to practise in England and Wales and who currently has or who is immediately able to obtain a practising certificate.</p> <p>Recent significant experience of legal practice in public child care law including significant advocacy experience in this area including contested final hearings.</p> <p>Expertise in the law and practice relating to public child care law.</p> <p>Excellent knowledge of with the rules of evidence and practice within the family courts.</p> <p>A sound understanding of the political and policy context within which care proceedings and children's services operate both nationally and locally.</p> <p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide prompt and accurate legal advice • communicate clearly both orally and in writing • work objectively, calmly and efficiently under pressure • contribute to the work of a team and to work well with both legal and support staff, clients and consultants • work effectively with the Courts, solicitors for other parties and others involved to ensure effective and timely outcomes for children in care proceedings cases. <p>Excellent advocacy and research skills.</p> <p>Reliable and conscientious.</p> <p>Willingness to work flexibly and be able to adapt as necessary.</p> <p>Excellent negotiation skills.</p> <p>Proficient in using IT including Word, Lotus Notes (or equivalent email product) and electronic document management and case management system.</p> <p>Willing and able to travel within the County.</p>
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