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| **Head of service for children in care and care leavers****SALARY GRADE: Divisional Manager 4** | Halton Borough Council resourcing@halton.gov.uk |
| Working at Halton |
| All our colleagues at Halton have made a positive commitment to delivering great outcomes for our communities. Whoever joins us will share that passion for outstanding service, and strongly align with the values which define our workplace culture: * Working Together – building fantastic relationships with colleagues and customers
* Continuous Improvement – Keeping great service delivery at the heart of everything we do
* Personal Growth – Learning, growing and developing ourselves
* Accountability – doing what we say we are going to do
* Inspiring Leadership – positive roles models and leading by example

*To read more about our values, click* [*HERE*](https://haltoncouncilcareers.co.uk/values/)**We are immensely proud that when asked what’s great about working for Halton, the most popular response from our workforce has been ‘*our colleagues’*.**Aside from working with a great team, our employees have access to a fantastic range of benefits, including:* A generous annual holiday allowance starting at 34 days per year (including bank holidays), increasing with long service
* Membership of our defined benefit, salary-linked pension scheme with generous Employer Contributions
* 3 x Salary Life Cover via Local Government Pension Scheme
* Investment in your personal development
* Free Car Parking at HBC sites
* Flexible / hybrid working arrangements available
* Car leasing schemes
* Essential Monthly Car User Allowance

*For further information about all the benefits we offer, please click* [*HERE*](https://haltoncouncilcareers.co.uk/benefits/)*.* |
| About the Job  |
| As the Head of Service for Children in Care and Care Leavers, you will lead and manage a high quality, effective and responsive service, delivering the following functions to partner agencies and the community in line with statutory and legal duties and the requirements of Ofsted inspections:· Children in Care· Fostering and Adoption· Residential Children’s Home· Performance Management and development of the serviceMore specific responsibilities include:* Lead, manage and develop the staff in the service (including planning of work and performance management) so they are appropriately deployed to provide and effective service.
* Be responsible for the delivery of a quality service so that they key aims of the Council and the needs of the wider community are met.
* Support the Director of Children’s Services by input into and implementation of the Business plan to enable the broader aims of the Department and Directorate to be achieved.
* Develop with the Director of Children’s Services the annual self-assessment and improvement plans as required by Ofsted and the Regional Improvement Alliance.
* Develop action plans in anticipation of and in response to Ofsted inspections to ensure identified areas have been addressed and progress against objectives is clearly evidenced.
* Establish sound and sustainable partnerships both internally and externally with organisations/stakeholders to ensure delivery of the service is on an integrated basis and within operational guideline.
* Operate within and make best use of the allocated budget to respond to service needs. Proactively manage, monitor and report on all the budgets allocated to the service area, or on projects for which the service is responsible, and secure financial efficiencies wherever possible. Apply for external funding where possible to develop the service.
* Review and monitor the service’s performance against local, regional and national standards and key performance indicators so that necessary improvements are identified and implemented.
* Provide professional advice, guidance and present reports on matters related to the service for Members and Senior Management so that the Council achieves its aims and objectives.
* Keep under review and recommend changes to methods of service delivery to optimise working practices.
* Attend external forums and represent the service on the Halton Safeguarding Children and Young People Partnership sub-groups so the views of the service are appropriately represented and best practice is shared and integrated within the service.
* Ensure all statutory and legal obligations applicable to the service (including the Council’s Standing Orders, health and safety, risk management, equality of opportunity and mandatory training) are complied with.
* Promote diversity and equality of opportunity to ensure the Council’s standards are met both in employment and across the wider community.
* Participate in disciplinary/capability/ dignity at work hearings as required. Liaise with the social work in England professional regulator, Social Work England, about the registration status of social workers and their fitness to practice and participate in fitness to practice hearings as required.
* Liaise effectively with the Head of Service for Early Help and Children in Care and Care Leavers to ensure that there is a seamless transition between each service for children and families and opportunities for shared and joint working are maximised.
* Provide strong and visible leadership for the service and ensure the social work model of practice is embedded.
* Act as a counter-signatory for applications to the Criminal Records Disclosure and Barring Service.

Children in Care and Care Leavers:* Ensure that there is a continued effective and integrated multi-agency partnership working to deliver improved outcomes for children in care and care leavers.
* Apply learning and best practice identified through quality assurance and feedback from region and national events, partners, children and families to ensure the service continually improves.
* Ensure the service delivers permanency for children in care in a timely manner through adoption, long-term stable placements and discharge from care.
* Ensure the service supports children and young people to reach their potential through education, employment and training.
* Ensure through leadership, supervision, training and development that a systemic social work model of practice is further developed, embedded and sustained throughout the service.
* Ensure through effective performance and quality assurance (including audits) that assessments and plans are of a consistent standard, have the child’s lived experience at the heart and are outcome based.
* Ensure through effective performance management and quality assurance (including audits) that standards for effective child protection investigations are consistently met and children are effectively safeguarded from significant harm.
* Support frontline staff in making clear and evidenced based decisions in managing risk, and through innovative and creative plans support children and young people to have the right placement at the right time.
* Support the Director of Children’s Services via Legal Gateway meetings in the decision of when to issue formal care and to undertake the deputy ADM role in support of the Director of Children’s Services.
* Authorise timely discharge applications of care orders, ensuring the plan is outcome focused and agree any resource implications during proceedings in line with financial delegation.
* Liaise with CAFCASS and the Designated Family Judge to ensure Halton maintains an excellent reputation in the court.
* Support the development of the Children in Care Council and ensure their voices, views and experiences directly inform the development of the service
* Drive and champion Permanency across the service and ensure robust governance to track and drive permanency planning for every child.

Fostering and Adoption:* Ensure the fostering service is able to meet needs of children in care by effective recruitment, training and support of foster carers in line with regulations and to be the named responsible individual for Halton fostering agency and for Halton adoption agency as registered with Ofsted.
* Deputise as Agency Decision Maker for the Director of Children’s Services for fostering approvals and adopters and matching of children for adoption
* Represent the council in the future development of the Foster4 collaboration
* Represent the council in the appropriate sub-groups of the Regional Adoption Agency (Together4Adoption) and deputise for the Director of Children’s Services at the Partnership Board as required.

Residential Children’s Home (Inglefield):* Ensure the short break residential unit for children with disabilities meets the requirements set out by Ofsted and to be the named responsible individual with Ofsted.
* Support the registered manager in the effective delivery of the service.
* Be the named Responsible Individual for this children’s home.

Workforce Development:* Ensure there is the right balance of skills and knowledge and capacity in the service to meet the needs of the service.
* Keep caseloads under regular review, identify and implement support to managers to manage caseloads and where necessary, ensure there is a robust business case to the Director of Children’s Services for agency staff, or changes to existing job roles or for additional permanent capacity.
* Identify and address any gaps in training and development to ensure the workforce remains skilled and knowledgeable and commission specific professional training when required and in line with the budget.
* Oversee the workforce recruitment and development strategy to ensure we recruit and retain social workers at the frontline and support workers in the residential setting and in the care leaver’s service.

Performance Management:* Review performance information, and identify and address any trends or patterns which emerge to ensure the expected targets are met.
* Undertake regular audits of the quality and effectiveness of practice, and contribute to multi-agency audits. Prepare a report and action plan in response which identifies good practice and areas for development and ensure actions are completed.
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| About You |
| As an ideal candidate, you must have a relevant professional Social Work Qualification and must be Social Work England registered. A management qualification is desirable.In addition you will have:* Management experience in a local authority or similar organization, with knowledge of government initiatives.
* Expertise in best practices and research, with experience supporting operational services in Children & Young Peoples settings.
* Staff supervision and leadership experience, with the ability to motivate and influence others.
* Knowledge of relevant legislation, policies, and procedures, with experience in writing and implementing them in a political context.
* Experience in inter-agency collaboration and chairing multi-agency forums, with the ability to build networks at all levels.
* Skilled in managing engagement with diverse groups in challenging situations, including those involving hostility and risk.
* Ability to foster a culture of compassionate relationships with professionals, service users, and caregivers, ensuring legal and ethical information sharing.
* Proficient in using professional judgment to promote support, protection, and positive change.
* Proven technical skills and success in delivering outcomes in a senior role.
* Professional credibility through relevant experience.
* Strong communication and presentation skills, with the ability to quickly build relationships.
* Creative problem-solving skills to drive systemic change.
* Experience in financial management and budget monitoring.
* Knowledge of performance monitoring and management systems.
* Proven relevant experience demonstrating professional credibility.

As this role involves regular travel across the borough and sometimes further afield, a driving license and access to a vehicle are essential requirements. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act.The Council and its schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults and expect all staff, workers and volunteers to share its commitment. |
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