Job Description

This job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work required of the post to indicate the level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list, and the line manager may vary duties from time to time which do not change the general character of the job, or the level of responsibility entailed.

Post Details	
Job Title	Strategy and Policy Manager
Service	Children's Services
Team	Children's Strategy, Transformation and Commissioning
Location	Hybrid/Shute End
Reports to	Head of Strategy, Transformation and Improvement
Responsible for	Up to 3 Officers (Strategy and Policy officers, Senior Transformation and Commissioning Officers, Transformation and Commissioning Officers)
Grade	11
Contract Type	Perm
Hours	Full Time

Main Accountabilities

Private: Information that contains a small amount of sensitive data which is essential to communicate with an individual but doesn't require to be sent via secure methods.

1.	Strategic Planning and Policy Development • Lead and coordinate the development, review and refresh of high-quality strategies across Children's Services, supporting Heads of Service to develop and deliver strategies within their respective service areas while ensuring consistency of approach and quality. • Work collaboratively with subject matter experts and service leaders to translate national policy, local priorities and reform requirements into clear, deliverable strategic frameworks and action plans. • Directly lead the development of selected corporate or cross-cutting strategies where commissioned to do so by senior leaders. • Ensure all strategies are evidence-informed, co-produced and aligned with the Council Plan, Corporate Strategy, statutory requirements and inspection frameworks. • Maintain a Children's Services Strategy Register, ensuring strategies, delivery plans and refresh cycles are planned, monitored and reviewed. • Develop and maintain a suite of strategy, action plan and policy templates, guidance and quality standards informed by best practice. • Work closely with the Corporate Strategy Team to ensure alignment between Children's Services priorities and wider organisational objectives. • Maintain awareness of emerging policy, legislation and national reform, advising leaders on implications and opportunities.

2.	System Insight, Research and Data-Led Policy
	• Work collaboratively with operational services, performance teams, commissioning colleagues and partners to develop, interpret and quality assure data, research and intelligence that informs strategic decision making. • Coordinate, support and quality assure needs assessments, sufficiency assessments, market position statements and thematic reviews produced across Children's Services. • Ensure strategic planning is informed by robust evidence, demographics, demand forecasting, performance intelligence and user feedback. • Produce clear insight reports and strategic briefings for senior leaders, Members and partnership boards. • Support services to strengthen the use of evidence, forecasting and modelling in strategy development and long-term planning.
3.	**Strategy Delivery, Monitoring and Accountability** • Maintain oversight of progress against agreed strategy delivery plans and action plans across Children's Services. • Monitor milestones, outcomes, risks and dependencies, providing challenge, support and escalation where delivery is off track. • Coordinate regular reporting on strategic priorities to leadership teams, governance boards and partnership forums. • Support Heads of Service to identify corrective actions and improvements required to achieve strategic objectives. • Ensure delivery plans remain current, measurable and aligned with agreed outcomes and performance frameworks.

4.	Programme Alignment and Transformation Support • Work collaboratively with the Transformation Programme to ensure policy, strategy and transformation workstreams are fully aligned. • Produce strategic narratives, business cases and governance papers that support programme delivery and decision-making. • Identify cross-cutting risks, dependencies and opportunities across strategic priorities. • Support the Head of Strategy, Transformation and Improvement in embedding continuous improvement and consistent strategic approaches across the Directorate.
5.	Partnership, Engagement and Co-production • Lead and coordinate engagement activity to shape strategies, ensuring meaningful co-production with children, young people, families, practitioners and partners. • Work closely with the Participation Team to ensure the voice of children and young people is embedded throughout strategy development, implementation and review. • Build effective working relationships across Education, Health, Social Care, Finance, Legal, Corporate Strategy and other council services to secure collective ownership of strategic priorities. • Represent Children's Services in multi-agency forums and partnership groups to support shared priorities and system-wide improvement. • Ensure all strategies reflect statutory duties relating to inclusion, equality, diversity, participation and safeguarding.
6.	Governance, Assurance and Compliance • Ensure strategic documents and policies meet governance requirements, quality standards, approval processes and publication expectations. • Maintain oversight of the Children's Services Strategy Register, ensuring strategies, action plans and review cycles remain current. • Support inspection readiness by ensuring strategic frameworks, delivery plans and evidence bases align with Ofsted, CQC and national expectations. • Monitor implementation of strategic commitments and support assurance reporting to senior leaders and governance boards. • Contribute to strategic risk management, ensuring key risks, dependencies and mitigations are reflected within relevant governance arrangements.
7.	Leadership and Management • Provide professional leadership, supervision and direction for cross-service project teams. • Promote a culture of high performance, collaboration, continuous improvement and learning. • Model the Council's values and behaviours, fostering an inclusive and positive working environment across Children's Services. • Deputise for the Head of Strategy, Transformation and Improvement when required.

Person Specification	Essential	Desirable
Education/Qualifications	Educated to degree level or equivalent OR extensive experience in Children's Services and Transformation. Evidence of continued professional development.	Project management qualification (e.g. PRINCE2, Agile, MSP).
Experience	Significant experience developing strategies or policies within Children's Services, Education, Social Care or related public sector environments. Strong understanding of national policy, legislation and regulatory frameworks relating to children and families. Experience conducting needs assessments, research, analysis and translating evidence into strategic priorities. Demonstrable experience in co-production and engaging children, families and professionals. Understanding of transformation, commissioning and/or service improvement methodologies. Experience working within complex partnership environments (LA, Health, Schools, VCS, etc.).	<Preferred experience>
Skills/Knowledge	In-depth knowledge of at least one area of children's services across Early Help, Social Care, Education, and Health, with awareness of relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and safeguarding responsibilities.	<Nice-to-have skills.>

	Excellent strategic thinking, analytical and problem-solving skills. Ability to write high-quality strategic documents suitable for senior leaders, corporate boards, and inspectors. Strong facilitation, communication and negotiation skills across all levels. High level of political awareness, judgement and discretion. Proven ability to foster collaborative partnerships across sectors and embed the voice of children and families in service design.	
Behaviours/Attributes	Collaborative and inclusive leadership style. Outcome-focused and committed to delivering positive impact. Resilient and adaptable in a fast-paced, changing environment. Values-driven, with a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Proactive and solution-oriented, with a continuous improvement mindset.	

Purpose Details	
Service Purpose	The Children's Transformation, Strategy and Commissioning Service has a pivotal role in shaping and delivering high-quality, child-centred services that improve outcomes for children, young people, and families. The Service leads on strategic planning, service transformation, and commissioning to ensure that services are evidence-based, cost effective, and responsive to the needs of the local population. Working collaboratively across the council, with partners in health, education, and the voluntary sector, we will ensure that children's services are designed and delivered in a way that promotes early intervention, prevention, and long-term positive impact. The team also drives innovation, supports continuous improvement, and ensures that the voice of children and families is central to all decision-making across Early Help, Social Care, Home Finding, Education and Health. Working collaboratively across the council, with partners in health, education, and the voluntary sector, we actively engage in relational commissioning—building and sustaining strong, trust-based partnerships to co-design and deliver services that best meet local needs. By working system-wide, we identify emerging needs and gaps in provision and allocate resources flexibly and responsively to where they can have the greatest impact. The team also drives innovation, supports continuous improvement, and ensures that the voice of children and families is central to all decision-making across Early Help, Social Care, Home Finding, Education, and Health.

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Role Purpose	The Strategy and Policy Manager provides strategic leadership, coordination and assurance for the development, implementation and review of Children's Services strategies, policies and delivery plans. Working closely with Heads of Service, senior leaders, partners and subject matter experts, the postholder supports the development of high-quality, evidence-informed strategies that improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

	The role maintains oversight of strategic delivery across Children's Services, ensuring that agreed priorities are translated into measurable action plans, monitored effectively and aligned with corporate priorities, national reform and statutory responsibilities. The postholder leads strategic coordination, facilitates co-production and engagement activity, maintains the Children's Services Strategy Register and provides quality assurance for strategic documents and delivery plans. Through collaboration with operational services, performance teams, partners and the Corporate Strategy Team, the postholder ensures Children's Services strategies are coherent, current, evidence-based and focused on achieving long-term improvement and sustainable outcomes.

Supervision and Relationships	
Supervision Received	Reporting to the Head of Strategy, Transformation and Improvement including regular 1-1's and annual performance review, as well as general guidance and support from matrix manager (on programmes) and Service Director.
Supervision Given	Line management of Commissioning Officer Provide regular 1-1/supervision and annual appraisals We operate within a matrix management framework in which staff retain a designated line manager for formal supervision, performance management and support, while also receiving task-based leadership, direction and coordination from project or portfolio leads. This approach enables flexible deployment of skills across programmes of work while maintaining clear accountability for line management responsibilities
Contacts/Stakeholders	• Children's Services Leadership Team • Elected Members • Children's Services teams including Early Help, SEND, Early Years, Education, Social Care teams, Performance Team, Children with Disabilities Team, Transitions Team • Other internal services including Public Health, Finance, Place and Growth, Community and Change, Performance, Adult Social Care and Adult Strategy and Commissioning, SENDIASS • ICB, NHS Trusts • Social Care, Education and health providers • Voluntary and community sector organisations including those representing advocacy or children's voice • Parent Carer organisations

Resources/Budget Management

Overall responsibility for up to 4 members of staff

Budget Responsibility: May have revenue and capital budgets for programmes of work these will be variable

Special Requirements
• Travel is required to attend specific events or meetings, or undertake visits to Providers/Suppliers • There may be occasions where working outside of normal office hours is required to attend relevant boards and meetings

Occupational Health Risk Assessment	Details
Skin/Respiratory Sensitisers	N
Working at Height	N
Exposure to Noise (>80-85dB)	N
Confined Spaces	N
Frequent Display Screen Equipment Use	Y
Driving for Work	Y
Hand Arm Vibration	N
Lone Working	N
Healthcare/Social Contact with Patients	N
Blood Borne Viruses Exposure	N
Food Handling	N
Working with Animals	N
Specialised Medical Screening	N
Night Working	N

Safety Critical Work	N

Nature of the Role	Details
Healthcare or Hospital Work	N
Working with Children (under 18)	Y
Working with Elderly/Vulnerable Adults	<Y
Work Environment Details	

Role Involvement	Details
Working with Children	Y
Working with Vulnerable Adults	Y
Both of the Above	Y
Providing Care/Supervision for Children	N
Providing Care/Supervision for Vulnerable Adults	N
Both of the Above	N
None of the Above	N

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)	Details
DBS Requirement	Enhanced DBS
Eligibility Tool	Find out which DBS check is right for your employee - GOV.UK (Find out which DBS check is right for your employee - GOV.UK)

Re-checks

Basic DBS

Evaluation Declaration	
Date of Evaluation:	22/07/2026
Evaluated by:	HR Team