

JOB DESCRIPTION

Departmental Management Team

JOB TITLE:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
DIVISION:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES
GRADE:	CHIEF OFFICER BAND A
RESPONSIBLE TO:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
POST REFERENCE:	107186

Purpose of Post

This is a pivotal leadership role within Children's Services, providing strategic direction and system leadership for Children and Families Services across Hartlepool. As a member of the Council's Senior Leadership Team, the postholder will work alongside the Executive Director of Children's Services to deliver the Council's vision, values and priorities, ensuring children, young people and families receive high-quality, child-centred support that improves outcomes and life chances.

The postholder will lead an ambitious programme of improvement and transformation across children's social care, driving a culture that is strengths-based, relationship-focused and centred on achieving the best possible outcomes for children and families.

Providing visible and influential system leadership, the postholder will champion a One Directorate, One Team approach, fostering effective collaboration within and across services and partnerships to ensure children and families receive the right help, at the right time, and that the Council fulfils its responsibilities as a safeguarding partner and corporate parent. Through innovation, partnership working and continuous improvement, they will support the development of sustainable services that reduce inequalities, strengthen family resilience and enable children and young people to thrive within their families and communities wherever it is safe to do so.

Key Relationships

- Chief Executive and Executive Director of Children's Services
- Lead Member Children's Services
- Executive Leadership and Senior Management Teams
- Departmental Management Team
- Children, young people, their families and carers
- Children's workforce

- Colleagues from partner organisations including those in statutory, voluntary, independent and faith sector partners

Main Duties and Responsibilities

The primary purpose of the postholder is to provide strategic leadership for Children's Social Care services, ensuring children, young people and families receive high-quality, relationship-based and strengths-led support that promotes safety, wellbeing and positive outcomes. The postholder will lead the effective discharge of the Council's statutory responsibilities, champion excellence in practice, drive continuous improvement, and provide visible leadership across the local children's system to ensure children and families receive the right help, at the right time, from the right professionals.

The postholder will have lead responsibility for the following duties:

1.Strategic Leadership and Corporate Responsibilities

- Lead the provision of social care services for children, young people and their families to improve their health, development, life chances and outcomes.
- Lead and drive, in partnership with the Directorate Management Team, service transformation and continuous improvement to achieve better outcomes for children, young people, and families in line with national policy and local priorities.
- Working closely with the Executive Director of Children's Services, ensure the statutory duties of the Council as they relate to this field are fully discharged.
- Act as an active member of the Council's Senior Leadership Team, contributing to corporate priorities, organisational development and the achievement of wider Council objectives.
- Champion a One Directorate, One Team culture across Children's Social Care, Education, Youth Services and Youth Justice Services, promoting collaboration, shared accountability and integrated working to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Contribute to the development of, and articulate, the Council's vision within the directorate to ensure its delivery in a way that meets statutory obligations, policy objectives and value for money.
- Work collaboratively across Children's Services, wider Council directorates and partner organisations to design and deliver transformational change, embedding a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, shared accountability and collective ownership of outcomes.
- Establish effective relationships with Elected Members providing clear, balanced advice and guidance on issues that achieve the service objectives.

2. Children's Social Care

Lead the delivery of Children's Social Care services within allocated budgets and drive continuous improvement in:

- The arrangements to safeguard children, promote their welfare and ensure the effective implementation of legal and statutory duties.



- The provision and commissioning of safe, effective and high-quality children's services that are responsive to local need and delivered within a clear quality framework.
- The delivery of preventative and statutory Youth Justice Services to children and young people involved in, or at risk of entering, the criminal justice system.
- Provide strategic leadership and oversight of the Children's Hub and Multi-Agency Child Protection Team arrangements, ensuring effective multi-agency decision-making, information sharing and timely responses for children and families requiring support, protection or intervention.
- Provide visible system leadership across safeguarding and children's partnerships, fostering strong relationships and collective accountability with education, health, police, justice, voluntary, community and faith sector partners.
- Develop, implement and maintain strategies, policies and procedures for areas of responsibility and ensure compliance and delivery.
- Lead, alongside other members of the Directorate Management Team, the implementation of national Children's Social Care reforms, sector-led improvement activity and emerging best practice, ensuring services are evidence-informed, strengths-based and focused on improving outcomes for children and families.

3.Children in Our Care, Corporate Parenting and Permanence

- Lead and promote the Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities, ensuring children in care and care leavers receive high-quality support, advocacy and opportunities to thrive and achieve their full potential.
- Ensure the provision of high-quality support and services for children in our care and those leaving our care, meeting their educational, health, developmental, social and emotional needs at all times.
- Provide strategic leadership for family networks, kinship care and permanence, ensuring children are supported to remain safely within their families and communities wherever possible, and that family-led solutions are embedded throughout practice and service delivery.
- Provide strategic leadership for sufficiency, fostering and placement provision, ensuring there is a sufficient range of high-quality placements and care arrangements to meet the needs of children in our care.
- Act as the Council's Agency Decision Maker.

4.Performance, Quality and Service Improvement

- Ensure effective use of performance management, quality assurance, audit, data benchmarking and management systems to secure consistently high standards of performance and continuous improvement.
- Champion a culture of high-quality practice, learning, professional curiosity and reflective practice, ensuring services are evidence-informed and focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Ensure appropriate risk management, financial management, governance and service management arrangements are in place across the service.
- Optimise service performance and delivery through the efficient and effective use of available financial, human and physical resources, promoting continuous improvement through a whole-system approach.

5.Participation, Partnerships and Influence

- Ensure effective consultation, participation, engagement and co-production with stakeholders, particularly children, young people and families.
- Ensure the voices, experiences and aspirations of children, young people and families are central to strategic decision-making, service design, commissioning, evaluation and continuous improvement.
- Maintain and foster effective partnerships to promote collaboration, improve outcomes for children and families, enhance the reputation of services and actively celebrate success and achievement.
- Represent the Council at local, regional and national partnerships, boards and forums, influencing policy development, promoting best practice and supporting innovative approaches that improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

6.Leadership, Workforce and Organisational Culture

- Provide strategic leadership, support and direction to Children and Families teams, ensuring staff are motivated, developed and empowered to deliver excellent services.
- Foster a positive, supportive and learning-focused culture where employees understand their contribution to the Council's vision and feel valued, respected and included.
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring these principles are embedded in leadership, decision-making, workforce development and service delivery.
- Support elected members in their role as community leaders by providing professional advice, information and strategic support.
- Work jointly with Assistant Directors and partners across Children's Services, and wider, to deliver integrated, place-based and family-centred services that prioritise prevention, early intervention and inclusion.
- Act as a visible and influential leader and ambassador for Hartlepool, championing the aspirations of children and young people and promoting a culture where everyone works together as One Team to improve life chances and create positive futures.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant health, safety and wellbeing requirements and undertake any additional duties commensurate with the responsibilities and strategic nature of the post.

Over time Council services change and develop. This can impact upon the main duties and responsibilities of the role, and subsequently the post holder will be required to adapt. Any changes will be appropriate to the grading of the post and will be made in discussion with the post holder.

Date: 22 July 2026

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS. IF THIS POST IS SUBJECT TO SAFER RECRUITMENT MEASURES THEN A DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECK WILL BE REQUIRED.

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<u>REQUIREMENTS</u>	<u>ESSENTIAL CRITERIA</u> Please indicate in brackets after each criteria how this will be verified i.e. (F), (I), (T), (R)	<u>DESIRABLE</u> Please indicate how this will be verified i.e.
- Educational/vocational/occupational qualifications and/or training - - Specific qualifications (or equivalents)	A degree or relevant equivalent professional or qualification Occupational (F) Qualified Social Worker (F) Registered with Social Work England (F)	Management
- Work or other relevant experience	A proven track record of consistent and demonstrable leadership and achievement within the field of children's social care with a developed understanding of the legal and regulatory framework and issues facing children, young people and their families (F, I) A demonstrable track record of leading, motivating and managing teams to achieve high performance, sustainable service improvements and outstanding results through internal and external partnership (F, I) Experience of promoting and sustaining a culture that meets the needs of and engages with customers and staff within a safe open and high performance working environment (F, I) Evidence of establishing and sustaining a performance management culture to drive continuous improvement including service planning, target setting, performance appraisal and the management of diverse staff groups (F, I) A track record of working in and forging successful partnerships with a wide range of internal and external bodies including other local authorities, statutory, private, voluntary and community sector organisations (F, I) Evidence of working effectively within a political environment providing clear balanced advice and guidance on issues that achieve the service objectives (F, I) Experience of budget planning, management and control (F, I) Experience in and detailed understanding of Local Government or public sector (F, I)	

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- Skills, Abilities, Knowledge and Competencies	Knowledge of legislation, statutory guidance and policy direction that governs practice in children's social care (F, I) A high degree of political awareness and capable of working effectively with the political dimension; ability to support elected members in undertaking their roles as community leaders and ward members (F, I) Ability to lead and manage change and develop services whilst maintaining consistency with corporate values and ethics. (F,I) Develop effective working relationships with staff and managers (F, I) Ability to optimise service performance and delivery ensuring efficient and effective use of the available resources (F, I) Ability to develop effective external relationships and working with communities and other agencies (F, I) Maintain focus on strategic and long term issues which inform operational service delivery in context of the organisation's strategic and operational capacity (F, I) Create a supportive learning and development environment where a culture of learning is promoted and constructive feedback on the service provided is encouraged (F, I) Ability to make difficult decisions in a challenging environment with solution focused, problem solving, evidence based decision making approach (F, I) An inspirational and effective communicator (F, I) Demonstrate good financial grip and management (F, I)	Media response
- General Competencies	An effective leader and manager who is energetic, determined, positive, fair and resilient enough to cope with the demands of the role (F, I) An enthusiastic and effective individual with a strong commitment to improving performance and ensuring the service meet the needs of the communities it serves (F, I) A positive role model promoting high standards of ethical behaviour, probity, integrity and honesty with credibility across a wide range of audiences and respect for all (F, I)	

	An innovator and motivator who can promote new and creative thinking and a corporate focus to achieving Council's objectives and continuous improvement, best value, service excellence and equal opportunities (F, I) A persuasive and effective influencer who can develop partnerships work collaboratively across boundaries and achieve performance and results through others (F, I)	
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On-going Training Requirements

The post holder will be required to undertake the following mandatory/essential training at the frequency indicated.

Mandatory/Essential Training	Frequency
Children's Safeguarding Maintain professional registration and meet Continuous Professional Development requirements	Three yearly Annually

Please note all appointments within Hartlepool Borough Council are subject to a declaration of medical fitness by the Council's Occupational Health Service (having made reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act (2010) where necessary.

Date: 22 July 2026

PERSON SPECIFICATION: Assistant Director, Children and Families

POST REFERENCE: 107186

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