

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

Designation: Independent Fostering Panel Member **Grade:** Casual

Main Purpose of the job:

We are looking to recruit an Independent Fostering panel member with care experience to join our central list of panel members.

About the role

You do not need experience of sitting on Fostering Panels, as long as you have transferable skills, including the ability to respectfully challenge when needed and be child focused.

Responsibilities and Personal Duties:

1. To read the circulated panel pack information carefully before the Panel meetings, to attend the Panels on time, be prepared to raise issues and to contribute to the panel discussion.
2. To take responsibility for participating in the making of a recommendation on each case, drawing on personal knowledge and experience.
3. To attend at least 75% of meetings of the panel.
4. To participate with other panel members, in advising on policy and procedural matters as required.
5. To address diversity issues and promote anti-discriminatory practice.
6. To respond promptly to the Panel coordinator/administrator.
7. To Safeguard the confidentiality of all panel papers and panel discussions.
8. To participate in an agreed appraisal system.
9. To participate in Panel induction and in Panel training, this will be at least one day per year.
10. To be prepared to attend additional panels where needed, if requested.
11. To adhere to the boroughs panel members code of conduct.

Person Specification

Experience

- Direct personal experience of the care system and can bring unique, lived insights into the care process such as being a former foster child or care leaver.

Knowledge

- An understanding of neglect, trauma, separation, and loss on children who are cared for by the Local Authority and in foster care is essential.
- Understanding of the diverse needs of children who are looked after and in foster care is essential.
- Awareness of the richness of different kinds of families and their potential for meeting children's needs.
- Some understanding of the purpose and function of the panel and of the agency which the panel is serving, or a willingness to learn is desirable.
- Must be IT literate.

Abilities

- Good listening and communication skills.
- The ability to read, process and analyze large amounts of complex and sometimes distressing information.
- The ability to make an assessment and to form a view, based on the written and verbal information presented to panel, and the confidence to articulate this at panel.
- The ability to use personal experience to contribute to discussions and decision-making in a balanced and informed manner.
- The ability to work co-operatively as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- The ability to attend at least 75% of panel meetings, arrive on time, and attend training each year.

Attitudes

- A commitment to keeping children within their own family or community where this is possible.
- A commitment to fostering as a way of meeting a child's need for permanence, where this appears to be in the child's best interest.
- A commitment to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare in foster care.
- Valuing diversity in relation to issues of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, sexuality and neurodiversity.
- An understanding of, and a commitment to, the need for confidentiality.
- A willingness to increase knowledge and understanding of issues through reading, discussion, and training.
- A willingness to contribute constructively to the annual appraisal process.

Panels take place fortnightly and are held face to face at 45 Bromley Road Catford London SE6.

Fees for full-day panel attendance are £250 and £150 for half day panel. The fee includes reading and preparation time.

DBS Disclosure Required? **No** **Basic** **Enhanced**

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor)