



## **Director for UK Practice & Innovation**

### **Core purpose of job:**

To be a member of the Senior Leadership Team, focused on delivering the vision and strategic objectives of The Fostering Network (TFN); with shared and specific responsibility for key areas listed below:

### **Key areas of responsibility:**

1. Strategic management and leadership at a UK level.
2. Ensure that TFN is the leading centre of excellence promoting and supporting good practice across the fostering community in the UK.
3. Drive TFN's internal and external Learning Development strategy and operations.
4. Manage delivery of TFN's advice and information services across the UK, including our contractual delivery of Fosterline(s) across all four countries.
5. Develop and deliver TFN's national publications strategy.
6. Development of TFN's practice service offer to our members, including Independent Support, Advice and Mediation, Annual Review chairing and Panel Advising.
7. Oversight of current and future innovative TFN programmes across the UK including Mockingbird, Step-up, Step Down, Fostering Wellbeing and Fostering Attainment and Achievement.
8. Identify potential for innovation and collaboration across the UK.
9. Engage and grow the individual and corporate membership of TFN; and maintain the organisation's position as the leading fostering charity in the UK.
10. Safeguarding lead for the organisation

**Position reports to:** Chief Executive Officer

### **Position is responsible for:**

Head of Learning and Development  
Head of Information and Resources  
Head of Independent Support (Practice Services)

Head of Mockingbird  
Head of Step Up Step Down

**Length of contract:** Permanent

**Salary:** Band B - £57,000 - £72,000 starting salary dependent on skillset and experience

**Main Duties:**

**1. *Strategic Management and Leadership***

Play an active leadership role in the strategic management of TFN, supporting the Chief Executive and Board of Trustees to deliver improved outcomes for the fostering community across the UK.

Work collaboratively and professionally with other members of the Senior Leadership Team to achieve agreed goals as a team.

Provide effective leadership to a large directorate, working in a strengths based, solutions focused approach.

Contribute to the development of, and champion quality assurance and quality improvements across the organisation.

Attend and contribute to meetings of the Board of Trustees, providing verbal and written information and reports when required.

Undertake other duties/projects as directed by the Chief Executive.

**2. *Ensure that TFN is the leading centre of excellence promoting and supporting good practice across the fostering community in the UK.***

Develop and lead a practice strategy across the UK reflecting current evidence base, policy and legislation in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

Embed appropriate knowledge and understanding of good practice within all teams across TFN including the Board of Trustees.

Develop and embed approaches to ensure effective interlinkage and sharing of good practice between all service areas within the directorate and across the organisation to inform our campaigns and policy direction.

Work with colleagues to ensure that TFN is the first port of call for all individuals and agencies seeking up to date information on fostering policy and practice.

Generate additional income for TFN by offering and providing exceptional learning and development services to external agencies; producing sector leading publications; providing consistent, high quality consultancy and a wide range of practice services.

**3. *Drive TFN's internal and external Learning Development strategy and operations***

Oversee TFN's Learning and Development strategy and operations to ensure good practice is understood and shared consistently across the UK.

Ensure the knowledge capital within TFN is maximised to develop a range of income generating courses, workshops, conferences and seminars to share good fostering practice.

Build TFN's reputation as a sector leading learning provider across the UK.  
Develop and grow TFN's consultancy services across the UK.

Develop and oversee the process for ensuring internal training needs analysis of staff across the organisation, ensuring effective professional growth of our staff team in connection with delivering on our mission and strategic objectives.

Line Manage the Head of Learning and Development.

#### **4. *Manage delivery of TFN's advice and information services across the UK***

Oversee the Fosterline service delivered in each nation, ensure contractual management and target delivery requirements are met.

Develop and oversee improved delivery of advice and information services for our members who fall outside of the accessibility restrictions in place under our Fosterline contracts.

Ensure the advice and information services meet key information standards, are aligned to our strategic vision and mission, and are consistent (as far as possible) in their application across all four nations.

Line Manage the Head of Information and Resources

#### **5. *Develop and deliver TFN national publications strategy***

Oversee the development of a publications strategy across the UK which will meet the needs of the fostering community and generate additional income for TFN.

Ensure effective control of intellectual property, and effective balance between public information, member information, and external product development.

#### **6. *Development of TFN's practice service offer to our members, including; Independent Support, Advice and Mediation, Annual Review chairing and Panel Advising.***

Review current delivery contracts and embed their purpose into a wider practice strategy for the UK.

Grow and develop this area of our service delivery to ensure it reflects our vision and mission and responds to the needs of the sector.

Line Manage Head of Practice Services.

#### **7. *Oversight of current and future innovative TFN programmes across the UK including Mockingbird, Step-up, Step Down, Fostering Wellbeing and Fostering Attainment and Achievement***

Oversee the management and expansion of the Mockingbird Programme.

Oversee the management and expansion of the Step-up, Step Down Programme.

Oversee and investigate opportunities for expansion of the Fostering Wellbeing programme in Wales.

Oversee and explore opportunities for the expansion of the Fostering Attainment and Achievement programme in Northern Ireland.

Develop and embed effective processes to ensure the interlinkage and sharing of good practice between all current and future programmes within TFN delivery.

Maintain high level relationships for programme funding with statutory funders and ensure that all service level agreements and outcomes to deliver programmes are met.

#### **8. *Identify potential for innovation and collaboration across the UK***

Work with colleagues to promote learning and outcomes of TFN successful programmes.

Identify potential partners across UK for the expansion of TFN programmatic work.

Keep abreast of all new initiatives within fostering including innovative practice and ensure that TFN is in a position to maximise partnership and funding opportunities across all four nations.

#### **9. *Engage and grow the individual and corporate membership of TFN; and maintain the organisation's position as the leading fostering charity in the UK***

Support the development and implementation of a UK wide, cross directorate, Membership and Engagement strategy in collaboration with the Director for Engagement and Influencing.

Ensure the collective priority to maintain and grow the membership of TFN is understood, actioned and respected.

Develop and strengthen the culture of membership engagement within TFN ensuring staff and trustees value and respond to the needs of membership in determining its objectives.

Ensure that TFN offers consistent, proactive, support to members which is efficient and responsive, utilising latest technology and quality assured customer service standards.

#### **10. *Safeguarding lead for the organisation***

Oversee the work of our internal Safeguarding Oversight and Reference Group (SORG).

Monitor and ensure compliance with our safeguarding responsibilities, including effective risk assessment, reporting, advising and evaluating.

Oversee, advise and guide our four country lead safeguarding officers to support them in their role.

### **Key competencies required for the role**

#### ***Essential***

- Ability to work as a collaborative leader to meet wider corporate objectives of TFN
- In-depth, current knowledge and understanding of foster care practice and children's social care across the UK
- Experience of working within statutory local authority social services department(s)
- Experience of strategic planning and programme management including managing budgets

- Experience of effective working with key government officials and a broad range of key stakeholders
- Experience of effective leadership, line management and supervision
- Experience of delivering effective, successful change management
- Commitment and understanding of devolution and working across the UK to maximise consistency and parity for the fostering community
- Ability to develop successful relationships and work in partnership with external agencies
- Experience of successful income generation as it applies to the charity sector
- Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Commitment to the core values, vision and mission of TFN

***Desirable***

- Experience of working within or closely with the independent or third sector
- Experience of managing the delivery of training, consultancy, publications, advice and information services in fostering or a relevant sector
- Experience of working across a national or UK wide remit
- Care experienced or lived experience of foster care

***Qualifications & minimum requirements for the role***

- Social work degree or equivalent level social work qualification
- Management qualification or evidence of effective management and leadership skills
- Social Worker registration with a relevant social care body (SWE / SCW / NISCC / SSSC)
- Significant practice experience within the fostering sector as a practitioner and manager
- Safeguarding qualification or evidence of sound safeguarding practice and knowledge base