



post outline: Lead Independent Person

dialogue is the foremost leadership and safeguarding training company for the children's residential sector in England. We worked with Regulation 44 visitors to found the national Independent Person Network, we undertook research on the impact of the role in the wake of the Care Review to influence the view of the DfE and we continue to develop the role of the Independent Person with high quality training and the development of national guidance to support the role.

We have a small Independent Person service supporting just over 50 homes. This role in the company will develop our national service offer, linking in with the other services **dialogue** provides.

dialogue has a broad team of consultants with a depth of knowledge and practical experience. Our aim as an organisation is to facilitate the cycle between learning and practice.

We are currently providing:

- consultancy on a range of projects, particularly where individual children's homes are struggling with compliance
- training across a range of children's residential, local authority, safeguarding children partnerships, schools and other settings
- membership support for Independent Persons, RIs, RMs and leads for a range of specialists within children's residential care
- contributing to national practice with guidance on regulation 44 for DfE, a training pack on Children Missing from Care for Home Office/Children's Homes Association/National Police Chiefs Council, work with Somerset Council towards an improved national approach to planning for residential children's homes, and membership of the DfE Expert Working Group on the new Care Standards.

description of the role: lead independent person

Within **dialogue**, lines of authority are kept flat and there is effort to ensure we work together as partners rather than in a traditional hierarchy. The role of **lead independent person** is important in developing the service and the independent people working with dialogue to ensure the growth of the service and so that children always receive a high-quality service to keep them safe and promote their welfare.

The role will include:

- ensuring young people's voice and experience influences all our work and prioritising their safety and welfare in all decisions
- working with new and existing customers to ensure we continue to make a difference in more settings
- recruiting, inducting, supervising and working together with our Independent People to maintain high standards
- advertising and agreeing Regulation 44 work with more settings, within our resources
- working with the Regulation 44 administrator in improving and developing systems and processes to support our independent person work
- undertaking some visits as an Independent Person, including cover visits as part of the quality assurance role
- working with other senior leaders to develop **dialogue's** support offer while maintaining the independence of our services
- other duties commensurate with the role

Day to day this will mean thinking about the development of the service. The role is strongly self-directed and the post holder will in many ways work independently, but with close communication, supervision and support from the Managing Director, the Customer Support Manager and her administrative team.

On a monthly basis the Lead Independent Person, with administrative support, will ensure all reports are completed on time for children's homes. They will review the reports to ensure they are of a high quality. It is envisaged they will undertake some cover visits and reports for Independent People to improve their triangulation in the quality assurance of the reports.

The Lead Independent Person will link with existing customers to review progress and develop our services while looking for new opportunities to develop the service and recruiting suitably experienced Independent Persons to undertake the visits.

Salary & hours are negotiable

Location – we are flexible on the location of the visitor, although travel to support homes will be necessary. Where it is commutable the team like to have an office day at Dartington Hall in Devon once a week.

Annual leave – we have a generous 25 day (pro rata) annual leave policy.

Key measures of success:

- Young people are seen, kept safe and their welfare promoted
- Maintain our 100% record of visits & reports in timescale
- Happy and competent staff, safely recruited
- Homes improve inspection judgements with our support
- Retain 90% of homes visited
- Increase size of service by 25% per annum

For further details please see the Person Specification (below) or contact John Woodhouse on 07921 015176 for an informal discussion.

Person specification

Knowledge

- In depth knowledge of Quality Standards, children's homes regulations and associated law and guidance
- Current safeguarding and child protection legislation
- Research and good practice around children's homes

Values

- Child centred practice
- Collegiate partnership approach
- Vision, energy, direction and belief in our ability to improve the lives of children in our care

Skills

- Skills to develop and expand a service
- Ability to move adeptly between strategic thinking and conversations with leaders, managers and staff to quickly building a relationship with young people and taking into account their views
- Evidence of effective capacity building challenge in an organisation
- Good observational and analysis skills
- Sound report-writing, proof reading & quality assurance skills
- Capacity building supervision, support and challenge of staff

Qualifications

- The candidate may have a range of different qualifications (e.g. level 5 or social work degree), but will be able to evidence how they have been able to apply these to their role

Experience

- A significant depth of Children's Residential Care experience
- A strong track record of success in leadership, management or inspection roles
- Previous Regulation 44 and/or Standard 3 experience desirable

John Woodhouse

Managing Director, Dialogue

September 2025