

SENIOR LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENT

Head of Integrated Children and Family Services

Job Description and Person Specification

ROLE FOCUS EHWP+ leadership • safeguarding assurance • integrated children and family pathways • quality and impact • growth and sustainability

1. Post details

Job title	Head of Integrated Children and Family Services
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer
Leadership role	Member of the Senior Leadership Team
Accountable for	EHWP+ and Spring North's wider children and family services portfolio
Direct reports	Service managers, team leads and other designated staff within the portfolio
Key relationships	Children, young people and families; Lancashire County Council commissioners; health, education, social care and safeguarding partners; VCFSE delivery partners; funders; trustees and Spring North colleagues
Base and travel	Spring North, Suite 118 King's Court, King Street, Blackburn BB2 2DH Flexible/hybrid working, with regular travel across Lancashire & South Cumbria and other service areas as required.
Salary / contract	SCP36-39 £47,565 - £50,677 FTE
Hours	1.0 FTE - 37 hours per week
Holiday Entitlement	25 days, plus bank holidays, plus Christmas closedown
Notice Period	1 month during probationary period, thereafter 2 months
Pre-employment checks	Enhanced DBS, satisfactory references and all role-appropriate safer recruitment checks

2. Role purpose

The Head of Integrated Children and Family Services is a senior leadership post with strategic and operational accountability for Spring North's EHWP+ work and the development of a coherent, high-quality children and family services portfolio. A key requirement of the role is the leadership, management and delivery oversight of counselling and therapeutic services for children, young people and families, ensuring these services are safe, effective, evidence-informed and delivered to recognised professional standards.

The postholder will provide visible leadership to teams and partners; ensure safe, effective and outcomes-focused delivery; strengthen links between existing services; and translate the needs and voice of children, young people and families into service improvement and future development. Working with the CEO and Senior Leadership Team, the postholder will also identify and develop sustainable opportunities that extend Spring North's impact.

3. Scope and senior accountability

- Hold delegated senior responsibility for the performance, quality, workforce, safeguarding and development of the children and family services portfolio.
- Lead EHWP+ as a key commissioned programme, ensuring that delivery remains aligned with contract requirements, local need, agreed outcomes and Spring North's values.
- Hold senior accountability for the effective management and delivery of counselling and therapeutic services within the portfolio, including service quality, practitioner practice, professional standards, supervision arrangements and continuous improvement.
- Balance strategic direction with strong operational grip, intervening early where delivery, safety, quality, finance or partnership performance is at risk.
- Contribute to whole-organisation leadership, growth, resilience and culture as an active member of the Senior Leadership Team.

4. Key accountabilities

4.1 Strategic leadership of children and family services

- Develop and implement a clear strategic direction for EHWP+ and the wider children and family services portfolio, aligned with Spring North's organisational strategy and local commissioning priorities.
- Maintain a strong understanding of the changing needs of children, young people, parents and carers, using data, lived experience, professional insight and community intelligence to shape priorities.
- Create a more connected portfolio by linking existing services, clarifying pathways and reducing gaps, duplication and avoidable hand-offs for families.
- Promote early help, prevention, relationship-based and strengths-based approaches that improve emotional health, wellbeing, resilience and family outcomes.
- Keep abreast of policy, legislation, evidence and emerging practice affecting children, young people and families, translating these into proportionate action.

4.2 EHWP+ programme leadership and delivery

- Provide senior leadership and direction to the EHWP+ team, creating a shared focus on access, quality, outcomes, partnership delivery and continuous improvement.
- Lead the operational delivery of counselling and therapeutic provision, ensuring clear service models, referral and allocation arrangements, appropriate caseload management, safe thresholds, effective practitioner deployment and consistent therapeutic practice across employed teams and delivery partners.
- Ensure counselling and therapeutic interventions are delivered by appropriately qualified and competent practitioners, with suitable induction, supervision, continuing professional development and access to specialist or clinical advice where required.
- Ensure that service plans, capacity, resources and delivery arrangements are sufficient to meet contractual commitments and respond appropriately to local need.
- Establish clear management arrangements, decision-making routes and performance expectations across employed teams and delivery partners.
- Review delivery data, caseload or activity information, outcomes, waiting times, feedback and emerging risks; agree and monitor corrective action where required.
- Ensure that the voice of children, young people, parents and carers is visible in-service design, review and improvement.
- Support effective mobilisation, change and service redesign when contracts, need or evidence require a different delivery response.

4.3 Safeguarding and professional practice

- Provide senior leadership and assurance for safeguarding across the portfolio, working closely with Spring North's formally designated safeguarding lead and organisational safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that staff and partners understand and follow statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures, escalation routes, information-sharing requirements and safer working practice.
- Maintain effective systems for safeguarding supervision, case escalation, incident oversight, audit, learning and improvement.
- Provide senior oversight of complex or high-risk concerns and ensure prompt liaison with statutory partners, without displacing their legal duties or decision-making responsibilities.
- Ensure safeguarding training, safer recruitment, professional boundaries, lone-working and record-keeping standards remain appropriate to role and risk.
- Provide senior professional oversight and governance of counselling and therapeutic services, ensuring practice complies with recognised counselling and therapeutic standards, ethical frameworks and relevant professional codes of practice, and that these requirements are embedded consistently across services and delivery partners.
- Maintain clear expectations for ethical practice, informed consent, confidentiality, professional boundaries, record keeping, safeguarding, supervision, practitioner competence and the safe management of therapeutic risk, taking action where practice falls below the required standard.
- Keep abreast of developments in counselling and therapeutic practice, professional guidance and evidence-informed interventions, translating learning and best practice into service models, workforce development, quality assurance and continuous improvement.
- Promote a culture in which concerns are raised early, challenge is welcomed, learning is acted upon and the welfare of the child remains paramount.

4.4 Quality, performance, impact and assurance

- Own and maintain a proportionate quality assurance framework for the portfolio, including standards, audits, case or file review, observation, feedback, complaints, incidents and action tracking.
- Ensure the quality assurance framework gives specific assurance over counselling and therapeutic practice, including supervision, case/file audit, practitioner competence, adherence to professional and ethical standards, service-user feedback, outcomes and learning from concerns or incidents.
- Ensure that services are safe, accessible, inclusive, evidence-informed and delivered consistently across teams, locations and partner arrangements.
- Set clear expectations for timely, accurate and meaningful recording on approved case-management and outcome systems.
- Oversee performance against key performance indicators, contractual deliverables and agreed outcomes, ensuring that underperformance is identified, understood and addressed.
- Use quantitative and qualitative evidence to demonstrate reach, experience, outcomes and wider impact for children, young people, families, communities and systems.
- Provide timely, high-quality contract reports, dashboards, assurance reports and analysis for commissioners, the CEO, Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees.
- Ensure learning from feedback, complaints, compliments, incidents, audits and reviews is converted into measurable service improvement.

4.5 People leadership and culture

- Lead, line manage, coach and develop managers and designated staff, creating clarity, accountability and a supportive performance culture.
- Ensure effective induction, supervision, appraisal, professional development, wellbeing support and performance management throughout the portfolio.
- Ensure practitioners delivering counselling and therapeutic interventions receive appropriate professional/clinical supervision and development, with clear arrangements for maintaining competence, reflective practice, ethical decision-making and adherence to relevant codes of practice.

- Develop workforce and succession plans that reflect service demand, professional requirements, commissioned resources and future growth.
- Model collaborative, inclusive and values-led leadership, encouraging constructive challenge, shared learning and responsible decision-making.
- Work with colleagues responsible for people, finance, contracts and operations to ensure sound recruitment, deployment and resource management.

4.6 Commissioners, partnerships and external representation

- Act as a senior point of contact for commissioners, attending contract reviews, performance meetings and other forums with clear evidence, appropriate challenge and agreed actions.
- Build trusted relationships with Lancashire County Council, health, education, social care, safeguarding partnerships, schools, community organisations and other relevant stakeholders.
- Represent Spring North and the children and family portfolio at strategic networks, partnership boards, sector events and development discussions.
- Strengthen collaboration across statutory and VCFSE partners so that families experience clearer pathways and more coordinated support.
- Identify and resolve partnership issues that affect quality, access, delivery or reputation, escalating material risks through the appropriate governance route.

4.7 Business development, growth and sustainability

- Identify unmet need, service gaps and emerging opportunities that are consistent with Spring North's purpose, strengths and strategic priorities.
- Lead or contribute to the design of new children and family services, developing credible service models, pathways, outcomes, delivery arrangements and implementation plans.
- Ensure new or redesigned counselling and therapeutic services are built around evidence-informed models, recognised professional standards, appropriate workforce competencies, supervision and governance arrangements, and clear measures of therapeutic quality and outcomes.
- Work with the CEO and relevant colleagues on bids, tenders, funding proposals, presentations and commissioner engagement.
- Assess potential opportunities for strategic fit, impact, deliverability, safeguarding, workforce, partnership, financial sustainability and organisational risk.
- Develop partnerships and consortium arrangements that combine expertise, extend reach and strengthen the role of the VCFSE sector.
- Support the sustainability of existing services through evidence of impact, strong commissioner relationships, service improvement and timely preparation for recommissioning or continuation funding.

4.8 Governance, compliance, finance and risk

- Ensure that governance requirements for the portfolio, including reporting to the CEO, Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees, are met in a timely and effective manner.
- Ensure compliance with contractual and regulatory obligations, including safeguarding, data protection and information governance, equality, health and safety and funder requirements.
- Maintain clear oversight of strategic, operational, safeguarding, partnership, financial and reputational risks, with proportionate mitigation and escalation.
- Work within approved budgets and delegated authority, monitoring income, expenditure, staffing and delivery resources and taking early action where variance or pressure arises.
- Support business continuity and organisational resilience, ensuring that essential services have appropriate contingency arrangements.
- Provide accurate, balanced and decision-useful reports and assurance, including where performance or risk requires senior or trustee attention.

4.9 Senior leadership and delegated representation

- Contribute to organisational strategy, business planning, culture, governance and cross-service improvement as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Provide high-level advice and constructive challenge to the CEO and colleagues on children and family services, safeguarding, commissioning and growth.
- Lead cross-organisational priorities or improvement work as agreed, helping connect services and make best use of Spring North's collective capability.
- Represent Spring North at senior meetings and partnership forums and deputise for the CEO on matters within the children and family portfolio when formally agreed.

5. General responsibilities

- Uphold the highest standards of professionalism, leadership, integrity and confidentiality.
- Champion equality, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and anti-discriminatory practice in employment, partnership working and service delivery.
- Work in accordance with Spring North's policies, procedures, values and delegated authorities.
- Maintain continuing professional development and role-appropriate knowledge of sector trends, governance requirements and best practice.
- Undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the seniority and purpose of the role. This role profile may be reviewed in consultation with the postholder as services develop.

6. Measures of success

Outcome area	What good looks like
Safe services	Strong safeguarding assurance; timely escalation and learning; clear evidence that practice protects and listens to children and young people.
Contract delivery	EHWP+ and other services meet agreed deliverables, KPIs, outcomes and reporting requirements, with recovery plans where needed.
Quality and experience	Consistent standards, positive feedback, effective improvement action and equitable access across the portfolio.
People and culture	Well-led teams with clear objectives, effective supervision, appropriate capability and sustainable workforce planning.
Commissioner confidence	Credible reporting, constructive relationships, transparent management of risk and confidence in Spring North's leadership.
Connected pathways	Better links between services and partners, clearer routes to support and reduced fragmentation for families.
Growth and sustainability	A qualified development pipeline, well-designed opportunities and demonstrable progress in sustaining or extending effective services.

7. Person specification

Applicants should demonstrate the following through their application, interview, presentation or other assessment activity. The assessment method may be refined as part of the recruitment process.

Area	Criterion	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Qualifications	Relevant degree, professional qualification or equivalent substantial senior experience in children's services, family support, health, education, social care, youth/community work or a related field.	Yes		A / C
	Leadership or management qualification at Level 5 or above, or equivalent accredited development.		Yes	A / C
	Advanced safeguarding leadership training appropriate to the responsibilities of the role.		Yes	A / C
Experience	Substantial senior management experience in services for children, young people and/or families, with accountability for quality, people, performance and outcomes.	Yes		A / I
	Substantial experience of both delivering and managing counselling and/or therapeutic services for children, young people and families, with senior responsibility for service models, practitioner teams, caseloads, quality, supervision, professional practice and outcomes.	Yes		A / I
	Demonstrable experience of assuring the quality and professional governance of counselling and therapeutic practice, including supervision arrangements, case or practice review, practitioner development, ethical practice and action to address concerns or improve standards.	Yes		A / I
	Successful leadership of commissioned or grant-funded services, including KPIs, outcomes, contract compliance, reporting and performance recovery.	Yes		A / I / P
	Leading managers and multi-disciplinary teams through change, growth or service improvement.	Yes		A / I
	Senior safeguarding leadership, including oversight of complex concerns, escalation, supervision, audit and organisational learning.	Yes		A / I
	Building effective relationships with commissioners and representing an organisation at senior contract, partnership or strategic meetings.	Yes		A / I / P
	Using performance, financial, quality and experience data to make decisions and demonstrate impact.	Yes		A / I / P
	Budget and resource management, with evidence of early action to address variance, capacity or sustainability concerns.	Yes		A / I
	Designing new services and contributing successfully to business development, bids, tenders or funding proposals.	Yes		A / I / P
	Working across statutory and VCFSE partners or within a multi-provider, alliance or lead-provider delivery model.		Yes	A / I
	Work within Lancashire and knowledge of the local children, family, health, education and community landscape.		Yes	A / I
	Leadership of early intervention emotional health and wellbeing services for children and young people.		Yes	A / I

Area	Criterion	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Knowledge	Strong working knowledge of children's safeguarding law, statutory guidance, local procedures, information sharing and safer working practice.	Yes		A / I
	Strong and current working knowledge of counselling and therapeutic standards, ethical frameworks and professional codes of practice, including confidentiality, informed consent, professional boundaries, record keeping, supervision, practitioner competence, safeguarding and the management of therapeutic risk.	Yes		A / I
	Understanding of children's emotional health and wellbeing, early help, trauma-informed and strengths-based practice, and the wider determinants affecting families.	Yes		A / I
	Understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and anti-discriminatory practice in service design and delivery.	Yes		A / I
	Understanding of commissioning, contract management, quality assurance, risk management, data protection and outcome measurement.	Yes		A / I / P
	Knowledge of SEND, neurodiversity, education, family support and/or community-based mental health pathways.		Yes	A / I
Skills	Strategic thinking combined with strong operational grip and the ability to translate direction into clear plans, decisions and accountability.	Yes		A / I / P
	Visible, compassionate and accountable leadership, with the ability to motivate teams, manage performance and develop other leaders.	Yes		A / I
	Excellent written and verbal communication, including concise reports, credible presentations and confident discussion with commissioners and trustees.	Yes		A / I / P
	Strong analytical judgement, including the ability to interpret varied evidence, manage ambiguity, assess risk and make proportionate decisions.	Yes		A / I / P
	Commercial and financial awareness sufficient to test service viability, manage resources and support sustainable growth.	Yes		A / I
	Highly effective partnership-building, influencing, negotiation and networking skills.	Yes		A / I
	Ability to manage competing priorities, maintain oversight and respond calmly to sensitive, complex or urgent situations.	Yes		A / I
Values	A clear commitment to the rights, voice, welfare and potential of children and young people, and to respectful partnership with parents and carers.	Yes		A / I
	Integrity, openness, professional curiosity, constructive challenge and a willingness to take responsibility.	Yes		A / I
	Collaborative and inclusive approach, with the ability to connect people and services around shared outcomes.	Yes		A / I
Other	Ability to travel regularly across service areas and attend occasional meetings outside normal working hours.	Yes		A / I
	Willingness and ability to complete an enhanced DBS check and all other safer recruitment requirements.	Yes		C

Assessment key: A = application • I = interview • P = presentation or task • C = documentary or pre-employment check

8. Safeguarding and appointment note

Spring North is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. Appointment will be subject to safer recruitment checks appropriate to the role. The postholder may be assigned additional formal safeguarding responsibilities only through explicit organisational designation, with the required authority, training, supervision and governance arrangements.

9. Document control and approval

Version	0.1
Status	Approved to Recruit
Review point	Approved
Approved by	MHS
Postholder	MHS
Date	MHS