

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: SEND Casework Officer

Directorate: DIRECTORATE OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Portfolio/Service Area: Special Educational Needs and Disability - Education and Skills

Scale/Grade: Scale 6

Reporting To: Senior SEND Casework Officer

Responsible For: No direct line management responsibility

Main Purpose of Job:

- Under the direction of the SEND Manager and supported on a day to day basis by the Senior SEND Caseworker, be responsible for a defined caseload for the purposes of EHC assessment, EHC Plans and monitoring processes within the context of required policies and procedures relating to County Council.
- Working closely with the casework admin officer and the senior SEND Caseworker, act collaboratively in ensuring that a range of tasks are undertaken as required to support the implementation of statutory SEND processes, and as set out by the Service's procedural manual.
- To respond to general enquiries from parents and carers, schools, settings and other agencies in relation to a range of factors relevant to the Local Authority's SEND arrangements, taking timely and appropriate action, and/or signposting to other services and information where appropriate.
- Draft EHC Plans, provision plans / notes in lieu of an EHC Plan, decisions and bespoke correspondence within the legal and operational framework set by the SEND Regulations, caselaw, the SEND Code of Practice and relevant statutory and other guidance issued by the DfE and ESFA.

Responsibilities, Duties and Tasks:

- Ensure delivery of EHC assessment and EHC Planning processes for a defined caseload in a manner that:-
 - Satisfies requirements of the Children and Families Act (2014) and other relevant current Education Acts or legislation
 - Complies with DfE guidance
 - Supports and promotes Worcestershire County Council policies

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- Promotes locality based and inclusive education
 - Encourages and develops positive relationships with schools
 - Builds confidence and minimises disagreement with parents through high quality communication, collaborative working and timely responses.
 - Builds on, develops and improves relationships with other agencies , including health
 - Enables local and national performance targets to be achieved
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- In accordance with the regulations and guidance, that underpin EHC assessment and multi-agency interventions, and within WCC operational procedures, ensure that all processes including issuing, amending and reviewing EHC Plans are delivered within timescales.
 - Ensure on-going familiarity with Council policies and procedures that apply to the management of SEND casework and placements, including working within defined decision making processes within the delegated decisions framework as appropriate.
 - Ensure supportive constructive and sensitive liaison and discussion with schools and settings so the decisions made on casework are well supported and have maximum potential for sustainability.
 - Develop and maintain high quality relationships with key staff in schools and settings related to casework geographical area / defined group of children and young people, and with key staff in Education and Skills, Children's and Adult's social care Services, Health and other agencies (including SENDIASS) as appropriate.
 - To make positive and constructive responses to telephone enquiries from schools, parents, other services and the public, by providing required information or signposting to other services.
 - Ensure correspondence with providers, parents and others is accurate, reflects local and national requirements, and is sensitive to the perspective of the recipient.
 - Ensure written documentation including individual EHC plans, provision plans / notes in lieu of an EHC Plan, and decision letters, are well structured, clear and written in a way to ensure those who know the child understand the depth of consideration that has taken place in reaching a decision.
 - Ensure case files for which the officer is responsible, are well maintained to agreed quality standards, and in particular, that documents are clear, labelled, dated and signed. A clear record should be available of intervention and support (and if possible lead professional) across agencies. Electronic filing systems should be kept up to date as should the ONE database according to procedural guidance that sets out roles and responsibilities across the Service
 - Attend meetings in schools / settings with other professionals and parents to assist in accurate EHC Plan drafting, within the time available to the individual and following discussion with the SEND Caseworker and/or SEND Manager.
 - To take part in and support appropriate SEND Inclusion meetings relevant to the role or defined caseload.
 - Take notes of meetings in the manner requested by the Chair.
 - Make appropriate and timely inputs to the SEND data systems as required.
 - To maintain records of actual and potential placements in specialist provisions as defined by the SEND Manager, and to support the Senior SEND caseworker in co-ordinating admissions processes.

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- Take personal responsibility for meeting required performance indicators and targeted, including statutory time-lines and targets for reducing requests for statutory assessment.
- Under the direction of the SEND Managers, work collegiately and co-operatively with other SEND casework officers to ensure flexibility in approach to casework management at times of differential pressure across the team.
- Attend local SEND partnership, moderation and other meetings and reviews, as required, or ensure attendance by other WCC service, according to priority for attendance and predicted issues arising.
- Contribute to team development as a member of the SEND team, and through assuming specific responsibility as agreed with managers.
- Attend meetings with parents, providers, and others as required.

General Duties:

- To maintain personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the job, participate in appropriate training activities and encourage and support staff in their development and training.
- To undertake such other duties, training and/or hours of work as may be reasonably required and which are consistent with the general level of responsibility of this job.
- To undertake health and safety duties commensurate with the post and/or as detailed in the Directorate's Health and Safety Policy.
- Ensure that WCC safeguarding guidelines are observed and that safeguarding remains at the core of all activities.

Contacts:

In all contacts the postholder will be required to present a good image of the Directorate and the County Council as well as maintaining constructive relationships.

Internal: Officers within Children's, Families and Communities Services and other WCC staff or commissioned partners.

External: Schools, academies, early education providers and post 16 education settings and training providers, Officers in partner agencies such as Early Help providers, Health Trusts, District Councils, Babcock Prime, other Local Authorities, Police, Probation, YS, Magistrates and local judiciary, voluntary and community organisations, service user groups, parents.

Contacts:

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Internal: Officers within Children's Services and WCC.



encies such as Early Help providers, Health Trusts, District Authorities, Police, Probation, YJS, Magistrates and local judiciary, Connexions, voluntary and community organisations, service user groups, parents.

Notes:

- Work in Regulated Activity and in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions Order) as amended and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and to have a relevant enhanced level Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure certificate.
- Undertake work which is concerned with the establishment or operation of a database or work that may require access to a database under Section 12 of the Children's Act 2004 and which is of such a kind as to enable the postholder to have access to information included in the database.
- The Council reserves the right to alter the content of this Job Description, after consultation, to reflect changes to the job or services provided, without altering the general character or level of responsibility.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered as required by the Disability Discrimination Act.
- The duties described in this Job Description must be carried out in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity, dignity and due respect for all employees and service users and is consistent with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Prepared by: Penny Richardson

Date: 05 Aug 2018

DChS/CR-WR171 (amended)

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title: SEN Casework Officer

Directorate: DIRECTORATE OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES
Portfolio/Service Area: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Education and Skills
Scale/Grade: Scale 6

QUALIFICATIONS / TRAINING:

It is **essential** that the postholder has/is:

- Educated to degree standard (or equivalent with evidence of relevant experience).

It is **desirable** that the postholder has/is:

- Qualification in a relevant field (public administration / law / education / health / social care)

EXPERIENCE / KNOWLEDGE:

It is **essential** that the postholder has/is:

- Considerable experience of working in a service that focuses on children and young people with SEND, either in a Children's Services provision or in a service that secures and monitors provision.
- A thorough working knowledge of relevant and current SEND legislation and practice guidance, especially the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- Understanding of the perspective and concerns of parents, schools and settings in relation to education for children and young people with SEND.
- Understanding of the issues associated with provision of inclusive education in mainstream and specialist settings
- A general understanding of the curriculum and wider educational provision available to pupils of different ages and in different education settings.
- Considerable experience and understanding of effective decision making processes.
- Understanding of the roles of fieldwork SEND staff, as well as the role of a SENCO

It is **desirable** that the postholder has/is:

- Experience of working in the SEND service of a Children's Services Directorate.
- Experience of direct work with children with SEND in a school or education setting.
- Experience of working with parents and carers of children with SEND.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

It is **essential** that the postholder has/is:

- An ability to draft statements or note in lieu type documents, by
 - Identifying specific information about pupil needs and provision from complex advice, reports and information received.
 - Analysing reports for themes
 - Synthesising detail into summary text

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- Ability to work flexibly in different settings, in a changing work environment and with changing deadlines, priorities and client groups
- Drive and a positive approach to work, demonstrating a can do attitude
- The skills to be a strong team member, with a readiness to work flexibly to secure team output requirements, and the ability to develop and sustain complementary working practices
- An ability to work in a changing work environment, showing initiative in the development of new systems to support working practice
- A creative thinker, with problem solving skills, and the ability to predict potential problems, identify them and develop approaches to manage or avoid them
- High levels of literacy skills – with an ability to write in different styles for different purposes
- Willing to undertake training and / or develop expertise in areas relevant to overall team objectives, and to refocus work according to changing needs.
- Well developed interpersonal skills, including skills in defusing potentially difficult situations and resolving conflict
- The ability to adopt different communication styles in different work scenarios
- Highly developed communication skills, both written and oral communication skills.
- An understanding of non-verbal communication styles, and how to present with empathy and understanding to parents in meetings
- A competent user of ICT, including Word, Excel, email and database systems
- Able to work as a member of a team in a pressurised environment, including responding to emotionally charged situations in appropriate, sensitive and effective ways.
- An ability to prioritise competing demands and plan ahead, managing tight deadlines and time effectively whilst retaining a positive approach.
- The ability and willingness to use initiative and independence in managing workload, whilst recognising the need to seek advice and support when necessary.

ADDITIONAL FACTORS:

It is **essential** that the postholder has/is:

- Committed to an inclusive approach to SEN.
- The ability to travel throughout the County

Prepared by: Anne Scarsbrook

Date: November 2012

DChS/CR-WR171-PS