

## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Early Years Census and NEF Compliance Officer  
**Directorate & Section/Unit:** Children's Services: Education and Early Years Quality Improvement Service – Early Years and Childcare Team  
**Reporting to:** Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency and Improvement Lead

**Salary Grade:** Scale 6  
**DMA Management Level:** Frontline staff  
**DMA Span of Control (Direct Reports):** 0

### Our People Values:

To uphold and act in accordance with Worcestershire County Council's values:

- **Customer Focus** - Ensure delivery of a high-quality service which meets the needs of customers
- **Can Do Culture** - Be proactive to achieve excellence, finding solutions and creative ways of working
- **Freedom within Boundaries** - Make constructive change through cohesive decision making, ensuring services are responsive.

### Purpose of job:

- To complete the termly Early Years Census return, ensuring that the statutory return is completed accurately by the required submission dates.
- To lead the NEF Audit Process, monitoring adherence to the DfE statutory guidance and the Worcestershire Provider Agreement on free entitlement hours, and ensuring the accuracy of funding claims made to the Local Authority.
- To be responsible for the NEF Termination and Removal of Funding process, ensuring that early years children are able to access their funding entitlement in high quality early years provision.
- To support the Early Years and Childcare Team and wider related services to ensure efficient and cohesive delivery of Early Years related objectives.

### Main Activities & Responsibilities:

- Lead all Early Years Census activities for Worcestershire County Council to enable an accurate submission of all funded Early Years children to the Department for Education, to generate the Early Years Designated Schools Grant (Early Years DSG) for the Local Authority.
- Collate, data assure and submit the termly Early Years Census return, for all funded early years settings, providing regular updates to Senior Leaders
- Work in partnership with the Performance Services Team to ensure that Early Years data included on the termly School Census return is accurate.
- Conduct NEF Audits to ensure that funding claims and payments are made accurately and that funded hours are provided in accordance with the DfE statutory guidance. Monitor the outcomes of NEF Audits, identify trends and develop guidance materials to improve sector compliance, reporting findings to internal colleagues.
- Work in partnership with the Early Years Funding Team to ensure that all Early Years funding data is processed and maintained accurately.

- Provide clear information, advice and guidance to early years and school settings to ensure adherence to the DfE statutory guidance on free entitlement hours; to include advice on compliant funding offers, transparent invoicing and clear parental information including the publication of the costs of chargeable extras.
- Develop and deliver training to NEF registered providers to support compliant and sustainable funding offers.
- Support and challenge early years settings and schools, instigating business change to develop compliant funding models that support sustainable business practice.
- Provide information and training for Best Start in Life Family Hub practitioners to ensure that they have up-to-date information to share with parents/carers regarding free entitlement hours.
- Work in partnership with the Early Years Improvement Advisors to ensure that advice, guidance and training is delivered consistently and in ways that meets the needs of the early years and childcare sector.
- Co-ordinate the NEF Termination and Removal of Funding process to remove funding from early years schools and settings that fail to meet the funding requirements.
- Develop and maintain a detailed understanding of the Online Provider Portal and provide support, as and when required, to Early Years settings and schools, to enable accurate and timely funding claims to be submitted.
- Develop and maintain a detailed understanding of the Early Years payment system and provide support, as and when required, to enable payments to be made as scheduled.
- Support the Sufficiency and Place Planning Team by ensuring that data collections are completed accurately and on time and provide robust information to inform the Early Years Sufficiency Tool.
- To provide analysis of complex national and local data sets, including national and regional benchmarking, to inform the Council's Early Years and childcare policy development.
- Work with a range of stakeholders on a regular basis to ensure up to date advice, guidance and information is provided.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with early years settings and schools.
- Support the delivery of statutory responsibilities and contribute to the achievement of wider early years and childcare objectives by providing effective coordination, communication and partnership working across the Local Authority.

### Generic Accountabilities:

- 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 other such 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
- 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 Equality and Diversity Policy
- This post meets Regulated Activity (as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) and is subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Check (Via the Disclosure Barring Service, DBS) and the relevant children and/ adults barred list(s) checks.
- The Code of Practice on the English Language Requirement for Public Sector Workers (the fluency duty) applies to this post. Therefore, an ability to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence through the medium of English is essential for the post.

### Contacts:

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

**Internal:** Directors, Assistant Directors, senior managers, management teams, managers and staff across all Directorates, project staff

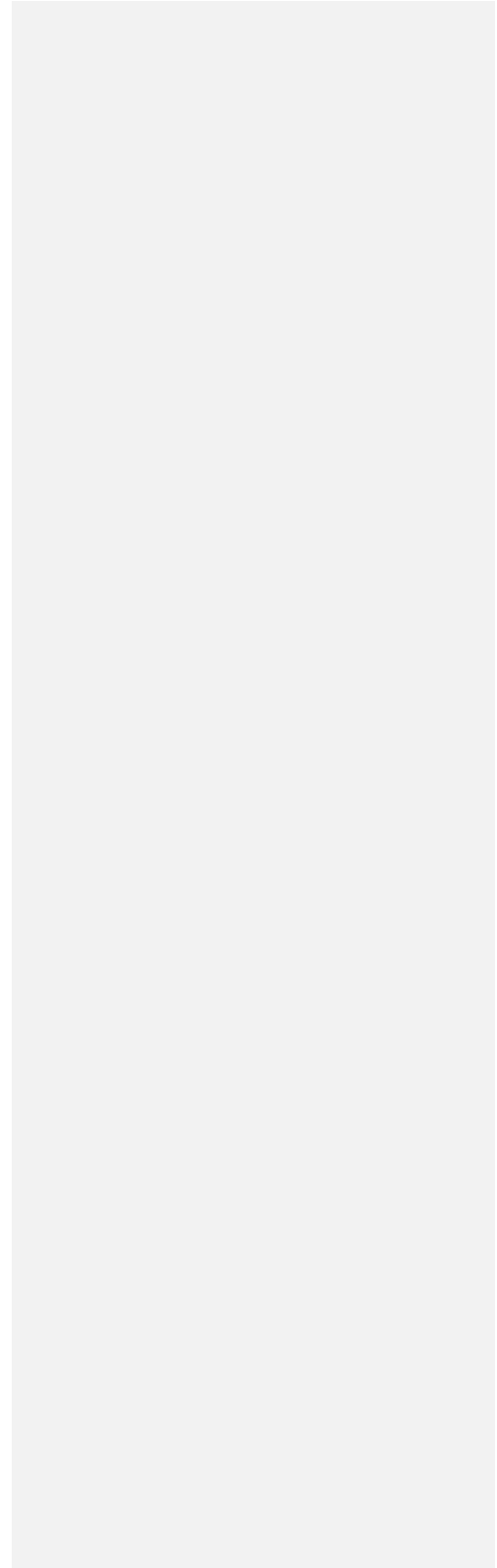
**Commented [WL1]:** The Code of Practice on the English Language Requirement for Public Sector Workers (part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016) places a duty on public authorities (including local authorities) to ensure that individuals in customer facing roles have the necessary level of fluency in English as appropriate for their role.

A customer facing role is defined as a worker who, as a regular and intrinsic part of their role, are required to speak to members of the public in English. This can include speaking face to face or over the telephone with members of the public

Workers covered by the fluency duty must have a command of spoken English which is sufficient to enable the effective performance of their role. Fluency relates to language proficiency and the ability to speak with confidence and accuracy but does not relate to regional or international accents, dialects, speech impediments or the tone of the conversations. When determining the level of fluency required recruiting managers should consider the following factors:

- The frequency of spoken interaction;
- The topic of spoken interaction;
- Whether the communication is likely to include technical, profession-specific or specialist vocabulary;
- The typical duration of spoken interaction
- Whether the communication is repeated in or supplemented by, written material provided to customers; and
- The significance of the spoken interaction for service delivery.

**External:** Department for Education, early years and childcare settings, including school-based settings, parents and carers.



### **Additional Information:**

- The ability to travel throughout the county, including areas where there is limited public transport and be able to reach, including but not limited to, schools and early years settings within a timely manner.
- Occasional evening/weekend work will be required.
- 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 Equality Act.

Author: Nicky Burford

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Date of grading confirmation:24/03/2026

**\* WCC is aiming towards a 5-level management organisational structure with level 5 being the Chief Executive.**