**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job Title: Virtual School Learning Advocate**

**Directorate & Section/Unit:** **Education, Early Years, Inclusion & Place Planning**

**Reporting to: Virtual School Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher**

**Full time: 35 hours (term time only + 10 days pro rata)**

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| **Salary Grade: Soulbury scale 1-4 term time only + 10 days pro rata**  **Number of Direct Reports: 0** |

**Our People Values:**

Our Vision, Mission, and Values define our reason for being. They are indicators of our direction of travel, to guide services and colleagues. This is particularly important for Worcestershire Children First as our Company represents positive change and new opportunities for colleagues and children, young people and families:

* ***Children at our Heart -*** We will keep children and young people at the heart of everything we do
* ***Value Family Life -*** We will support and empower parents to care for their own children well
* ***Good Education for All -*** We will value education as the best start in life for all children and young people
* ***Protection from Harm -*** We will act in a professional and timely way to protect children from harm

**Purpose of job:**

* Act asa Learning Advocate for a specific cohort of Children Looked After (CLA), residing both in and out of county.
* Promote high expectations for CLA within our educational settings, prioritising their educational needs to secure a good quality education and positive outcomes.
* Work with partners to meet the diverse needs of CLA, challenging barriers to success and promoting a culture of high aspiration and achievement.
* Provide early identification and targeted intervention at the earliest opportunity.
* Develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of all schools/providers and their staff so they can effectively meet the needs of any CLA.
* Increase % of CLA achieving expected or better level of attainment in end of key stage national assessments.

**Main Activities & Responsibilities:**

* *DfE:* Parents want their children to have the best start in life and to reach their full potential. As corporate parents, local authorities should have equally high aspirations for the children they look after. As professionals sharing responsibility for ensuring that the local authority discharges its duty to promote the educational achievement of their children looked-after (CLA), Learning Advocates should:
  + ensure that top priority is given to creating a culture of high educational aspirations, striving for accelerated progress and age-related attainment or better for CLA.
  + monitor and intervene with attendance and educational progress.
  + work with partners to ensure sufficient information about a child’s mental health, SEN or disability is available to their education setting so that appropriate support can be provided.
  + support the virtual school in ensuring that social workers, designated teachers (or equivalent) and schools/settings, carers and IROs understand their role and responsibilities in initiating, developing, reviewing and updating the child’s Personal Education Plan (PEP) and how they help meet the needs identified in that PEP.
  + ensure up-to-date, effective and high quality PEPs that focus on educational outcomes, and that all looked-after children, wherever they are placed, have such a PEP.
  + avoid drift or delay in providing suitable educational provision, including special educational provision, and unplanned termination of educational arrangements through proactive, multi-agency co-operation. Where this requires negotiation with other authorities this should be completed in a timely manner and with the best interest of the child as paramount.
* Promote awareness of the statutory requirements for CLA.
* Offer challenge and guidance to schools/settings to build on and improve educational outcomes.
* Identify needs of high priority children and signpost schools/settings to appropriate support networks that will help them to overcome barriers.
* Undertake, quality assure and monitor the PEP process to ensure each CLA benefits from focused targets and use of Pupil Premium Plus / Early Years Pupil Premium for CLA in the care of Worcestershire Local Authority.
* Work with partners to identify the child/young person’s educational needs and facilitate appropriate support in a timely manner.
* Monitor use and impact of and/or Pupil Premium Plus / Early Years Pupil Premium.
* Provide practical advice to schools/settings to support wider outcomes.
* Facilitate transitions at key points within a child/young person’s education.
* Work collaboratively with social care teams to support the holistic development of CLA.
* Work collaboratively with professionals to identify education provision for CLA who are not on roll at a school/setting. Advise social care regarding preference for school/setting placements (high quality provision matched to individual needs and stability) and contribute to admissions process.
* Work collaboratively with local authority SEND teams to ensure CLA with an EHCP are given effective support to thrive and progress in their education.
* Promote effective inclusion practices.
* Promote a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding, sharing information and taking prompt action where concerns arise, in line with guidance contained within Working Together to Safeguard Children, Keeping Children Safe in Education and the WCF Safeguarding Policy.
* Work collaboratively with professionals to ensure CLA on a part time timetable are supported to receive full time education as soon as possible.
* To keep accurate and up to date records for allocated CLA, including attainment, progress, attendance, SEN status etc.
* To develop effective working partnerships with young people in care, their carers and other key workers.
* To listen to young people through taking into account their aspirations, wishes, feelings and needs.
* To prepare reports, presentations, articles and website material for the service and other stakeholders as required
* To ensure confidentiality of children/young people’s information and adherence to data sharing protocols.
* To organise, plan and contribute to training events that raise the educational outcomes for CLA.
* Provide support, training and advice for partners and stakeholders with respect to education policy and practice.
* Working collaboratively with social care, support self-evaluation and governing body reports related to the attainment and progress of CLA.

**Generic Accountabilities:**

1. 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
2. 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

* To undertake health and safety duties commensurate with the job and/or as detailed in the Directorate’s Health and Safety Policy
* 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
* Working with some vulnerable children, young people and adults can, at times, be emotionally challenging for which appropriate support will be provided through management supervision. The post holder must be able to deal with such mental demands.

1. 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.
2. 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: Elected Members, Directors, Heads of Service, Senior Managers, Management Teams,

Managers & Staff across all directorates, Project Staff, Governors, Head Teachers, Teachers, Support

Staff and other school/setting-based staff.

External: District & County Councils, Government Agencies & Departments, NHS, Clinical

Commissioning Groups, Healthcare Professionals, Police, Fire, Probation Service, Educational

Settings, Suppliers, Contractors, Service providers, Statutory and Voluntary Organisations, service

users, clients, customers, parents & pupils, members of the public, volunteers.

**Additional Information:**

* Worcestershire Children First 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.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Job Title: Virtual School Learning Advocate**

**Directorate & Section/Unit: Education and Early Help**

**Salary Grade: Soulbury scale 1-4**

**WCF Management Level: Frontline staff**

**Full time - term time only + 10 days pro rata**

**EXPERIENCE:**

It is **essential** that the post holder has:

* Substantial practitioner experience working with education settings.
* Substantial experience of advising on relevant legislative and regulatory frameworks and Government initiatives relating to the education of children looked after.
* Substantial experience in educational initiatives impacting on children looked after.
* A successful track record and substantial background of consistently raising standards for children/young people.
* Significant experience of providing advice, support and challenge to schools/settings, ideally including senior leaders.
* Substantial track record in managing own caseload and workload.
* Excellent ability to make effective use of information and communication technology and information management systems to improve service outcomes.
* Significant experience of working independently and as part of a team.
* Proven track record of interpersonal impact with others, including experience of successfully building internal and external relationships with a range of stakeholders.

It is **desirable** that the post holder has:

* Experience of undertaking the Personal Education Plan process.
* Experience liaising with staff at different levels and acting as a point of contact.
* Experience of delivering professional development to schools/settings.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:**

It is **essential** that the post holder has:

* Expert knowledge and understanding of relevant legislative and regulatory frameworks and Government initiatives relating to the education of children looked after.
* Expert knowledge of educational initiatives impacting on children looked after.
* Ability to work effectively within and across a range of schools/settings.
* Ability to offer challenge and support to school staff in a wide variety of schools/settings.
* Outstanding commitment to improving the outcomes for CLA.
* A specialist understanding of learning and teaching in a school/education setting.
* Ability and experience working to statutory timelines.
* The confidence to hold others to account for the educational outcomes of the CLA.
* Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
* Effective inter-personal skills to create positive working relationship with managers, school/setting staff including Designated Teachers (or equivalent), teachers/practitioners and leaders, social workers, carers, professionals from within WCF services/teams, outside agencies and children in a wide range of roles and settings.
* A proven track record of building effective working relationships with children/young people in order to ensure their voice is heard and their needs are met.
* Excellent ability to work within a team and foster effective working relationships.
* The ability to reflect on and develop their own practice.
* Ability to work to tight deadlines and manage time effectively.

It is **desirable** that the post holder has:

* A sound understanding of the need to champion CLA.
* Knowledge and understanding of the statutory guidelines for CLA.
* A sound knowledge and understanding of relevant legislative and regulatory frameworks and Government initiatives relating to the education of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

**QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT:**

It is **essential** that the post holder has:

1. Level 6 qualification (e.g. degree) in a relevant discipline **or** compensatory experience.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

It is **essential** that the post holder has:

A full driving licence and the ability to travel to schools/settings within Worcestershire and to other local authorities within the UK.