

## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title: Commissioning Hub Support Officer**  
**Directorate & Section/Unit: Worcestershire County Council/ Finance**  
**Reporting to: Placement and Resources Team Manager**  
**Management responsibility for (Level 1 Manager and above): n/a**  
**Supervisory responsibility for (Level 1 Supervisor): n/a**  
**Headcount and FTE of staff: n/a**

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|------------------------------------|
| <b>Salary Grade:</b> 5             |
| <b>WCC Management Level:</b> n/a   |
| <b>Number of Direct Reports:</b> 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 County Council 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:** To arrange and coordinate a variety of services as agreed with social workers/casework officers/ managers to meet the identified needs of children and young people in a timely and efficient manner and in line with Council procedures, Finance and Contracting Rules.

### **Main Activities & Responsibilities:**

- To use knowledge and collaborate with social workers and casework officers to identify suitable placements for vulnerable children in care and coming into care/ or to identify suitable educational provision for children with SEND, to enable the best outcome for children, young people and their families
- To commission support workers and respite care for young people at home to prevent them from coming into LA care, and also commission support for children in care. This is normally at very short notice to ensure children are safe, family can manage in a safe environment and placements with providers are more stable.
- To ensure provider financial information is received and input into WCC systems and financial queries from providers and management are answered in a timely manner. Financial data for management and end of year finance is completed and accurate.
- To ensure relevant contracts are either in place, or are completed in a timely manner. To also ensure knowledge of contracts is up to date and adhered to by providers and WCC. Providers are challenged on contractual matters as and when required.
- To liaise with and provide advice to social workers and casework officers in the production of documentation related to placements for children and young people.
- Review referrals: support and advise social workers and casework officers on how to write a strong, factual, accurate referral. Provide constructive challenge on how placement referrals have been written in order to find the best possible outcomes for young people referred to the service.

- Provide immediate response to information or situations concerning risk to vulnerable children, in relation to placement services.
- To follow up placement offers with providers to ensure that the placement requested matches the placement being provided and actively challenge when anomalies exist.
- To undertake cost negotiations with providers to ensure optimum value for money and as a result, reducing the overall expenditure for WCC. This involves analysing placements data and using market knowledge to influence and persuade providers for the benefit of the young people and the service.
- Investigate, negotiate with and challenge providers, when in young person's best interests. This involves discussing notice periods with providers and using expert knowledge to help negotiate additional support to ensure the best outcomes for the young person.
- To ensure that any variations put forward by the provider to the agreed placement which have an impact (e.g. on child's care, financial, etc) are communicated through the necessary processes within WCC.
- To ensure that any variations put forward by the provider to the agreed placement which have an impact (e.g. on child's care, financial, etc) are challenged and substantiated with the provider. This includes requesting copies of risk assessments, evidence of need and incident chronologies.
- Support management to develop and maintain healthy working relationships with internal and external providers to help improve placement outcomes. Providing new provider information to management for follow up.
- Assess and decide which placement offers to share with social workers based on agreed criteria, in line with WCC processes. This would include taking into account key factors such as quality of care, Ofsted outcome, location and cost.
- To assist in the monitoring of placements, identifying and following up on concerns and compliance issues. Ensure Pre-Placement Checklists are completed in a timely manner and concerns raised with the social work team/ SEND colleagues as necessary.
- Act as the first point of contact for social workers, partner organisations and external providers, to agree appropriate actions.
- Provide weekly duty cover as part of a prepared rota, often working in a pressurised environment, dealing with multiple same day placement searches until resolved. This can frequently involve working outside of normal office hours.
- To work with placement colleagues in order to find placements for a caseload of searches, linking closely with other Commissioning Hub Support Officers, supporting each other and providing peer to peer supervision.
- To facilitate and lead in the coordination development and delivery of new and existing projects, in line with the team development plan to contribute to the effectiveness of the service.
- Collate and share information relating to the placing of children, to support the best use of resources and support the development of systems to track placement sourcing.
- Work closely with the in-house fostering team, supported living and residential managers to enable the sourcing of in-house placements / resources.
- Liaise with other Local Authority Placements Teams, to gather information when sourcing placements outside of Worcestershire to identify any potential risk or vulnerabilities.
- Undertake specific service projects/tasks including investigation, identification and research;
- Collate and prepare information to reflect quality assurance and performance data relating to providers. Compile presentations where appropriate.
- Support management to collate and present placements data or senior management and Freedom of Information requests as required.
- Initiate, organise, attend and contribute to partnership and public events, conferences, seminars and other awareness raising activities, as required.

- To ensure that opportunities to access national funding are maximised for Worcestershire and that we submit claims to access funds, in line with criteria, from Central Government. This would include claiming UASC funding from the Home Office.

### **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
- 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

### **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 and other school-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 County 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: Craig Wheeler

Date: 01/10/2020

Date of grading confirmation: