

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	LAFSE Subcluster Fostering Enquiry Lead		
Directorate:	People	Salary:	£35,235 - £39,513 plus LWA £706
Section:	Regional - Working on behalf of 17 South East Local Authorities	Grade:	BG-G SCP 25-30
Location:	Time Square	Work Style:	Flexible

Key Objectives of the role

The Subcluster Fostering Enquiry Lead will serve as a central point of contact for the Local Authority Fostering South East (LAFSE) Fostering Recruitment Hub, a regional partnership of seventeen local authorities.

With warmth and enthusiasm, you will support local authority-based enquiry officers and prospective foster carers by addressing enquiries via multiple channels (including online, phone, email and occasionally face to face during events), whilst maintaining robust information management systems.

You will also use your specialist knowledge in fostering to elevate the profile of fostering across the South East, whilst developing professional and supportive relationships across the region, in what is an innovative approach to foster carer recruitment

Designation of post and position within departmental structure

The Subcluster Fostering Enquiry Lead will work across the South East and be line managed by the LAFSE Hub Operations and Workforce Manager, within a virtual regional recruitment hub.

The Subcluster Fostering Enquiry Lead will have a dotted line supervisory responsibility for local authority-based enquiry officers; however, their contractual line management will be undertaken within their respective local authority teams.

Daily and monthly responsibilities

Supervising and Supporting Fostering Enquiry/Recruitment Officers

- Providing oversight, guidance, and professional support to Enquiry/Recruitment Officers, including trouble shooting any issues within the Hub's telephony and CRM systems to ensure LA's have access.

- Ensuring consistent approaches in initial visits and assessments across the region.
- Offering advice and problem-solving support for complex cases.
- Conducting joint visits and covering visits, when necessary, across the SE region.
- Attending initial home visits alongside Enquiry/Recruitment Officers for support or training purposes.
- Carrying out visits independently and producing a high-quality report with recommendations on whether an applicant is suitable for fostering if a local authority-based officer is unavailable.

Ensuring Thorough Assessment of Prospective Foster Carers

- Ensuring prospective carers receive clear and accurate information on fostering.
- Supporting Enquiry/Recruitment Officers in assessing the home environment for safety and suitability.
- Identifying any concerns or required modifications prior to referring to the quality assurance manager for sign off.
- Helping officers evaluate applicants' motivations, experiences, and readiness to foster.

Providing High-Level Guidance on Fostering Suitability

- Assisting officers in identifying strengths and areas for development in applicants.
- Ensuring fair and consistent decision-making regarding progression in the fostering process.

Supporting the Recruitment, Retention and Data Management Strategies

- Working with local authority-based enquiry officers to ensure the regional recruitment strategy and key performance targets are met or exceeded.
- Contributing to the development and implementation of recruitment initiatives.
- Assisting in improving recruitment outcomes through feedback and reflective practice.
- Ensuring enquiries are dealt with efficiently and with reference to the relevant information and procedural requirements of each participating local authority.
- Working with colleagues (including business support teams, Fostering Teams, Communications, Marketing Officers) and other relevant staff across the region,
- To support with planning and implementing the relevant marketing and recruitment strategy to achieve service plan objectives and targets.
- Leading on regular analysis of foster carer enquiries (pre-stage 1 assessment) to ensure statutory requirements are met, to make recommendations for action by social workers, and other practitioners, and to ensure team managers follow up in a timely manner.
- To be responsible for populating and maintaining the fostering database, tracking recommendations as identified.
- To participate in the Bracknell Forest Councils Employee Development Scheme/appraisals /supervision and contribute to the identification of your own and team development needs.

Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:

- Undertake activities to support the implementation of the hub strategy.
- Maintain knowledge of relevant issues within fostering, providing efficient responses to enquiries generated by recruitment campaigns.
- Engaging with prospective carers through various channels and lead them to information events.
- Support fostering events and maintain updated data on previous enquiries.

- Ensure compliance with corporate policies, statutory, and national policies, including equal opportunities, team development and confidentiality.
- Manage and maintain a database of prospective foster carers, providing reports when required.
- Develop and maintain a tracking system for efficient enquiry handling.
- Support organisational change, promoting a positive image of the Fostering Hub.
- Explore innovative uses of technology to enhance service delivery.
- Carry out initial home visits and produce high quality reports on each visit as and when required.

Scope of role

This post holder provides supervisory support to LA based Fostering Recruitment Officers, ensuring consistency and best practice in the initial assessment of prospective foster carers. They conduct joint home visits with officers for training and complex cases or carry out visits independently when required. Their role involves guiding officers in assessing suitability, addressing any concerns, and ensuring applicants receive accurate information about fostering. Additionally, they contribute to recruitment strategies and ensure compliance with fostering regulations, helping to improve the recruitment and retention of foster carers.

Internal Contacts: These include maintain contact as necessary with colleagues and managers within the People's Directorate.

External Contacts: This will include other Directorates within the Council, other Local Authorities, other agencies, such as the police, probation, health services, and members of the public.

To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's relevant codes and procedures.

All employees are required to participate in continuous personal development and to undertake appropriate training and development identified to enhance their work.

Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled candidate.
Commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunities policy at all times

Commitment to working within the bounds of the Data Protection Act and GDPR legislation at all times

Such other duties as may from time to time be necessary, compatible with the nature of the post. It should be noted that the above list of main duties and responsibilities is not necessarily a complete statement of the final duties of the post. It is intended to give an overall view of the position and should be taken as guidance only.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

KEY CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Skills and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English language and Mathematics GCSE Grade C/5 or above, or good standard of literacy and numeracy • Proficient in the use of Microsoft Windows Applications and mainframe Client Index/ Case Management systems. • The ability to produce robust initial fostering, shared lives or supported lodgings assessments. • Excellent telephone manner and listening skills required, able to focus and record information whilst working in an open plan office. • The ability to communicate effectively, verbally, in writing, within meetings and effectively engaging service users. • Experience of identifying, mitigating and managing risks and effectively reporting these through upper tier management structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of supporting a team in successful service delivery of a new project or service and motivating a team to deliver high quality, consistent services
Competence Summary (Knowledge, abilities, skills, experience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of and commitment to the requirements of safeguarding children, young people, vulnerable adults and promoting their welfare. • Knowledge of prospective carer assessments and the journey of a prospective foster carer • Experience of carrying out initial home visits to prospective foster carers. • Experience of setting up and maintaining administrative systems and processes. • Experience of working with and engaging a wide range of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of key local government issues associated with the role and how these affect service delivery • Experience of developing creative and informative material that is effective • Knowledge of online community facilitation tools and application of social media tools to build networks and communicate in a cost-efficient manner • Ability to work with IT systems to ensure performance metrics can be reported on.

community groups and organisations

- Knowledge or relevant experience of marketing, recruitment, and campaign / project delivery (ideally for foster carers and/or adopters but not limited to).
 - A working knowledge of relevant national legislation and regulation requirements including safeguarding policies and procedures
 - Awareness of and a commitment to equality of access and opportunity in a diverse community.
 - Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post
 - Ability to prioritise effectively and work on multiple work-streams and meet deadlines whilst requiring minimal supervision.
 - Ability to work with sensitive and confidential issues tactfully.
 - Willing to work outside normal hours, work very flexibly and across the county in a variety of locations as and when required.
 - Participate in team development and promote equal opportunity policies.
 - Ensure compliance with corporate policies, statutory, and national policies.
 - Explore innovative uses of technology to enhance service delivery.
 - Ensure confidentiality and adhere to relevant policies and procedures.
- Ability to analyse information, write business reports and use this for providing clear recommendations and decisions for informing service planning
 - The ability to work with internal stakeholders and external partners and bodies

Other Work Requirements

A satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

This role has been identified as public facing in accordance with Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016; the requirement to fulfil all spoken

aspects of the role with confidence in English applies

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

As the duties give you access to persons who are under the age of 18. Applicants are not entitled to withhold information about convictions, which would be regarded as spent for other purposes.

Role models and demonstrates the Council's values and behaviours

Our values define who we are. They outline what is important to us. They influence the way we work with each other – and the way we serve our residents and engage with our communities.

We make our values real by demonstrating them in how we behave every day.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the Council's Equality & Dignity at Work policy at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and Council policies/procedures.

