

Job description

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| Job title: | SEND Service Lead (up to 12 months fixed-term maternity cover) | | |
| Directorate: | People | Salary: | £61,091 - £66,644 per year plus £729 London Weighting |
| Section: | E&L SEND Service | Grade: | BG-C (SCP 49-54) |
| Location: | Time Square | Work style: | Flexible/Hybrid |

Key objectives of the role

To fulfil and maintain a professional leadership and strategic management function which supports the timely implementation of all aspects of SEND statutory responsibilities relating to children and young people with SEND to ensure that all statutory and mandatory services are strategically planned, aligned and available to stakeholders as detailed in the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 2014 and Education Act 1996 and as directed by the Head of SEND and Specialist Support Services.

To manage delegated High Needs Block budget areas, negotiating and managing external frameworks and be responsible for resource allocation, placement decisions and key decisions making processes including (but not limited to) chairing Decision-Making Group and Resource Allocation panels in line with corporate decision-making processes, the Head of SEND and Specialist Support Services and within the scheme of delegation.

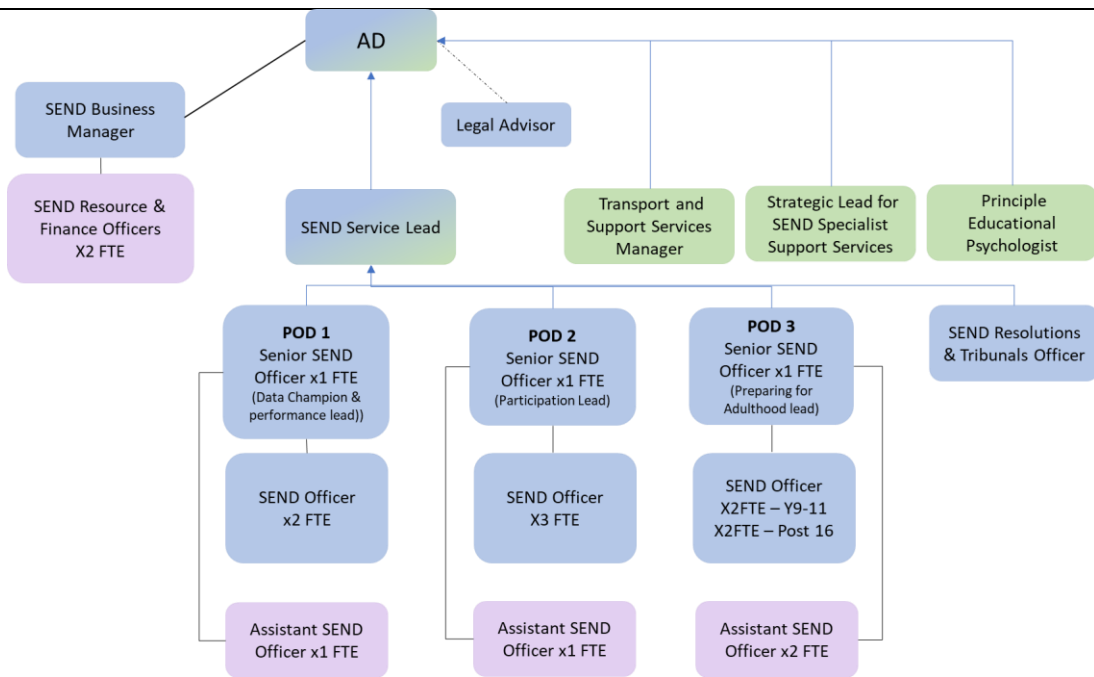
To develop and lead the council's SEND Strategy and contribute into strategic and improvement planning such as the QA frameworks, placement and provision planning, Inspection preparation, and readiness, DfE and council corporate requirements.

To ensure appropriate mediation and tribunal intervention occurs and be responsible for timely and detailed responses to requests for information, including complaints, LGSCO queries and FOI requests.

To be a proactive and accountable member of the SEND and Specialist Support Services management team ensuring business continuity is maintained across SEND services and to represent or deputise for the Head of Service, if or when required.

Designation of post and position within departmental structure

The postholder will report into the Assistant Director for Education and Learning.



Daily and monthly responsibilities

1. To be fully accountable and provide management and oversight of all operational duties for the SEND Statutory Service, including the EHC needs assessment process, Annual Reviews and Phase Transfers.
2. Manage a team of professionals who will have responsibility for ensuring that there are timely, effective and statutorily compliant EHC assessment and review pathways and that our responsibility to provide a formal mediations and tribunals response is fully discharged on behalf of the council.
3. Monitoring of compliance and KPIs in relation to staff members and statutory processes and supporting the Senior SEND Officers to undertake performance management of staff if required.
4. Monitor and implement, when necessary, advice, support or training for staff and key stakeholders/partners in relation to SEND statutory process and requirements.
5. Develop an appropriate quality assurance tool and lead on multi-agency quality assurance audits of Education, Health and Care plans and annual reviews, identifying areas for learning and deliver training for staff/partners to ensure sustained improvements.
6. To lead on the development and implementation of specific SEND initiatives such as placement commissioning, EHCP review and delivery and cultural change, and work closely with the Commissioning team in sufficiency, negotiating and commissioning with existing and new providers with reference to our internal 'hard to place' list. This will include leading on stakeholder engagement.
7. Chair weekly Decision-Making Groups (DMG) that convene to discuss agreements to EHC needs assessments, decisions to issue EHCPs and resource allocation.
8. Responsible for compliance with internal and external requests for information. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - Requests for mediation
 - Tribunal submissions

- Subject Access Requests
 - Freedom of Information requests
 - Engagement activity with the Parent Carer Forum
 - Councillor and MP enquiries
 - Data protection queries
 - Customer feedback
 - Complaints
 - General enquiries and stakeholder engagement
9. Driving continuous improvement at service level, through regular monitoring and reporting of the statutory processes. This includes:
- Gathering and validation of regular and timely high-quality accurate data via the implementation of a quality assurance framework.
 - Utilising the output of Capita ONE (or other designated case management system) to identify data outliers (areas of weakness/ concern) and to provide early identification of pressure points within the workload/ service and generate solutions to drive continuous improvement.
 - Where rapid improvement is required, ensure that reporting is put in place to monitor and track performance.
 - Ensure that where professional standards are in place there is statutory development to meet requirements.
10. Liaise with external bodies such as the judiciary, DfE, ICS, Berkshire Health Foundation Trust, Parent Carer Forum, and IASS, as directed by the Head of SEND and Specialist Support Services. Working closely with the Integrated Care System (ICS), Children's Social Care, professionals, external agencies and providers to ensure effective and aligned practice and strategic planning is delivered by the council and its relevant partners.
11. Support the implementation of guidance, strategy and service planning in relation to SEND strategy and improvement plans, as well as the wider corporate plan and BFC values, ensuring staff are aware of the principles and it informs daily practice.

Scope of role

The post holder will have 4 direct reports and have overall responsibilities of the team of professionals.

The postholder will be a proactive and accountable member of the SEND Services Senior Leadership Team with overall responsibility and accountability for the successful delivery of SEND Statutory Services within the wider SEND and Specialist Support Services. Additionally, ensuring business continuity is maintained across SEND services.

This post has a key role in advising and providing expertise across the People directorate (and externally) on statutory and mandatory SEND Statutory Services to key professional groups. The appropriateness and timeliness of advice supports early intervention and prevents escalation and wider concerns. Any such advice or guidance should be appropriate, accessible, relevant and in place for all stakeholders and there are regular monitoring and engagement across multi agencies to ensure aligned and cohesive processes.

The post has a key role in maintaining effective relationships between the council and its local and regional partners, this requires initiative and diplomacy as well as sound professional knowledge. There is a need to interface with a wide range of people both within the council and with partner organisations including Elected Members, when appropriate.

This role ensures that the statutory and mandatory development and standards are in place to meet legal and professional standards, compliance data is returned where funding is

allocated to High Needs Block, DfE and that data is used effectively to quantifiably inform areas of improvement.

The role provides senior leadership for the delivery of SEND improvement and reform activity, acting as a key lead in driving forward agreed priorities across the SEND and Specialist Support Services. This will include translating strategic improvement plans into clear operational delivery, strengthening statutory compliance and quality assurance, supporting service redesign, and working collaboratively with education, health, social care, families and partners to secure sustainable improvements and evidence the impact of reform for children and young people with SEND.

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 |
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| Skills and qualifications | <p>Educated to degree level or equivalent and evidence of continuous professional development.</p> <p>Significant senior management experience within SEND, education, children's services or a related statutory service, with responsibility for operational delivery, service improvement and risk management.</p> <p>Proven experience of leading SEND service improvement and reform, including translating strategic priorities into measurable delivery plans and evidencing impact.</p> | <p>Ofsted trained and accredited.</p> |
| Competence summary (Knowledge, abilities, skills, experience) | <p>Detailed working knowledge of SEND legislation and statutory guidance, including the Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Code of Practice 0–25, Equality Act 2010, Education Act 1996, statutory assessment duties, annual reviews, phase transfers, mediation and tribunal processes.</p> <p>Strong understanding of local area SEND inspection frameworks, including preparation, evidence gathering, quality assurance and post-inspection improvement planning.</p> <p>Experience of leading multi-agency partnership working across education, health, social care, schools, settings, parent / carers, children and young people, and commissioned providers.</p> <p>Ability to use data, performance information and quality assurance intelligence to identify risk, track statutory compliance, drive improvement and report effectively to senior leaders and governance boards.</p> <p>Experience of managing high-risk statutory decision-making, including complex casework, resource allocation, placement decisions, tribunals, complaints and escalation.</p> <p>Strong financial and commissioning awareness, including managing or contributing to High Needs Block pressures, placement sufficiency, value for money and provider negotiations.</p> <p>Proven ability to lead, motivate and develop teams through change, including supervision,</p> | <p>Knowledge of other associated legislation in relation to children and young people.</p> <p>Experience at a senior level within a special needs assessment service.</p> |

performance management, workforce planning, coaching and creating a resilient culture.

Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to produce clear reports, briefings, tribunal responses and senior-level governance papers.

Strong political awareness and professional judgement, with the ability to advise senior leaders, elected members and partners on complex, sensitive or high-profile SEND matters.

Commitment to co-production and inclusive practice, ensuring the voices of children, young people, families and parent carers inform service design, improvement and decision-making.

Knowledge and understanding of the primary phase and current National and Local agendas relating to EYFS- KS5 and related legislation which will enable the postholder to provide accurate advice and challenge.

Ability to operate successfully collaborating with school leaders and governors and with a range of outcomes for children and young people service providers to influence and negotiate to secure positive outcomes.

Ability to ensure business continuity and management of risk, particularly in relation to the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

Effective communicator with evidence of high level oral, written and presentation skills to enable the post holder to communicate effectively with a range of audiences.

Ability to prioritise work in a fast-paced working environment.

Understanding of and commitment to the requirements of safeguarding children, young people, vulnerable adults and promoting their welfare.

**Work-related
Personal
Requirements**

The post holder must hold a full UK driving licence (or valid equivalent). Non-UK licences must be converted to UK licences in the first six months of employment.

**Other work
requirements**

A satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

The ability to converse easily in spoken English, explain complex or technical information to

members of the public and respond effectively to detailed or complex questions for an extended period of time

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Ability to attend occasional evening and/or weekend meetings, if required.

Commitment to ongoing professional development and training to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of SEN legislation and practice, and to develop skills in ICT and other areas.

Ability to work flexibly balancing several competing tasks and priorities simultaneously, often under pressure.

Resilient and solution focused when facing challenges.

Make the right, transparent decisions and stand by them.

Reacts positively to change.

Hold people to account and celebrate their achievements.

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 and Dignity at Work policy at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality and Diversity legislation and Council policies/procedures.

