

Northumberland County Council
JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: SEN Lead Officer for Looked After Children	Director/Service/Sector: Education and Skills Service, Children’s Services Directorate		Office Use JE Ref:3742
Band: 7	Workplace: County Hall		
Responsible to: SEN Team Manager	Date: September 2020		
Job Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To co-ordinate Northumberland’s process for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) for all Looked After Children (LAC), resulting in quality assured and outcome focussed Plans for learners 0-25• To commission education health and social care assessments for that caseload of children within statutory timescales to contribute to the writing and resourcing of the EHCP• To take responsibility for the development of good practice and expertise in the area of LAC within the SEN Assessment and Monitoring Team• To work across partner agencies including schools, settings, Northumberland Virtual School, Social Care and central education services to promote effective communications and provision of service as appropriate for individual LAC within statutory processes, and at SEN Support• To take a lead role the quality assurance of the statutory assessment process for LAC• To lead on Annual Reviews for LAC, ensuring that they align as far as possible with other statutory meetings eg Personal Education Plan (PEP) Reviews, Strategy Meetings and Care Team Meetings			
Resources	Staff	The post holder will not be directly responsible for other staff but will coordinate staff activity around individual cases.	
	Finance	The post holder will not be directly responsible for a budget but will be required to ensure that decisions made guarantee effective use of council resources and do not adversely impact on SEN expenditure. The post holder will also advise schools on funding processes and support the budget monitoring.	
	Physical	The post holder will report to a central team based at County Hall, but work is related to Looked After Children and therefore travelling to schools and settings across the County may be necessary to attend meetings	
	Clients	Children and young people who are Looked After, and have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and/or EHCPs, and all partner agencies involved with children and young people concerned, including within the Virtual School for LAC	
Duties and key result areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To promote the inclusion of looked after children and young people with SEND2. Work in partnership with parents/carers/social care services and ensure that children, young people and all partners are fully involved in the assessment process and that the child or young person is an active participant in any decisions made about him or her3. Have a thorough understanding of and commitment to personalisation and person-centred approaches, use these approaches at all times and support other professionals to develop their skills in this area4. Act as a critical friend to schools and settings5. Co-ordinate and communicate the response when a non-statutory pathway is indicated, working with partners to ensure needs can be met in school/setting6. Contribute to case conferences and strategy meetings7. Gather the views of the child and the parents/ carers/corporate parent as part of the EHC Needs assessment process, and support the presentation of those views8. Working closely with all partners to identify outcomes for the LAC in every aspect of their life, based on high aspirations9. Ensuring a comprehensive set of assessments is obtained, and that these clearly identify appropriate outcomes for the LAC			

10. Following the assessments, progress the EHC Plan which is holistic, clear, accessible and outcome focused through draft and final stages
11. Participate in annual reviews of EHC Plans for individual LAC, ensuring they are completed in a timely way with all partner agencies involved. This is of particular importance when considering transitions between schools/settings, and will involve planning ahead for pupils for up to and beyond a year to ensure the best long-term outcomes
12. Provide feedback to managers to support evaluation of the process and advise managers on how developments and improvements could be made in relation to EHCP processes and LAC
13. Use the data collected to assess the impact of the EHCP on pupil achievement and contribute to the SEND Team Manager's performance management
14. framework
15. Ensure that the child or young person's welfare remains paramount. Work closely with Education Service for Looked After Children and ensure and that any safeguarding issues are appropriately managed in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures
16. To support the SEND Team Manager and/or Tribunals Officer to prepare for SEND tribunals and exclusion meetings in relation to LAC
17. Promote equality as an integral part of the role and to treat everyone with fairness and dignity
18. To represent the Local Authority at meetings and to undertake such other duties and responsibilities that are consistent with the nature, level and grade of the post.
19. To undertake such other duties and responsibilities determined by the Director of Children's Services that are consistent with the nature, level and grade of the post
20. To adhere to the rules, procedures and Code of Conduct of the County Council

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Work Arrangements

Transport requirements:	The work involves the need to visit schools or work sites throughout the County on a regular and routine basis. Other than travel between sites, the work is office-based.
Working patterns:	Full time 37 hours per week Monday to Friday
Working conditions:	As described in NCC employee terms and conditions

Northumberland County Council PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Essential	Desirable	
Knowledge and Qualifications		
Good general education up to degree level	Professional qualification in Education, Social Care or Health	
Good working knowledge of a range of SEND	Knowledge of other related legislation, including legislation governing Adult Social Care, the Children Act and safeguarding processes	
Knowledge and understanding of statutory guidance for Local Authorities on promoting the education of looked after and previously looked after children	Knowledge of resource allocation processes including the Continuing Healthcare Decision Support Tool	
Detailed knowledge of the Children and Families legislation including the SEND Code of Practice		
Knowledge of other related legislation, including legislation governing Adult Social Care, the Children Act and safeguarding processes		

<p>Knowledge of the Equality Act particularly in relation to children and young people with disabilities</p> <p>Understanding of and commitment to person centred approaches, personalisation and key working functions</p> <p>Thorough knowledge of the services and agencies which might be involved in EHC assessments and EHC Plan delivery</p> <p>An understanding of the specific challenges related to being a Looked After Child</p> <p>An understanding of the role of the Corporate parent</p>	
Experience	
<p>Minimum of 2 years' experience in SEND and either in Education, Social Care or Health</p> <p>Extensive experience of working with parents and families</p> <p>Extensive experience of multi agency working</p>	<p>Previous experience of direct working with Looked After Children</p> <p>Experience of working with LAC with SEND</p>
Skills and competencies	
<p>High level oral communication skills including the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of situations, face-to-face, telephone or large group</p> <p>Excellent written communication skills including ability to draft clear and concise plans</p> <p>Negotiation skills: ability to manage oral and written negotiations sensitively, appropriately and successfully</p> <p>Be able to work with a high degree of autonomy, without daily recourse to senior managers</p> <p>Interpersonal skills: the skills to relate effectively to parents, professionals and colleagues, mediating when necessary</p> <p>IT skills including ability to use Microsoft Office software</p> <p>Tact and diplomacy; the ability to deal with sensitive and confidential issues that require a variety of approaches.</p> <p>Ability to remain effective and professional in challenging and difficult situations.</p> <p>Ability to establish good working relationships</p>	<p>Ability to use SEN Module of Capita One/EMS</p>

Analytical thinking and ability to make sound judgements based on appropriate evidence

The ability to identify creative, personalised solutions to achieve a young person's identified long term outcomes (usually spanning a school key stage of up to 4 years) and to influence others to think creatively

The ability to set and meet deadlines

Ability to work independently and on own initiative, requiring minimal supervision

Well organised and methodical, able to plan effective schedules for clients within and beyond statutory processes; spanning months and reviewing annually

Ability to work in a pressurised environment that requires prolonged periods of concentrated mental attention throughout the working day

High level of personal resilience

Commitment to promoting and implementing equal opportunities.

Commitment to customer care practices.

Commitment to person centred approaches, personalisation and key working functions

Physical, mental and emotional demands

The post holder will need to work under pressure, managing conflicting priorities within tight timescales and speedily making decisions on complex and challenging cases. This area of work can be emotionally draining and the post holder will need resilience to deliver justifiable decisions to parents, schools and colleagues which may not meet their expectations. The post holder must have the resilience to work day to day with a client group which can be challenging and whose responses may not always be predictable or as expected.

Other

The post sits within Education and Skills, under the line management of the SEN Assessment and Monitoring Team Manager. The postholder is expected to work closely with the Virtual School for Looked After Children.