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| **Job Description** | |
| **Post title** | SEND, Looked After Children and Vulnerable Groups Caseworker |
| **JE Reference No** | N10041 |
| **Grade** | Grade 9 |
| **Service** | Children and Young People’s Services |
| **Service Area** | SEND & Inclusion |
| **Reporting to** | The post holder will report to the SEND, Looked After Children and Vulnerable Groups Casework Manager |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be Broom Cottages, Ferryhill, but you may be required to work at any Council workplace within County Durham. |
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| **DBS** | This post is subject to an enhanced disclosure. |
| **Flexitime** | This post is eligible for flexitime. |
| **Politically restricted** | This post is designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the requirements of Section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State. |

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| **Description of role** |

The function of the SEND and Vulnerable Children Caseworker is to provide high quality casework across 0-25 age phase that ensures that children and young people with SEND and those who are Looked After by the Local Authority achieve outcomes that are aspirational, inclusive, supportive of independence and designed to prepare for the next learning phase and ultimately for adulthood including independence and employment in their communities.

The SEND and Vulnerable Children Casework Team will be focussed on the inclusion of children and young people with SEND and those with Looked After Status in a Local Offer that delivers real world outcomes that ensure the best preparation for adulthood.

The functions of the team are to ensure that the duties set out in SEND Code of Practice and the Children and Social Work Act (reference to the duties of the Virtual School) are adhered to. This includes:

* ensuring the high quality of new Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP’s) following best practice principles
* ensuring the production of high quality Personal Education Plans (PEP’s) and the effective use of PP+ to support achievement
* determine the most appropriate learning placement of children and young people including mainstream, enhanced and specialist options
* provide proportionate support, guidance and advocacy to children and young people with SEND and their families
* provide support, guidance and where necessary challenge to learning providers as part of the graduated response to meeting identified needs
* promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked after children
* facilitate effective transitions through each learning age phase that ensure a focus on outcomes that prepare young people for adulthood remains in place
* respond effectively to additional vulnerabilities that inhibit children and young people achieving their aspirations

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

This role will be primarily responsible for the providing Casework to Children and Young People with SEND and other Vulnerable Children, listed below are the responsibilities.

* To engage with children and young people and their parents/carers to ensure they have the opportunity to fully participate, either directly or via an advocate in services that they receive
* Conduct an assess, plan, deliver and review cycle based on best/effective practice principles
* To ensure Looked After Children and other vulnerable children and young people achieve good educational outcomes
* Ensure education placement is aligned to identified needs and placement is sustained through the effective resourcing of adaptation that meets identified need, including Looked After Children of other Local Authorities who reside in Durham and require an education placement in County Durham
* Where placement breaks down determination and delivery of swift and effective child centred solutions
* The preparation of departmental records for tribunal and other external scrutiny purposes
* To take proactive steps to develop practice through continuous professional development
* Ensure that assessment and planning processes fully support Preparing for Adulthood principles through early transition planning and access to high quality CEIAG.

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| **Organisational responsibilities** |

* **Values and behaviours**

To demonstrate and be a role model for the council’s values and behaviours to promote and encourage positive behaviours, enhancing the quality and integrity of the services we provide.

* **Smarter working, transformation and design principles**

To seek new and innovative ideas to work smarter, irrespective of job role, and to be creative, innovative and empowered. Understand the operational impact of transformational change and service design principles to support new ways of working and to meet customer needs.

* **Communication**

To communicate effectively with our customers, managers, peers and partners and to work collaboratively to provide the best possible public service. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to our public.

* **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

To take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety Policy and procedures.

* **Equality and diversity**

To promote a society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live, free from discrimination and prejudice and ensure our commitment is put into practice. All employees are responsible for eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination in everything that they do.

* **Confidentiality**

To work in a way that does not divulge personal and/or confidential information during the course of their work and follow the council’s policies and procedures in relation to data protection and security of information.

* **Performance management**

To promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. Contribute to the council’s Performance and Development Review processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

* **Quality assurance (for applicable posts)**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and service level so that the highest standards of service are delivered and maintained. Use data, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of service provision and support decision making processes.

* **Management and leadership (for applicable posts)**

To provide vision and leadership to inspire and empower all employees so they can reach their full potential and contribute to the council’s values and behaviours. Managers and leaders must engage in personal development to ensure they are equipped to lead transformational change; always searching for better ways to do things differently to meet organisational changes and service priorities.

* **Financial management (for applicable posts)**

To manage a designated budget, ensuring that the service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

*The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.*

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| Person specification | | |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * Degree or equivalent | * L4 Professional Careers Guidance or Information, Advice and Guidance qualification |
| Experience | * Experience of working with families and/or other professionals to meet the needs of children and/or young people * Experience of managing a caseload * Experience of collaborative working with a range of partners including: schools, colleges, health and social care professionals to affect change and problem solve | * Experience of managing multi-disciplinary casework in a local authority setting * Production of high quality Education Health Care Plans * Experience of working directly with children and/or young people * An inclusive practitioner in respect of children and young people - specifically those who are Looked After, previously looked after and or those with SEND * Experience of working as a SENCO or Designated Teacher in an educational setting * Engaging in disagreement resolution techniques * Experience of evaluating the quality of provision for children and young people with additional needs in an education setting |
| Skills & Knowledge | * Thorough knowledge and understanding of Special Educational Needs and the Code of Practice 0-25 * Strong communication skills (written and verbal) * Negotiation / influencing skills * Good ICT skills | * Specialist areas e.g. in depth knowledge of SEND legal issues and the tribunal process * Understanding of children and young people’s development through 0-25 years * Understanding of SEND and vulnerable children outcomes planning, and planning that prepares children and young people for adulthood * Good knowledge of the Looked After and wider Social Care systems * Good knowledge of Early Years and/or Post 16 provision * Good knowledge of work and employment opportunities for young people with SEND. * Well-developed knowledge of equality issues in schools and colleges. |
| Personal Qualities | * A drive to work in co-production with children and young people and their families, corporate parents and care leavers to ensure that their voice is heard clearly and that they are able to contribute to their assessment and provision * Commitment to an inclusive ethos for the education of children and young people with SEND and those looked after or previously looked after. * Ability to contribute to a team ethos underpinned by strong performance management and quality improvement. * Demonstrate a commitment to improving outcomes for young people, particularly as they relate to Preparing for Adulthood. * Adaptability, flexibility and the capacity to work effectively under pressure and to tight deadlines. * Strong interpersonal and negotiation skills that can influence positive change. * Skilful assertion techniques * Commitment to maintaining and improving quality standards. * Enthusiasm to work as part of a team. * Ability to take initiative and personal responsibility for delegated tasks. * Takes a solution focussed approach. |  |
| Special Requirements | * Travel is as essential requirement of the post |  |