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| **Job Description** |
| **Post title** | SEND Caseworker |
| **JE Reference No** | N10041 |
| **Grade** | Grade 9 |
| **Service** | Children & Young Peoples Services |
| **Service Area** | Early Help Inclusion & Vulnerable Children – SEND & Inclusion |
| **Reporting to** | The post holder will be accountable to the Strategic Manager for SEND and Inclusion – Strategy, Assessment and Provision |
| **Location** | Your main base will be at the SEND Casework Team offices at Broom Cottages Primary School, Ferryhill, County Durham. In your role you will be required to work from alternative council workplaces and a range of schools and independent private providers and across County Durham, the North East region and beyond. Your work may also involve visits to homes |
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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** |

As part of Durham County Council Childrens Service the SEND and Inclusion Service forms part of the Early Help, Inclusion and Vulnerable Children Management Team. The post holder will be accountable to the Strategic Manager for SEND and Inclusion and will be part of a SEND Casework Team that delivers the Local Authority statutory responsibilities in assessing, reviewing and determining provision to meet the special educational needs of children and young people. The team ensures that the Local Authority’s statutory responsibilities under the 2014 Children and Families Act, the Children Act 2004 and related legislation are effectively delivered either through direct intervention or through effective partnership.

The post holder with colleagues from across the Local Area including education, health and care services will work in partnership to achieve our strategic vision:

*“That County Durham’s children are safe, a part of their community, have the best start in life, have good physical and mental health, and gain the education, skills and experiences to prepare them for adulthood.”*

The function of the SEND Caseworker is to provide high quality casework for children, young people and young adults with SEND.

The SEND Casework Team will support children and young people to:

* Be Present - attending their local school developing positive links in their community that will help them throughout all aspects of their life. Achieved through working with and connecting families, schools and other stakeholders to support the child.
* Participate – developing the resilience and confidence that they and their families need to progress. Achieved by working with young people with SEND and their families to understand and to meet their needs.
* Achieve - identifying needs in a timely way and have the right support available at the right time. Achieved by working in local partnerships linking families to support through a graduated approach.
* Belong - for all learning settings and their workforce to be confident in identifying and meeting needs and to promote inclusion. Achieved through providing and informing ongoing improvement in individual and organisational practice.

Be Independent – realising an integrated offer of support that is proportionate to assessed needs and focussed on shared outcomes. Achieved through effective coproduction focussed on long term outcomes.

The functions of the team are to ensure that the duties set out in SEND Code of Practice are adhered to. This includes:

* Ensuring high quality of new and reviewed Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP’s) following best practice principles
* Determining the most appropriate learning placement of children and young people including mainstream, enhanced and specialist options
* Providing proportionate support, guidance and advocacy to children and young people with SEND and their families
* Providing support, guidance and where necessary challenge to learning providers as part of the graduated response to meeting identified needs
* Facilitating effective transitions through each learning age phase that ensure a focus on outcomes that prepare young people for adulthood remains in place
* Responding effectively to additional vulnerabilities that inhibit children and young people achieving their aspirations

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

The Send Caseworker will

* 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 and review cycle based on best/effective practice principles
* Ensure a child’s/young person’s education placement is aligned to identified needs and placement is sustained through the effective resourcing of adaptation that meet those needs
* Provide timely intervention to resolve where a child/young person’s education placement breaks down using effective child centred solutions
* Prepare departmental records for tribunal and other external scrutiny purposes
* 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 change 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 L6 qualification | Evidence of ongoing professional development in a related fielde.g. CEIAG QualificationNational Award for SEN Coordination |
| Experience | Experience of working with families and/or other professionals to meet the needs of children and/or young peopleExperience of managing a caseloadExperience 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 PlansExperience of working directly with children and/or young peopleAn inclusive practitioner in respect of children and young people with SEND Experience of working as a SENCO Engaging in disagreement resolution techniquesExperience of evaluating the quality of provision for children and young people with additional needs in an education setting Experience of working with children and young people with SEND  |

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|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Skills & Knowledge | Thorough knowledge and understanding of Special Educational Needs and the Code of Practice 0-25Strong communication skills (written and verbal)Negotiation / influencing skillsGood 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 yearsUnderstanding of SEND and vulnerable children outcomes planning, and planning that prepares children and young people for adulthoodGood knowledge of the Looked After and wider Social Care systemsGood knowledge of Early Years and/or Post 16 provisionGood 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 |  |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Personal Qualities (Cont.) | 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 an essential requirement of the post |  |
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