

Job profile

Service area: Specialist Children Services	Job title: Placement Commissioning Officer SEN	Grade: BUSSUP 29-31
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Who we are

Achieving for Children champions children and families, putting the wellbeing and education of children first. As a social enterprise, we can take a business approach to delivering our social aims. We have the independence and flexibility to tailor innovative solutions to the needs of children and their families, whilst maintaining our strong bond and deep commitment to society and public service.

Context

Achieving for Children was created by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and is commissioned to deliver children's services on behalf of the two local authorities. Our vision for Achieving for Children is simple: by bringing together professional expertise from the two founding local authorities, and by putting children and young people at the heart of everything we do, we will be able to deliver improved outcomes for families and give children and young people the best start in life.

Achieving for Children is divided into seven key business areas: Children's Social Care; Education; Early Help; SEN and Disabilities; Health Partnerships; Standards and Improvement; and Finance and Resources. Each business area is led by a Director or Associate Director who reports to the Chief Executive Officer. The Children's Social Care service areas are Permanency, Safeguarding and the Multi-Agency Team. The Safeguarding service includes the Referral and Assessment and Child Protection teams.

Achieving for Children continually reviews its structure and business practices in order to provide the best possible services for children, young people and their families, in the most effective and efficient way. As a result, the key tasks in any job profile may be varied and the post-holder will be expected to take on such variations and duties consistent with the level of responsibility of the post.

Relationships

Responsible to: Placements Commissioning Manager

Important internal relationships:

- Single Point of Access, Referral and Assessment Teams, and Looked After Children Service]
- Service managers and team managers across Achieving for Children (AfC)
- All staff across Directorates
- Colleagues from teams across AfC – Kingston, Richmond and Windsor & Maidenhead Councils

Important external relationships:

- Children, young people and their families
- All relevant partner organisations that AfC does business with including schools, other local authorities and the private and voluntary sector including foster carers and residential care providers; Police; Probation
- Representatives of the key government departments, national bodies and networks
- Local residents and other customers

Main purpose of job

As Commissioning Officer SEN for Achieving for Children, you will be responsible for

- Acting as a single point of access for commissioning placements
- To contribute to the delivery of strategic commissioning intentions identified as part of the Commissioning Service and its partners.
- To deliver delegated activities or products in relation to commissioning, contract management, policy and planning activity as identified.
- To undertake quality assurance tasks (including visits) to ensure compliance with agreed processes and standards including regulatory and inspection frameworks.
- To utilize contract management tools to ensure data and information is timely, accurate and complete.
- To assist in the co-ordination with a range of providers/organizations and individuals, researching and drafting correspondence. In addition, the management of specific tasks, lead reporting and analysis across a range of specialties, functions and projects will be required to be undertaken.
- Collating data as required and providing up to date statistical information on a monthly and annual basis

Main responsibilities

- To maintain an overview of and responsibility for identification and assessment systems for children with special educational needs 0-19 and to deliver a high quality service in relation to identification, assessment and placement of pupils with SEN in line with statutory legislation.
- To lead on the completion of complex SEN assessments and amendments to SEN documents (including legal documents) and ensure that these are done with statutory timeframes.
- To commission preferred providers for children with SEN and ensure that that they provide high quality expertise to meet the needs of children with SEN.
- To lead area meetings with providers which consider commissioning of SEN support and funding.
- To review placements of pupils with SEN within the agreed framework.
- To ensure accurate data collection and returns in line with an agreed framework.
- Commissioning effective and efficient services through a range of direct delivery, innovative partnerships and commercial arrangements which meet the goals and objectives of Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS).
- Using internal/external relationships and other appropriate mechanisms (i.e. customer surveys) to gather feedback on the effectiveness, perceived value and fitness for purpose of services delivered.
- To contribute to the delivery of strategic commissioning intentions identified as part of the Commissioning Service and its partners.
- To support the establishment of relationships with internal stakeholders, suppliers and organizations that deliver services and support that meet the needs and outcomes of children and young people.
- To deliver delegated activities or products in relation to commissioning, contract management, policy and planning activity as identified.
- To assist in the delivery of jointly commissioned services across the health, housing and social care economy.
- To take responsibility for work packages as part of a project team supporting the activities of the Commissioning Service
- To undertake quality assurance tasks (including visits) to ensure compliance with agreed processes and standards including regulatory and inspection frameworks.
- To work collaboratively with partners and colleagues to pro-actively safeguard and protect vulnerable people/groups ensuring appropriate and timely action is taken

- To assist in the co-ordination with a range of providers/organizations and individuals, researching and drafting correspondence. In addition, the management of specific tasks, lead reporting and analysis across a range of specialties, functions and projects will be required to be undertaken.
- To utilize contract management tools to ensure data and information is timely, accurate and complete.
- To collect and analyze data in order to inform commissioning activity, to complete statutory returns and support performance management.
- As appropriate to lead on the development of aspects of children and young people involvement in the work of the Commissioning Team.
- Providing advice and guidance on volume and price negotiations, more complex placement requirements and development of procedures to meet demand.
- Responding to requests from social workers and care managers to identify suitable placements/care provision that support choice, independence and cost objectives. Liaising with providers and assessors to identify appropriate and available provision, negotiating to ensure value for money service provision that ensures the desired outcomes for individuals.
- Support and help define the requirements for a contracts database, ensuring all service providers across Adults, Children and Health are identified, including the type of services they provide and any information on their availability and existing usage across the borough.
- Work with directorates to predict future demand requirements and engage with the market and service providers to build the market
- Deliver savings to support overall commissioning targets as identified in the commissioning strategy and commissioning intentions plans
- To review and lead on the placement protocol for the commissioning team which supports the teams processes to ensure compliance for safeguarding and contract regulations.
- Co-ordinate and maintain an audit trail of resolution of contract issues.
- Promote and encourage operational commissioning staff to work with internal and external stakeholders to build relationships and develop their understanding of the markets and providers we are working with.
- Develop and maintain a positive working relationship with internal clients and external public and private sector groups/suppliers alongside promoting good practice.
- Liaising and negotiating with external organizations in relation to the work of the adults, children's and health services establishing, requesting or providing information and responding to requests.

- Respond to all requests and enquiries in a professional, timely and effective manner.
- Demonstrate excellent customer service, capacity building, leadership, management practices and performance across within the commissioning team and with stakeholders.
- Together with other members of the Commissioning Team contribute to cross-functional team working.
- Provide support with commissioning projects to service leads and head of service within commissioning.
- Fostering a positive and conducive team culture, contributing to effective collaboration amongst colleagues in commissioning.
- Ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations, responding to new Health and Safety guidance as and when required. Undertake any other duties which may be required or requested to meet the needs of the commissioning team and the services they offer.

Person specification

Directorate: Specialist Children Services

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Qualifications	
A degree or equivalent	Essential
A Member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supplier (MCIPS) (or willing to work towards) Commissioning qualification Management qualification	Desirable
Knowledge	
A professional understanding of all the legal aspects of procurement and commissioning activity.	Essential
Awareness of Government and European initiatives and developments in relation to procurement and commissioning legislation	Essential
An understanding of issues relating to children's, education, health and social care services. Awareness of relevant Care Quality Commission policies and policies of other public bodies relating to Children's Services and Adults Services	Essential
Skills and experience	
Supervisory/management experience of teams in a frontline setting	Essential
Ability to influence others to gain support, trust and collaboration using highly developed interpersonal and presentation skills	Essential
Experience of effective performance management (people and organisational); identifying development needs; addressing skills and knowledge gaps; and managing poor performance.	Essential
Advanced experienced of applying in practice, the principles of child care legislation relating to child protection, looked after children and the provision of services to children in need.	Essential
Demonstrable commitment to the principles and practice of equal opportunities in employment and service provision	Essential
Demonstrable understanding of safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection in relation to social care legislation	Essential
Demonstrable negotiating and project management skills	Essential
IT literate	Essential
Driving license	Essential