



Brighter
Futures for
Children

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SEND and Education Placement Officer

Job Description & Person Specification

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Job Information

Post Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND and Education Placement Officer
Reports to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Commissioner – SEND and Education
Grade:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainee - RG4m SCP 11 – SCP 22 with gateway at SCP 19 SEND & Education Placement Officer: - RG5m SCP 22 - 28 with gateway at SCP 26
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic Centre, Reading With agile working.
Direct reports to the post:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None

Job Purpose

Brighter Futures for Children is improving outcomes for Reading's children, young people and families. We are an independent, not-for-profit-company, wholly owned by Reading Borough Council. Our responsibility is to deliver quality children's social care, early help, education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services in the borough.

The SEND and Education Placements Officer will sit within the Commissioning, Contracts and Procurement Team (CCP) and co-ordinate and manage all placement requests, whether for a full-time placement or for alternative educational provision (AP), for pupils with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) including those with multiple and complex needs. Referrals may come from:

- SEND Team;
- Virtual School;
- Education Welfare Officers;
- Social Care.

The post holder will liaise with the referring Officer to understand the requirements of the placement and support the referring officer to negotiate in consideration of the achievement of the best outcomes for children and young people.

Working under the guidance of the Strategic Commissioner - SEND and Education, the post holder will ensure that placement sourcing is undertaken on the basis that it has been appropriately approved, meets the child's needs and expected outcomes, is cost effective, is within or as close to the borough as possible and is completed in a timely manner.

The post holder will:

- support the negotiation of placements;
- populate Individual Placement Agreements (IPAs);
- ensure that education and AP placements are correctly entered on the Company's systems;
- ensure that overarching contracts are put in place with Independent and Non-Maintained Schools (INMS);
- maintain the AP Directory of approved providers;

- provide out of borough notifications and ensure effective record keeping of placements enabling the gathering of information that will inform future commissioning strategies and assist in the continued development and maintenance of the service.

Designation of Post within Company Structure

The post is directly line managed by the Strategic Commissioner - SEND and Education who is currently managed by the Head of Commissioning.

Appendix 1 illustrates where the role sits within the EHCP assessment and placement process, there will be other referrals outside of this process.

The post is suitable for a trainee or a fully trained officer.

Duties of the SEND and Education Placement Officer

- Assist in the maintenance and review of procedures for managing the referral/placement process.
- Develop strong working relationships with SEND Case Officers, Virtual School Team and Social Workers and other referring officers on a planned and ad hoc basis to support placement stability and the placement process.
- To be proactive in workload management, prioritise placement searches as required and liaising with referring officers around service delivery expectations.
- Ensure placement consultations are completed in a timely, effective and efficient manner, and within statutory timelines.
- Ensure placements are made as close to the borough as possible.
- Provide advice and guidance on all aspects of making a placement to referring officers, and other stakeholders.
- To build good working relationships with Providers to enable effective financial challenge and effective price negotiation.
- Support referring Officers to proactively monitor placement decisions and changes.
- Provide information as required to Commissioning Manager – SEND and Education; Strategic Commissioner - SEND and Education to enable monitoring, accountability and prompt systems review.
- Extract and verify data to enable population of the appropriate individual personal contract/agreement for each child.
- Ensure all costs for services purchased are clearly identified and agreed along with aims and objectives for the placement and any other relevant information as specified in the referral.
- Support the contract monitoring process and effective budgetary control.
- Take responsibility to ensure knowledge of legislation and guidance, Ofsted inspection reports and registration details and other pertinent documents are read and understood, and queries are discussed with management in a timely way.
- To undertake announced and unannounced placement visits with referring Officers as required.
- To support the Strategic Commissioner - SEND and Education to manage effectively any budgets delegated to the Commissioning team.
- To support Heads of Service and Service Managers in their management of budgets relevant to the team, including helping to forecast spend, analyse the financial impact of market or policy changes and identify savings.

Gateway Criteria for a trainee (RG4)

- To contribute to reports and returns as required, ensuring these are of high quality.
- Support the implementation of business as usual processes for reviewing placements, including activities to support the delivery of savings through the creation of a forward plan, scheduling of reviews and performance updates.
- Support the delivering demonstrable savings or additional value gained for children, young people and families.

Gateway Criteria for an experienced officer (RG5)

- Ensure care packages are correctly entered on the company's care management system in a timely way.
- To contribute to reports and returns as required, ensuring these are of high quality.
- Implementation of business as usual processes for reviewing placements, including activities to support the delivery of savings through the creation of a forward plan, scheduling of reviews and performance updates.
- Delivering demonstrable savings or additional value gained for children, young people and families.

2. Relationships – who you will work with

Internal:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SEND Team (Case Officers and Team Manager)• Virtual Schools Team• Social Workers requiring AP• Procurement Team• Finance Team•
External:	Develop and promote strong partnerships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providers of independent and non-maintained special schools.• Providers of AP provision.• Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group

3. What your performance will be measured against

- Delivery against agreed objectives, targets and outputs as part of your probation period, 1:1s and appraisal.

4. Your level of autonomy

- Required to work as part of a team as well as using own initiative to deliver Company objectives.
- Manage own work load in consideration of targets set by the Strategic Commissioner - Social Care.

5. Personal Attributes

- Confident

- Approachable
- Friendly
- Uses initiative
- Achieves deadlines

6. Scope of Job (Budgetary/Resource Control/Impact)

RG4 SEND and Education Placement Officer

The post holder will receive training and support to develop skills that will enable them to:

- Liaise with SEND Finance to ensuring providers are paid the correct amount, on time, according to their contract, in partnership with the wider Commissioning Team and finance colleagues.
- Monitoring contract expenditure and for providing exception reports as necessary.
- Both internal and external suppliers' business viability relies on prompt and accurate payment of fees.
- Effective and value for money placements contribute to good outcomes of Ofsted SEND inspections.

RG5 SEND and Education Placement Officer

- The post-holder will be responsible for ensuring providers are paid the correct amount, on time, according to their contract, in partnership with the SEND Finance Officer.
- The post-holder will be responsible for monitoring contract expenditure and for providing exception reports as necessary.
- Both internal and external suppliers' business viability relies on prompt and accurate payment of fees.
- Effective and value for money placements contribute to good outcomes of Ofsted SEND inspections.

Special/Other Requirements/Responsibilities of this Post

Level of DBS check required for this post	Enhanced with a check of the barring list(s)
If *, does the post require a check against the list of people barred from working with vulnerable adults?	YES
If *, does the post require a check against the list of people barred from working with children?	YES
What other security/safer recruitment clearances are required for this post? (excluding standard identity/work permit/education qualification checks)	NONE
Is this post “politically restricted”?	NO
Responsibility for Health & Safety:	Level 1
Please specify responsibility for implementing the company’s risk management strategy as it applies to the service, ensuring risks to service delivery and specific projects or initiatives are recognised and that actions are taken and monitored to mitigate risks identified	N/A
Please specify any other Statutory Duties and/or responsibilities of this post not already covered in the “Main Duties & Responsibilities” above	N/A

Person Specification

Qualifications & Education

- Good general education with Maths and English to A-level standard

Experience

RG4 SEND and Education Placement Officer

- Experience of working within a similar working environment, matching criteria to identified need at an entry level.
- Commercial skills - experience of working in a fast-paced environment with a cost Focussed service.
- Experience of IT data systems.

RG5 SEND and Education Placement Officer

- Experience of the impact and understanding of the principles of good care/support to vulnerable clients
- Experience of achieving better value for money
- Experience of working within a similar working environment, matching criteria to identified need.
- Commercial skills - experience of working in a fast-paced environment with a cost Focussed service
- Experience of IT data systems.

Skills, Abilities & Competencies

RG4 SEND and Education Placement Officer

- Willingness to learn and understand the statutory requirements around children looked after; children with disabilities and Education, Health and Care Plans.
- Willingness to learn and understand the legislation relating to data protection and confidentiality.
- Ability to research and analyse information effectively.
- Ability to communicate with a wide range of people.
- Competent in Microsoft office software and the ability to work with databases.
- Maintains high standards of performance, professionalism and communication for self and others.
- Excellent organisational skills and ability to be flexible where necessary.
- Ability to work in an inclusive manner.
- An informed and ethical value base that is congruent with public service.
- Excellent at people skills, ability to empathise and form excellent, effective relationships.

RG5 SEND and Education Placement Officer

- Knowledge and understanding of statutory requirements around children looked after; children with disabilities and Education, Health and Care Plans.
- Understanding of legislation relating to data protection and confidentiality.
- Ability to research, analyse and communicate complex information effectively through oral and written communication, reports and presentations.
- Ability to communicate with a wide range of people, in a wide range of situations and build effective working relationships, including with other professionals/organisations.
- Competent in Microsoft office software and the ability to work with databases.
- Maintains high standards of performance, professionalism and communication for self and others.
- Ability to give 'critical friend' challenge, manage conflicts and be assertive where necessary while maintaining excellent relationships.
- Excellent organisational skills and ability to be flexible where necessary.
- Successful influencing skills and the ability to develop innovative solutions.
- Ability to apply risk management approaches.
- Ability to work in an inclusive manner.
- Ability to understand the bigger picture and the context of the post's work area.
- An informed and ethical value base that is congruent with public service.
- Excellent at people skills, ability to empathise and form excellent, effective relationships.

Specific/Additional Working Requirements

- To attend external meetings and visits/conferences/training as appropriate.
- To attend occasional meetings outside of normal working hours.
- To attend training as required to gain the appropriate qualifications and knowledge.

Appendix 1

Statutory timescales for EHC needs assessment and EHC plan development

