

Job Description

Management Grouping:	Children's Services
Team:	Virtual School
Post Title:	Education Advisor
Reporting to:	Head of Virtual School/Team Manager

Main purpose of the job:

The Education Advisor will work as a member of the Service and to the direction of the Virtual School Head and the appropriate Assistant Head. The work will involve providing educational support, advice and guidance to schools, social workers and other professionals in line with the statutory guidance 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children'. The Education Advisor will lead a caseload of children and young people that are mostly aligned to the Early Years & Primary Phases or to Secondary and Post 16 Education Phases.

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- To demonstrate leadership by supporting Social Workers, teachers in schools and other settings, and with Carers to promote good attendance and academic achievement for Looked After Children using the Personal Educational Plan as vehicle for this.
- To communicate promptly and effectively with others, collaborating within the Virtual School service and contributing to team work and priority outcomes for the service, also ensuring that partners understand their role, service objectives and how these fit in with broader corporate parenting commitments.
- To ensure that the Personal Education Plan process is implemented and managed for the assigned caseload, according to statutory timescales, and that a high quality record of the Personal Education Plan is finalised on the child's file (Liquid Logic) at the completion of the process. To quality assure Personal Education Plans and to work with social workers and schools to ensure their contribution to the process is understood in order to achieve a high quality and robustly implemented plan for each child.
- To provide advice to social workers and foster carers to ensure that planning for a school change progresses in a timely way, with careful attention to planning for children's needs during transition points and that children who miss out on education due to barriers to attendance or change in circumstances, are reported to the local Children Missing Education Officer and have appropriate packages of support until the barriers are resolved.
- To provide support and challenge within the professional network to ensure that high aspirations are promoted and that children's needs are met well, by requesting urgent reviews or chairing professionals meetings when required about education matters. This will include responsibility for problem solving within the remit of the role and consulting with the child's Independent Reviewing Officer, and escalating concerns when required.
- To provide advice and guidance about the appropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus in line with Bexley Policy, ensuring that timely decisions are made and explained clearly to ensure that children can benefit from swift access to this support. This will include responsibility for authorising Pupil Premium spending within the agreed budget of up to £500 per child, per term and following the appropriate procedures to ensure decisions are recorded and

payments instructed. The scope of decision making and budgeting can be up to £25,000 per term for a case load of 40-50 children.

- To assess whether a child can benefit from direct support from Virtual School or a commissioned service, and to apply a range of strategies through your own direct work with children and young people to provide educational information, advice and guidance in plain English and to help children and young people express their views, wishes and feelings as part of the personal education planning process when required.
- To act as commissioner when required, to secure support from appropriate and vetted services or alternative provision that meets the council's requirements for quality assurance and safeguarding and to ensure that children and young people can access assessments or additional support in a timely way.
- To provide advice and guidance for children leaving care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements orders and to ensure the support plan is clear to parents or guardians, and schools through a carefully planned transition PEP. To provide advice and guidance to families and schools who contact the service for support in relation to previously looked after children.
- To provide educational advice and guidance to professionals who are supporting children with a social worker, signposting to services that can help them or providing direct advice from our local offer and SEN Toolkit. To provide more detailed advice and guidance to social workers, families and schools about children with a social worker who are on the edge of care, or presenting with significant difficulties in accessing education.
- To contribute to the wider programme of learning and enrichment activity led by the service, by helping to lead and support at least one timetabled activity weekly, which may include occasional evenings or weekends. Education Advisors will also lead on at least one a key initiative or project agreed with the Virtual School Head and Assistant Head per year and contribute to the preparation and smooth delivery of the annual Looked After Achievement Awards.
- To be able to provide informed advice and guidance to school staff, social workers and foster carers on strategies for use with pupils who have a range of special educational needs, including those who have experienced trauma and may have attachment difficulties and to provide expert advice in at least one phase or specialism in education. To be able to progress assessment and planning in collaboration with SEN and other specialist services, following local procedures where the child is residing and ensuring that children with Education Health and Care Plans have an Annual Review of their plan, and that their needs are planned for and provided for in keeping with the SEN Code of Practice.
- To be able to contribute to practice weeks and themed audits, building on regular quality assurance of PEPs to look at educational chronology alongside a care plan and to be able to feedback to other professionals using a Signs of Safety approach (such as Independent Reviewing Officers about a care plan, Supervising Social Workers about the work of foster carers and to auditors about the overall effectiveness of the Personal Education Plan.

Recording and Reporting

- To maintain high quality accurate records, using the service's systems for this including Liquid Logic to record case notes about education concerns and actions taken. To maintain current and accurate data about children's education on the tracker, maintain a detailed and accurate Personal Education Plan and SEN records ensuring that clear oversight of the caseload is up to date and available for discussion in supervision and for reporting as part of monthly monitoring of performance standards, taking action as appropriate.

- To contribute, when required, to monthly and periodical reports about the service and children's outcomes to senior leaders and to the Corporate Parenting Board and to be able to meet agreed deadlines for this.
- To take responsibility for keeping informed about current developments in education and related fields, including Government legislation and ensuring that the advisory role takes account of latest practice and requirements
- To attend supervision prepared, providing the appropriate data about a caseload and to be able to act upon advice and agreed actions within agreed timescales
- To maintain effective relationships with a range of professionals and provide such information as is necessary to enable the LA to carry out its functions and duties.

INSET

- To contribute to and attend in-service training, conferences, network meetings and events for Designated Teachers, Foster Carers and Social Workers to promote support for looked after and previously looked after children and to foster inclusive education practices through your leadership and contribution to learning and development.

Equal Opportunities

- To provide support to looked after children and young people leaving care, to enable them to develop their potential irrespective of race, gender, ethnic origin or disability and to apply appropriate strategies to overcome barriers to learning and engagement.
- To encourage partnership between colleagues, carers, schools and the local community and other agencies as part of our commitment to 'Working Together' and to support and promote the principles of effective 'Corporate Parenting'

General

- To undertake other reasonable duties consistent with both the post holder and the job description.

Job Activities:

Activities carried out in Bexley mainstream schools or in alternative provision settings, and in settings that are out of borough.

- Coordination of and attendance at Personal Education Plan meetings
- Discussion with Social Worker, Designated Teachers, Foster Carers and Independent Reviewing Officers
- Direct work with children or young people to provide advice, guidance and to elicit wishes and feelings
- Advocating for looked after children at meetings
- Participating in or Chairing professionals meetings using a Signs of Safety approach
- Record keeping
- Interpretation and reporting of attainment and attendance data
- Attendance at homework club or other learning and enrichment activities on a weekly basis
- Leading a project or initiative

The post holder needs to have a high level of independent skills and to be able to liaise with a wide range of professionals. He/she needs to be able to use their own initiative and to maintain high standards with integrity and commitment at all times. All staff working in the department have a responsibility for promoting and supporting the Council's policies and procedures for safeguarding. You should ensure that you carry out your duties and work at all times in a way that ensures the safeguarding and welfare of service users.

Person Specification

Management Grouping: Children's Services

Team: Virtual School

Post Title: Education Advisor

Selection Criteria	Essential/ Desirable (E/D)	Method of Assessment (A/I/T)*
<p>(a) <u>Education & Formal Training</u></p> <p>English and Mathematics to GCSE A-C level or equivalent</p> <p>Education training or teaching qualification appropriate to a school or education setting</p>	<p>E</p> <p>E</p>	<p>A</p> <p>A / I</p>
<p>(b) <u>Relevant Technical Experience & Knowledge</u></p> <p>Experience of working with children and/or young people in a professional capacity</p> <p>Detailed knowledge of phases of education including curriculum/attainment and progression through the curriculum and ability to provide children and young people and adults in their network with expert advice and guidance.</p> <p>Knowledge of Signs of Safety</p> <p>Experience of working with other agencies and professionals</p> <p>Knowledge of a range of educational assessment processes, including how to use assessment data effectively to record and track progress and attainment over time</p> <p>Understanding of principles of child development and learning processes, and a detailed knowledge of special educational needs, methods of assessment and support in line with the code of practice.</p> <p>Knowledge of the specific policies and procedures that apply to looked after children and young people leaving care; with excellent understanding of the statutory frameworks and entitlements that must be in place to support and promote their educational achievement and care.</p>	<p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>D</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p>	<p>A / I</p> <p>I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A / I</p> <p>A / I</p> <p>A/I/PE</p> <p>A/I/PE</p>
<p>(c) <u>Relevant Abilities & Competencies</u></p> <p>Ability to complete detailed and accurate reports, using data and representing the voice of the child</p>	<p>E</p>	<p>A / I</p>

Ability to show leadership, leading by example and showing creativity and innovation in seeking the best possible outcomes for children and young people	E	A / I
Ability to problem solve within the role, using a range of strategies to address issues impacting on statutory requirements for looked after children	E	A / I
Ability to develop and demonstrate effective relationships with children, young people and all adults in their network Ability to agree and track decisions against individual budgets and to monitor spending within agreed limits	E	A / I
Excellent communication skills, that take account of the needs of the child, young person or other audience through sensitive application of plain English but also adapting formal communication in the settings and reports that require this.	E	A / I
Ability to analyse and evaluate complex educational information; including SEN assessments and reports, and educational data to inform summative data analysis and an accurate picture of need for individual children	E	I
Ability to work constructively and contribute to a team.	E	I/PE
Effective use of ICT to access and construct records on a range of platforms and to support learning and ensure proper record-keeping.	E	I
Able to plan and organise work independently.	E	I
Have high expectations of staff and maintain high aspirations for the children and young people we work with.	E	A / I
<u>English Language Requirements for Public Sector Workers:</u>	E	I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to speak with confidence and accuracy, using accurate sentence structures and vocabulary. • Ability to choose the right kind of vocabulary for the situation in hand without a great deal of hesitation. • Ability to listen to customers and understand their needs. • Ability to tailor your approach to each conversation appropriate to the customer, responding clearly even in complex situations. 		
Possess a high level of independent skills and be able to liaise with a wide range of professionals. Be able to use their own initiative.	E	A/I
(d) <u>Other Additional Requirements</u>		
DBS Enhanced Clearance	E	DBS
Access to a car	D	A
Ability to travel around the Borough and further afield.	E	A

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***Selection Method key:**

I = Interview

A = Application Form

AT = Ability Test

PQ = Personality Questionnaire

P = Presentation

PE = Practical Exercise

Applicants will be assessed against these criteria and high performance indicators throughout the recruitment process.

High Performance Indicators

Values	Behaviours for staff	Behaviours for managers
Innovation	<p>I respond flexibly and adapt to changing demands</p> <p>I am prepared to take managed risks to achieve better outcomes</p> <p>I ask 'What if...?' to develop fresh thinking and innovative approaches to generate and implement solutions to improve performance and challenge the status quo</p>	<p>I routinely look for innovative and cost-effective ways to improve performance and customer service</p> <p>I champion change and deal successfully with ambiguity, enabling people to see positive and exciting possibilities for the future</p> <p>I take calculated risks based on available evidence and my professional judgement to learn and try new things</p>
Leadership	<p>I demonstrate a clear sense of purpose and direction, in line with organisational objectives</p> <p>I am willing to take difficult decisions</p> <p>My personal actions promote a positive image of Bexley</p>	<p>I take responsibility for my service and for making things happen to make a difference to my service users</p> <p>I create an environment where staff can thrive and show I value and trust staff, give praise and recognise good work</p> <p>I inspire, lead and encourage staff to move forward</p>
Collaboration	<p>I show respect for others and value contributions from internal and external partners and customers</p> <p>I recognise the right solution, regardless of who initiated it</p> <p>I seek out and work with partners who can help me achieve the outcomes and objectives I need to deliver</p>	<p>I encourage the feeling that the team is a collective unit with shared goals</p> <p>I engage with service partners and other areas of the Bexley organisation to understand the demands on others and seek solutions as One Council</p> <p>I network internally and externally</p>

Listening and Responding	<p>I acknowledge other people's viewpoints and work with them to find a win-win solution</p> <p>I prepare and present information anticipating questions and problems</p> <p>I adapt my style to the audience and their needs, using the most appropriate communication channels</p>	<p>I seek regular service user feedback and review customer data to shape service improvements</p> <p>I ask staff for ideas on how to improve our service and how I can improve as a manager, listen to them and act on them</p> <p>I empower staff to make decisions and changes to improve value for money, customer service and productivity</p>
Open and Accessible	<p>I see issues from the customer / user perspective</p> <p>I monitor customer feedback and level of satisfaction with the service they receive, and use this to improve and pre-empt customer needs</p> <p>I seek to build and maintain positive relationships with customers and partners</p>	<p>I am accessible to my service users, customers, staff and Members</p> <p>I communicate and share a clear vision for the bigger picture as well as specific service areas</p> <p>I outline what is expected of individuals and their contribution to the whole, and am consistent in my expectations</p>
Impact	<p>I prioritise my activities and resources to focus on those which have the most impact for residents</p> <p>I take responsibility for making things happen and achieving my objectives</p> <p>I make decisions and clear recommendations based on my professional opinion, experience, and informed by a range of information and evidence</p>	<p>I design services that provide value for money and deliver our outcomes, informed by evidence</p> <p>I produce, prioritise and adapt plans to meet changing requirements</p> <p>I set interim goals to achieve notable wins on the way to larger objectives</p> <p>I deal with poor performance</p>