

Job Description

Job Title:	Children's Placements Officer	Job Number:	
Service:	Children's Placements	Post Number:	
Location:	Broadgate	Grade:	Grade 5

Job Purpose:

To provide support to the Placements Team in identifying fostering and residential care and supported accommodation for care leavers and vulnerable young people aged 16-24. This will include working with Council services and independent Providers to find appropriate placements which meet the needs of individual children, ensuring that quality and safety checks are completed and negotiating individual arrangements with Providers.

To support decisions in respect of placement matching for individual children, and the delivery of good outcomes, quality services and value for money in children's placements and supported accommodation. To support strategic work in respect of looked after children and supported accommodation and the implementation of key placement contracts.

To establish and maintain information systems relating to children's placements and supported accommodation, including costs, value for money, quality and gaps in service provision, and producing relevant datasets and reports to target and support management needs.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Undertake searches to identify fostering and residential placements and supported accommodation services based on knowledge and understanding of the range of services available and the assessed needs of children and young people.
2. To liaise with Children's services staff from a variety of service areas, in particular Social Workers, to ensure the Team has good quality information to inform referrals and ensure good matching to meet the child/young person's needs.
3. Collate and assess information on the placement match in consultation with the child's Social Worker and the relevant Social Worker in Placements who is responsible for formal matching.
4. Support in ensuring that the health, education and care needs of children and young people are fully considered in the placement matching process, liaising with relevant professionals as needed and identify any gaps in how the child's needs may be met by the placement.

5. Support in ensuring that placement services safeguard and protect children and young people through robust checks and enquiries in the matching process and during the placement as needed.
6. Negotiate and confirm placement arrangements for individual children with Providers including introductions, provision of additional support where needed, contact between agency and social worker, transport and contact.
7. Where appropriate negotiate spot purchase fees for fostering, residential and supported accommodation services for individual children, working closely with Commissioning and highlighting opportunities for improved Value for Money in contractual arrangements.
8. Ensure that Individual Placement Agreements are completed and reflect contract and negotiated arrangements, with clearly specified outcomes and placement packages.
9. Ensure that quality and safeguarding concerns relating to children's placements or supported accommodation are communicated to the Team Manager or Senior Social Worker as a priority and assist with enquiries into those concerns as required by the relevant lead officer to safeguard children and young people.
10. Support the Team in ensuring that placement and supported accommodation needs are met in accordance with national standards and legislation, and support the implementation of Council priorities including Value for Money, quality assurance and safeguarding, maximising use of internal provision and challenge in placement decision-making to ensure appropriate use of resources to meet the identified needs of children and young people.
11. Support operational panels and meetings relating to children's placements and supported accommodation as needed, including those which relate to accessing resources.
12. Support the provision of information on children's placements, supported accommodation and related services to Placements Team Manager, Social Work Teams, Heads of Service, Assistant Directors and Cabinet Members as required.
13. Ensure there is a continual information exchange within the Placements Team and with other staff including Social Workers, Finance, Providers, Education and Procurement, and attend operational meetings with all above parties as required.
14. Act as a focal point for queries in relation to children's placements and supported accommodation for Social Workers, other Council officers and Providers, and seek to resolve queries or direct them to a Social Worker within the Team or Team Manager as appropriate.
15. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with Providers and other stakeholders.
16. To ensure that any contractual issues are communicated to the appropriate line manager and Commissioning, and to support in the resolution of any disagreements between the Council and the Provider that may arise, being aware of potential areas for complaint and liaising with relevant officers on matters arising through the complaints procedure.
17. Collate, interpret and present referral, monitoring, quality assurance and other statistical data to support contract management, performance review and evaluation of services.
18. Contribute to wider commissioning activity including service design, specifications, tendering, monitoring and review, consultation, quality assurance checks, commissioning and de-commissioning as required.

19. To support continuous improvement in placement and supported accommodation services, processes, policies and procedures.
20. Contribute to the development and implementation of Improvement Plans in response to Value for Money reviews, inspections and other scrutiny, to ensure that policy and service developments respond appropriately to these plans. Monitor and evaluate progress.
21. Assist the Team Manager Placements and Service Heads in formulating, reviewing and updating strategies for the development of new policies and development across Children's Services.
22. Undertake special research projects as directed.
23. Contribute to reports, briefings and other responses for members, officers and departments, agencies and organisations with which the Directorate liaises.
24. Represent / deputise for the Team Manager on agreed matters.
25. To take responsibility for personal development including, participating in team meetings, supervision & identifying training and development needs.

Any other duties and responsibilities within the range of the salary grade.

The post holder must comply with Coventry City Council's health and safety policy and in particular is required:-

- To take reasonable care for their own health and safety at work and of those who may be affected by their actions or by their omissions
- To cooperate with their line manager and senior management, to work safely, to comply with health and safety instructions and information and undertake appropriate health and safety training as required
- Not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare
- To report to their manager any health and safety concerns, hazardous condition or defect in the health and safety arrangements.

Any further Health and Safety responsibilities relevant to this post will be set out in the offer letter and Written Statement of Particulars

The post holder must comply with the Interagency procedures of the Safeguarding Boards and Coventry City Council's policies for safeguarding children and safeguarding adults and in particular is required:-

- To ensure they are aware of the signs that may suggest a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected
- To report to their manager, or other appropriate manager, any concerns they may have that suggest that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused or neglected immediately

Any further Safeguarding Board responsibilities relevant to this post will be set out in the offer letter and Written Statement of Particulars

Post holders will be accountable for carrying out all duties and responsibilities with due regard to the City Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Duties which include processing of any personal data must be undertaken within the corporate data protection guidelines.

Responsible for: None

Responsible to: Team Manager Placements

Date Reviewed: April 2020.

Updated: October 22

Person Specification

Job Title:	Children's Placements Officer	Job Number:	L3342D
Service:	Strategy & Commissioning	Post Number:	
Location:	Friargate	Grade:	Grade 5

Area	Description
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Knowledge:	Knowledge of children's services particularly in relation to Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
	Understanding of the legal and regulatory framework in relation to Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
	Understanding of Value for Money in a public sector context.
	Proficient in the use of IT systems
	Local Government functions and current issues facing local government children's services.
	Understanding of the effects of discrimination and commitment to equality working.

Skills and Abilities:	Demonstrate ability to work as part of a team and on own initiative.
	Organisational skills with the ability to manage conflicting priorities and meet deadlines.
	Ability to gather, manage, analyse and present data.
	Excellent communication and proven ability to communicate clearly and effectively orally and in writing, e.g. preparing & presenting reports in a variety of settings.
	Able to work in partnership and develop effective working relationships with a range of stakeholders and at all levels of the organisation.
	Ability to negotiate and challenge to ensure value for money and quality of service.
	Confidence to take initiative in dealing with issues and problems relating to costs, services and quality.
	Ability to assess information in relation to the needs of the child.
	Able to effectively support the implementation of plans, policies and processes.
	IT skills including word processing, Excel Spreadsheet, database use and email applications.

Experience:	• Experience of work relating to services for children and young people.
	• Working in partnership and promoting effective working relationships at different levels.
	• Participating in multi-agency working and working across organisational boundaries.
	• Negotiating and influencing in complex situations.
	• Meeting strict timescales and deadlines and managing frequently changing priorities.
	• Managing difficult situations with a solution focused approach.
	• Report writing
	• IT systems
	• Collecting, collating and interpreting data, and its presentation.

Educational:	• NVQ 3 and up to A levels standard
	• Evidence of continuing professional learning and development

Special Requirements:	• This post is exempted under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and as such appointment to this post will be conditional upon the receipt of a satisfactory response to a check of police records via Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
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Date Reviewed: March 2015

Updated: October 2022