

Role Title	Placements Officer – Social Worker /Non
Service Area	Children Social Care Services
Directorate	Children and Families
Pay Range / Scale	SO1-PO1
Fixed-Term Contact	Full-time (36 hours per week)
Budget Responsibilities	None
Supervisory Responsibilities	None
Main purpose of the role: - To identify placements and/or additional services which meet the needs of Looked After Children, Children in Need and Care Leavers holistically and in accordance with the care plans - To collaborate with social workers, providers and other stakeholders to achieve service delivery of the highest quality, on time and at cost to achieve the best outcomes for the children and the young people - To strive to learn new skills and develop in the role.	
Generic Accountabilities	End Results/ Outcomes
Search and identify suitable placements i.e. foster families, residential homes, semi-independent homes for children and young people in care of the Local Authority and independent homes/flats for care experienced young adults.	Review referral documents and understand children and young people's needs from the available assessments and care plans. Follow the processes and procedures (including procurement rules on transparency and equal opportunities) to identify suitable homes/families. Communicate in a clear and succinct way young people's needs to providers and commission care packages in line with each child's/young person's needs.
Commission bespoke care packages to meet the needs of each child/young person and negotiate with providers to achieve best value for the commissioned services.	Searches are undertaken speedily, thoroughly and effectively to identify the range of choices available. Explore in-house and/or external options to find the right family or home depending on needs. Placements and services are purchased at best value using commercial negotiation skills to achieve value for money.

	Make use of collaborative commissioning arrangements to achieve efficiency, effectiveness and economy throughout the placement commissioning process e.g. London Care Services, CCRAG etc. Regularly review the commissioned care and support packages and negotiate with providers and social workers for changes and adjustments in line with the child's/young person's evolving needs.
Collaborate with internal and external agencies to monitor service delivery standards as required by the Terms & Conditions of the Contracts for all types of services (i.e. fostering, residential, semi-independent).	Have knowledge and understanding of the contractual obligations and service specification requirements to monitor that providers deliver on quality and at cost. Collaborate with contract monitoring colleagues and participate in Quality Assurance visits, when required. Share clear, accurate and appropriate information via the most appropriate channels (e.g. present search results to social workers and participate in reflective conversations about suitability of options, email communication, review meetings etc.).
Maintain accurate and well-documented case files and records.	Keep clear and concise records of searches, actions, circumstances and decisions on the official recording system to justify placement decisions for every child/young person. Collect all the required quality assurance documents from providers upon commissioning and for every placement. Manage data and information in compliance with GDPR and LBWF policies, legislation and best practice principles.
Have full and in-depth knowledge and understanding of the legislation around looked after children, care planning and review, safeguarding, sufficiency and leaving care.	Integrate the statutory framework on the placement search, commissioning and quality assurance procedures. Ensure that providers comply with all the safeguarding processes and procedures e.g. safeguarding policies, location risk assessments etc.

Proactively develop professional knowledge, skills and behaviours.	Take responsibility for identifying and pursuing own professional practice and development needs and consult with the line manager to pursue training opportunities. Maintain an evidence log for achievement against objectives, behaviours and learning activities. Participate in regular practice reflection and supervision. Participate in duty rotation within the team.
Share professional knowledge related to all aspects of placement procedures to internal and external colleagues and partner agencies.	Provide advice and guidance to colleagues to assist them to complete referral forms accurately by presenting the strengths of the children/young people as well as the risks to enable providers to do appropriate matching. Provide professional advice to social workers on service delivery expectations from providers to measure the outcomes achieved for each child/young person.
Teamwork and collaborative spirit.	Work collaboratively and flexibly with other team members on referrals and in general demonstrate an awareness of impact on others. Work with a degree of autonomy and a high level of self-management yet demonstrate an awareness of the team's role within the overall organisation. Effectively organise, plan and deliver own tasks and workload effectively to meet agreed goals and timescales, in line with the team and corporate objectives. To be proactive and forthcoming in keeping Line Managers well informed of workload, progress and any issues. Contribute to the development of others (e.g. through sharing knowledge, skills and experience or providing feedback).
Act in accordance with all policies and procedures of LBWF which apply to the role.	Showcase commitment to the principles of diversity and equality LBWF follows and implements across all services. Always showcase professional integrity.

Job Specific Accountabilities

Ensure compliance with the LBWF's policy on placement search, procurement principles and safeguarding responsibilities in order to secure the best placement for each child/young person at the right time and at cost.

Develop and maintain accurate data records of available providers for all type of placements to ensure that the local authority has access to sufficient accommodation for every child/young person.

Monitor providers' effectiveness in service delivery and achieved outcomes.

Use effectively the collaborative commissioning arrangements to achieve value for money for the local authority.

Develop appropriate contractual relationships with providers in line with the principles of professional integrity and accountability.

Always provide duty cover as required to ensure availability of staff to ensure the smooth and continuous operation of the service.

High level of organisational skills to ensure the search and identification of placements always happens in an efficient and effective manner.

Good understanding of commissioning principles in the public sector and children services to achieve value for money for the local authority.

Knowledge of the Sufficiency Duty legislation.

Nature of Contacts – Collaborative Work

Collaborate with professionals across Council's departments and external providers in order to achieve the highest quality of service delivery for children/young people's progress and holistic wellbeing.

Liaise with external and internal partners and other agencies on day-to-day matters and co-ordinate actions to resolve problems and prevent breakdowns of placements.

Collaborate with diverse agencies to support children and young people and promote good practice in the delivery of placement services.

Maintain an attitude of sensitivity, persuasiveness, negotiation and assertiveness are required skills in order to communicate with diverse audiences in emotive circumstances.

Ability to build trusting relationships with colleagues and providers.

Ability to maintain good working relationships with other professionals whilst challenging circumstances occur (e.g. pressure of emergency placement searches etc.).

Procedural Context

Ability to work in organised and controlled manner in a pressurised environment and with tight deadlines when emergency and unpredicted situations with regards to a placement occur.

Ability to prioritise conflicting demands without compromising the quality of the work output.

The role may require working beyond the usual office hours to deal with emergency placement requests.

Person Specification

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Social work experience in children's services
- Demonstrable knowledge and experience of issues relating to children in need, looked after children and care leavers including relevant legislation, policy guidance & procedures
- Experience of service delivery which is culturally sensitive and responsive to the needs of a multi-cultural community
- Ability to work as a team member and foster teamwork and collaboration
- Ability to work under regular and reflective supervision from a line manager
- Ability to understand the wider system that impacts the needs of the child
- Ability to work effectively under pressure
- Ability to prioritise work
- Ability to monitor service delivery standards from providers
- Ability to conduct commercial negotiations and achieve value for money for public services
- Ability to participate in change effectively
- Ability to communicate clearly verbally and in writing, and to follow through required actions
- Excellent organisational skills
- Commitment to the participation of children, young people and their families both at an individual and service level
- Able to work flexible or unsocial hours at short notice
- Understanding of the commissioning landscape in children's services and the importance of

achieving the best outcomes for the children by sourcing the best services on time and at cost

- Commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and Acceptance of their responsibility for its practical application
- Able to understand and comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Indicative Qualifications

Social Work qualification with HCPC registration is required for this post

IT Competency Level:

All basic levels / Good knowledge of recording on spreadsheets

Key Requirements

Appropriate DBS Clearance (Enhanced)

Important Note: The above profile is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees in this role. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities which may be required. This role profile will be supplemented and further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed in conjunction with the post holder. It will be subject to regular review and the Council reserves the right to amend or add to the accountabilities listed.