

Role Title	Senior Speech and Language Therapist
Job Family	Education – SEND Service
Competency Level	Specialist Practitioner
Pay Scale	PO8-9 subject to evaluation
Purpose To provide strategic and operational leadership for the speech, language and communication element of the Council's Experts at Hand service, ensuring delivery of a high-quality, evidence-based offer that supports the Council's response to the national SEND reforms. The postholder will operate as the Council's senior specialist advisor for speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), leading the development of communication-inclusive practice across education settings and children's services. Working within the principles of the Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) programme and a graduated response model, they will strengthen early identification, universal provision, targeted intervention and specialist support. The postholder will undertake highly specialist assessments, contribute to differential diagnosis, provide consultation and intervention, supervise the speech and language workforce within Experts at Hand, including Language Assistants, and work collaboratively with education, health and care partners to improve educational, developmental and inclusion outcomes for children and young people. The role builds upon the current Experts at Hand model and responsibility for supporting practitioners and educational settings to embed effective speech, language and communication support.	
Generic Accountabilities	End Results/ Outcomes
Plan and ensure service delivery within a complex / diverse service area. Control operational activities within the service area and ensure professional standards are delivered.	The service is delivered to the quality, Council, professional and legislative standards required. Integrated service development and delivery is informed by client, partner and stakeholder views, latest thinking, good practice and legislative requirements. Corporate strategies are effectively implemented within area of responsibility. External inspections are managed effectively. Service delivers excellent customer service.
Manage responses to complex professional or politically sensitive issues within the area of responsibility.	Expert opinion, advice, supports and interpretation is provided on all aspects of the area of responsibility, including major decisions.

Manage key relationships with delivery partners /providers /suppliers to commission / manage / evaluate / enhance appropriate service delivery / capacity within area of responsibility.	Major issues are managed through to a satisfactory conclusion. Feedback and complaints procedures are developed and managed. Complaints are effectively resolved. Customer outcomes are clearly understood and specified. Services / goods are delivered on time, to budget and standards agreed. Opportunities to improve delivery / capacity of provision are proactively identified and actioned. Suppliers and supply chains are resilient and adaptable to meet changing needs. Expected operational efficiencies are realised.
Develops service plans to meet strategic business goals. Ensure compliance with all internal and external standards.	Service plan and targets for area of responsibility are developed from Council's overall strategic directives and agreed and communicated within required timeframe. Strategic and operational input is provided to wider business planning and development. Progress against objectives is effectively monitored and delivered.
Ensure the development and delivery of continuous improvements in all aspects of the service.	Improvements are developed and delivered effectively. Stakeholder requirements are met.
Lead, motivate and develop staff to create and maintain a highly competent and participative workforce.	The team is highly competent, effective, motivated and outcomes focussed. Recruitment, induction, development, performance reviews, employee relations and all HR processes and planning is completed to the required standards and timescales.

	Effective team meetings take place to required timescales.
Identify, secure, deploy and manage the resources necessary for the professional service area to meet/exceed its objectives.	Resources including, equipment, people, and systems are utilised optimally and efficiently. Annual budget is planned, developed and delivered. Value for money is maximised. Financial expenditure and financial integrity are controlled to assure regulatory and Council policy compliance.
Ensure the necessary standards relating to safeguarding best practices/protocols are effectively communicated, monitored and maintained. Maintain HCPC registration and comply with RCSLT professional standards.	Safeguarding standards are monitored and maintained in compliance with Council policy. Appropriate safeguarding training is provided. Professional standards and accountability are maintained.
Implement a risk management programme and advise on issues affecting Council service areas.	Business threatening situations are recognised, planned for and managed or escalated as appropriate. Systems and governance are in place to and respond promptly to critical events. Continuous service is provided.
Ensure the successful implementation of health and safety legislation, policies and practices.	Risks to staff and others are assessed and managed. Suitable health and safety instruction and training are provided. There is a safe working environment.
Maintain accurate records, reports and case management systems in accordance with information governance requirements.	Robust records support decision making, quality assurance and accountability.
Job Specific Accountabilities:	End Results / Outcomes
Lead and oversee the speech, language and communication element of the Experts at Hand offer across the Council.	A coherent, effective and impactful speech and language offer is delivered.

Provide professional and clinical leadership for speech and language practice within the service.	High-quality, evidence-based professional standards are maintained.
Take responsibility for the strategic development of speech, language and communication pathways within the Council's SEND reform programme.	Speech and language support is embedded within local SEND transformation.
Undertake highly specialist assessments of children and young people with speech, language and communication needs.	Needs are identified accurately and support is appropriately targeted.
Use advanced clinical reasoning to contribute to differential diagnosis as part of multi-disciplinary assessment processes.	Assessment outcomes support effective planning and timely access to support.
Formulate and deliver evidence-based intervention plans tailored to individual children and young people.	Communication, participation and educational outcomes improve.
Provide specialist consultation, advice and recommendations to families, education settings and professionals.	Adults around the child are confident in implementing effective support.
Support and challenge education settings to develop communication-inclusive environments and practices.	Schools and settings become increasingly inclusive and responsive to communication needs.
Lead implementation of ELSEC principles across the service and wider partnership network.	Early identification and intervention are strengthened.
Design and deliver universal, targeted and specialist support pathways.	Children receive support at the right level and at the earliest opportunity.
Develop, commission and quality assure training programmes for schools, early years settings and professionals.	Workforce knowledge and confidence increase across the local area.
Supervise, mentor and provide professional leadership to Speech and Language Therapists, Language Assistants and other staff within the Experts at Hand model.	Staff are supported to deliver high-quality interventions and advice.
Lead the strategic deployment of Language Assistant capacity across schools and settings.	Resources are targeted effectively to meet identified need and demand.
Contribute specialist advice to Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments and reviews.	Statutory assessments are informed by high-quality professional expertise.
Work collaboratively with Educational Psychologists, SEND professionals, health services and social care colleagues.	Integrated planning and delivery improve outcomes for children and families.
Monitor outcomes, activity and service demand, using data to inform service improvement and commissioning decisions.	Service delivery is responsive, efficient and evidence-informed.
Lead service development, quality improvement and innovation projects relating to speech, language and communication.	New approaches improve service effectiveness and reach.
Develop resources, toolkits and guidance that	Knowledge and skills are embedded

support sustainable capacity building in schools and settings.	beyond direct intervention.
Represent the Council in local, regional and national forums relating to speech, language and communication needs.	The Council influences and responds to best practice and policy developments.

Nature of Contacts

Education settings, health partners, SEND Service, parents and carers, children and young people as well as senior managers and members.

To provide expert advice, guidance and support on highly complex / sensitive issues. Communicate changes in policy, strategies and working practice both internally and to partner organisations / stakeholders.

Build and sustain effective relationships with all internal and external stakeholders. Work in partnership with internal and external contacts to develop and maintain joint working and promote the Council position. Co-ordinate partnership working activities and internal / external working groups. Influence their decisions.

Procedural Context

Objectives and targets are developed and agreed in line with service plan. High level of discretion and use of initiative in deciding what course of action to take. Exercise expert judgement in assessing complex stakeholder requirements, potential risk and managing quality assurance of service.

Significant expert knowledge and significant experience is required to resolve highly complex issues and proactively anticipate and mitigate problems. Design and develop innovative solutions which enhance the quality and efficiency of services and reputation of the council.

The post will be expected to work from locations across the borough.

Key Facts and Figures

Enable others to understand changes and developments in relevant area and learn new processes / procedures.

Responsible for ensuring contractors / providers deliver to agreed standards.

Work with project teams of both internal staff and external contractors / consultants

Resourcing

Budget Responsibilities: yes – managing a budget between £50k-100k

Supervisory Responsibilities: supervising a speech and language therapist and team of up to 16 language assistants.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Essential:

- Extensive post-qualification experience working with children and young people with speech, language and communication needs across a range of presentations and

levels of complexity, to achieve positive outcomes.

- Advanced knowledge of child development, speech, language and communication needs, assessment methodologies, differential diagnosis and evidence-based intervention approaches.
- Demonstrable expertise in clinical reasoning, formulation and the development of effective intervention and support plans.
- Strong understanding of SEND legislation, the SEND Code of Practice, Education, Health and Care processes, safeguarding responsibilities and inclusive educational practice.
- Experience of leading, supervising and developing therapists, assistants, students or other practitioners.
- Ability to lead service improvement initiatives, develop pathways and contribute to strategic planning and transformation programmes.
- Understanding of quality assurance, outcome measurement, clinical governance and continuous improvement approaches.
- Ability to build effective relationships, influence practice, manage sensitive conversations and support collaborative decision-making.
- Strong analytical, organisational and problem-solving skills with the ability to manage competing priorities and make sound professional judgements.

Desirable:

- Experience working within a local authority SEND service.
- Experience of implementing the Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) programme or similar early intervention and capacity-building approaches.
- Experience contributing to neurodevelopmental assessment pathways and differential diagnosis processes.

Indicative Qualifications

Essential:

- Degree or postgraduate qualification in Speech and Language Therapy.
- HCPC registration as a Speech and Language Therapist.
- Evidence of significant postgraduate training and specialist development.
- Membership of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists.
- Evidence of continuing professional development at postgraduate level.
- Training in clinical supervision.

Desirable:

- Master's degree or equivalent advanced study.
- Leadership or management qualification.
- Practice Educator qualification.

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.