



# JOB DESCRIPTION (JD) AND EMPLOYEE SPECIFICATION (ES)

Standard Template

<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	Senior SEND Casework Officer		
<b>GRADE:</b> <b>JOB CODE:</b>	Grade 9 CHI289SENIGG9 JE Checked 05/08/2021	<b>SERVICE AREA:</b>	Children's Services – Access & Achievement (SEND)
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	EHCP Strategic Team Manager	<b>LOCATION:</b>	Education Development Centre
<b>SPECIAL CONDITIONS:</b>	This post is covered by the Government's Code of Practice on the English Language Fluency Duty for public sector workers		

## 1. Main purpose of the job role:

- To provide management and leadership to a team of SEN Caseworkers within the service, ensuring full compliance with legislative and policy requirements, statutory timescales prescribed within the Government's Code of practice.
- To deputise for the EHC strategic Manager and Head of Service and carry out the necessary statutory functions to meet performance indicators.
- To have decision making authority regarding high cost placements including those that are funded via tripartite arrangements
- To develop positive relationships with health, social care and educational providers
- To ensure quality, clarity, accuracy and consistency in the delivery of SEN casework management, including:
  - Drafting and review of Education Health and Care Plans, and other reports such as notes in lieu, and reasons for the decisions to assess/ cease.
  - Considering annual review documentation and applying statutory considerations and processes, including the use made of delegated and assigned resources;
  - Subject to the use and engagement with moderation and advisory panels, make recommendations on statutory assessment, placement, changes to funding levels and other responses to annual review recommendations;
  - Respond to a wide range of casework related enquiries, including the preparation of briefing s and responses relating to statutory assessment documentation, complaints, appeals and general enquiries.
- To display genuine commitment to close supportive and partnership working relationships with parents, pupils, Children Service Staff and other statutory voluntary agencies to ensure that the highest possible standards are achieved by pupils with SEN.
- With other Senior Caseworkers, adopt a collaborative approach to managing statutory SEN process and its delivery within the context of other Education and Skills priorities, policies structural processes and protocols.
- Monitor spend against all SEN budgets, identifying and recommending to the EHC Strategic Team Manager areas for spend reduction and preventative measures.
- Attend and co-chair as appropriate SEN Panels or SEN related Panels.
- Contribute to service development/ improvement plan
- Contribute to the strategic activity in the service.

## 2. Role specific duties and accountabilities:

### Management

- To work with the EHC Strategic Manager to develop a high performing child/ young person centred team

- To Manage a team of SEN Caseworkers by providing professional support and guidance to the team of SEN Caseworkers ensuring supportive and constructive relationships are developed and maintained with schools / Colleges and other education providers, other agencies and parents of children with SEND, Children and young people with SEND to achieve creative person centred interagency solutions which meet pupils' needs.
- To develop strong and enduring relationships with educational psychologists, specialist teachers, early years, early help, social workers and health practitioners so that the SEN casework is effectively co-ordinated and managed between the central SEN team and Local Authority services.
- To determine and supervise work priorities of allocated SEN Caseworkers on a day to day basis, so that the Team priorities are met.
- Working with the EHC Strategic Manager to ensure operational guidance, team protocols and SEN casework management standards are achieved.
- Ensure clear, coherent and sensitive communication with schools, parents and others on matters relating to the responsibility of the post.
- Take specific account of local initiatives eg: reduction of exclusions, placing of difficult to place children,
- Maintain an active engagement with data using this to feedback to the team about their performance and using the data in conjunction with the EHC Strategic Manager to contribute to ongoing team improvement
- Ensure accurate budgetary control is maintained within the team and that all placements represent excellent value for money
- Ensure that SEN Caseworkers signpost stakeholders to, or provide them with timely and appropriate advice about:
  - Available services and provision, and the child's entitlement to them
  - The statutory assessment process
  - The LA's approach to meeting pupils' special educational need

### Decision Making

- Act as designated officer with delegated responsibility for decision making or the recommendation for decisions for:
  - The commencement of an EHC needs assessment, provision and related matters.
  - The decision on the outcome of an annual review
  - The decision on whether or not to issue an EHC Plan
  - The name of the school on an EHC plan / or if no school is to be named , the type of school or other arrangement
  - The level of additional top-up funding to the placement, including the allocation of special school / resource provision band
- Through close liaison and planning with the SEN Team Members ensure coherence in decision making. Ensure that decisions are based on sound professional judgements against the agreed criteria/ statutory duties, taking full account of professional advice: educational medical social care and psychology advice and other relevant information relating to a child's young person's special needs.
- Ensure that all decisions are legally compliant when considering parents preferred school and those where they make representation. Keep a record of reasons for the decisions taken, including costs of placement.
- Ensure decisions are properly informed by information regarding financial consequences, in a manner that is consistent with the Code of practice. This includes ensuring careful links with SEN transport Officers so that the cost of transport are considered as an integral element of every decision.
- Ensure that once a decision is reached, it is communicated promptly to the parent and school setting/ college in a manner that is consistent with the law, and if part of the statutory process, in the agreed written format.

### Ensuring High quality Casework Management

- Ensure all written material prepared for any aspect of the SEN statutory process, and for responses to correspondence, complaints FOI requests Tribunals etc is developed from

a rigorous analysis and synthesis of evidence, and that it takes account of the relevant guidance and policies – national and local

- Ensure high standards of quality, clarity, accuracy, compliance, format and consistency are maintained for Education, Health and Care Plans including the formation of appropriate Outcomes within pupils EHC plans to produce a clear Golden thread within each plan.
- Ensure that all EHC Plans in the group of cases for which the post holder has management responsibility, are reviewed annually and are amended following annual reviews or on receipt of other relevant information.
- Oversee and monitor casework, reviews and case conferences and take a lead/ hands on role for the more complex cases.
- Identify potential conflicts and disagreements and emotionally charged situations at an early stage. Take a lead and / or model and coach SEN Caseworkers in communicating with parents during the assessment review process when there is potential parental dissatisfaction. Ensure that conflicts and disagreements are resolved swiftly, effectively and professionally, through mediation and other appropriate conflict resolution. Work collaboratively with other managers to secure consistency.
- Ensure that pupil files and other records are accurate, up to date and are filled and stored securely. Ensure the team uses the monitoring systems to ensure statutory timescales are met and a high standard of database case information is maintained.
- Assume responsibility for the management of designated cases, generally those that are exceptionally complicated and where higher-level skills, knowledge and experience is required.
- Maintain an up to date knowledge and understanding of the legal framework for SEN, and apply the legislation within the remit of the post
- Undertake related project work as required and directed
- Provide training, information and specialist advice as required to parents, schools, and other parties. Represent the SEN team at events organised to provide information sharing/ training with other agencies related to the SEN Code of Practice, legislation and relevant practice and procedures for Walsall.

#### Staff Responsibilities

- Manage a small team of SEN Caseworker officers
- Manage other staff as introduced to support development and transformation work from time to time
- Involvement in the training and development of staff within the team
- Ensure that ad hoc pressures of the work of SEN Caseworkers are monitored and staff are supported to deal with any pressures.

### **3. Corporate duties and accountabilities:**

- The post holder will comply with and promote the Council's Health, Wellbeing and Safety at Work policies and ensure these are implemented effectively within his/her areas of responsibility.
- Through personal commitment and clear action, the postholder will promote the Council's employment policies, with particular reference to diversity, equality of access and treatment in employment, service delivery and community involvement. To support/develop a working culture within these services that reflects the corporate vision.
- Ensure that the services provided aligned to the Council strategy, vision, aims, objectives, priorities and continuous improvement programme and play their part in achieving these. This includes compliance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and the Councils Policies and Procedures.
- This job description sets out a summary of the duties and accountabilities of the role. It is not intended to be exhaustive.



JOB TITLE Senior SEND Casework Officer		GRADE G9	
		Indicate when Assessment is possible: at Application form=A interview=I both=A/I test = T	<b>WEIGHT CODE</b> shows relative importance Low=1 Medium=2 High=3
<b>Behaviours:</b> <i>refer to corporate behaviours document</i>			
<b>Professionalism</b> - Actively seek ways to prevent over-complication or confusion of service delivery through innovation, being open to change and the removal of barriers including challenging negative behaviours.		A/I	3
<b>Leadership</b> - Leads by example, optimising those resources allocated, Communicates clearly taking account and welcoming feedback. Takes a positive and resilient approach to change understanding the longer-term vision of the Council and/or service areas.		Not Applicable	
<b>Accountability</b> - Adopt a 'can do' attitude in the work that I deliver taking accountability for my own performance and development and responsibility for my actions and decisions. I will demonstrate inclusivity and promote the values of diversity and equality.		A/I	3
<b>Transparency</b> - Work with others to reach a common goal; sharing information, supporting colleagues and searching out expertise and solutions from relevant partners and/or communities we serve.		A/I	3
<b>Ethical</b> - Aware of own impact on others through valuing openness, treating everyone with respect and listening carefully to understand the views of others in order to build trust.		A/I	3
<b>Abilities/Skills:</b> (refer to JE guidance document)			
Ability to use interpersonal skills effectively to build rapport and communicate with a range of stakeholders including adults and children		I	3
Ability to communicate verbally with service users and provide advice and/or information in accurate spoken English.		I	3
Ability to communicate effectively in writing (including effective use of ICT)		A/I	3
Ability to motivate and inspire staff and service users to strive for excellence		A/I	3
Ability to lead and manage specialist educational support in accordance with Council policies and procedures		A/I	3
Ability to lead and nurture the professional development of staff and develop a customer focused culture		A/I	3
Ability to conduct staff induction and performance management effectively		A/I	2
Ability to implement a statutory framework, monitor, review and quality assure processes, customer satisfaction and outcomes		A/I	3
Ability to organise and chair meetings involving a range of stakeholders		A/I	2
High level organisational skills and the ability to meet demanding dead-lines		A/I	3
Ability to work effectively within a dynamic multi-agency environment		I	2
Evidence of commitment to continued professional development		A/I	2
<b>Experience:</b>			

Successful experience of managing and/or developing the practice of others, including organising and delivering staff development training, induction and performance management	A/I	3
Extensive experience of working within an SEN team, either within a school or Local Authority context	A/I	3
Experience of leading a group of colleagues to develop policy and/or practice in relation to groups of vulnerable children (which may include SEND and LAC)	A/I	2
Substantial and successful experience of working in close partnership with families and contributing to a multi-agency model of support.	A/I	2
Experience of successful liaison and close working with a range of outside agencies and services	A/I	2
<b>Qualification:</b>		
Qualified Teacher Status and/or other relevant high level professional qualification(s)	A	
Further specialist qualifications in key areas linked to working with children and young people with additional needs	A	
<b>Other essential requirements:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An awareness of, and commitment to, equality of opportunity</li> </ul>	I	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness of, and commitment to, confidentiality and handling data</li> </ul>	I	3
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Emma Thornbery	<b>Date:</b> 12.08.19