

Job description

Post title: Deputy Manager & Complex Case Lead
Service area: Pupil Services
Grade: PO5
Reports to: SEND Operations Manager
Your team: Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Team
Number of supervisees: Four

Our ambition

We're determined to make Islington fairer. To create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

We also have an ambitious goal – to be the best council in the country – with every employee clear about the part they play and inspired, focused and supported to give their very best.

We want to build an organisation where employees feel valued, inspired and empowered to help us achieve our goals and provide the best services possible to our residents.

Our values and behaviours

'Be Islington' is about setting a clear challenge about what it means to be an Islington employee and sets the standard for every new recruit.

We ask our employees to 'Be Islington' – playing their part in working together for a fairer borough and to always be collaborative, be ambitious, be resourceful, and be empowering ('CARE').

Our commitment to challenging inequality

We are committed to tackling inequality, racism and injustice and creating a fairer borough for all. In order to do this, we need to set the example by being a fair employer and creating a workplace environment, which is free from discrimination, racism and inequality. Our approach needs to be proactive, consistently learning to create a fairer workplace and foster a culture, which empowers all staff to challenge inequality.

Fairness is at the heart of what we do. We want to celebrate and embrace our differences by:

- Ensuring our workforce is representative of the people we work on behalf of, our residents
- Creating equitable working environments and diverse teams
- Understanding our residents in order to design and deliver services that help tackle inequality and improve life chances for our residents
- Getting to know people and their differences
- Interpreting issues and concerns from a cultural perspective and address situations or problems from the points-of-view of multiple cultures

- Supporting people with long-term health conditions and/or disabilities
- Recognising the value of flexible working to support staff where possible

Key responsibilities

The post-holder will contribute to the improvement of special educational needs provision for children and young people age 0 - 25 and to accelerating their individual achievement and progress.

The primary functions of the post are to:

1. Manage a small number of complex cases, dispute resolution including through formal mediation and appeals to the SEND Tribunal on behalf of the local authority and health partners
2. Line manage a small team of three or four SEN Keyworkers responsible for new assessments or annual reviews, monitoring performance against statutory timescales, monitoring workload allocation and providing advice and guidance.
3. Support Islington Council to meet its statutory duties with regard to the education of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND)
4. Provide high quality advice, guidance and support to colleagues in Pupil Services, and partner agencies, on interpreting and implementing legislation and guidance regarding children and young people who may benefit from an Education, Health and Care needs assessment and/or EHC Plan
5. Lead on investigating and responding to complaints from families, councillor enquiries, and other challenges regarding the working of the SEND team
6. Ensure that there are appropriate procedures in place to ensure that children and young people with EHC Plans who are being educated out of school/college settings receive the support that they require
7. Represent the SEND team and/or Pupils Services at multi-agency meetings, as required

Key duties and responsibilities include:

1. Case management of complex cases to point of resolution, including through formal mediation, and lead on the Council's response to appeals to the SEND Tribunal, working in close partnership with the Council's Legal Services, providing instruction to lawyers and preparing case submissions as required
2. Manage a small team of SEN Keyworkers.
3. For cases where the Council is contesting an appeal, liaise with expert witnesses from

education, health and social care to ensure that the Council's position is reliable and robust, and prepare and advise staff attending tribunals

4. Ensure that Tribunal decisions are implemented within statutory timelines
5. Provide expert advice to the SEND Operations Manager and other managers in Pupil Services by keeping up to date with developments in legislation, trends in case outcomes, guidance and best practice as they relate to special educational needs and disability, and applying this knowledge and understanding to the Council's priorities and practice
6. Communicating information about legislation, guidance and best practice across the SEN team, Pupil Services, and to schools and other education settings when appropriate.
7. Work with the SEN Operations Manager and Principal EP in developing and implementing the LAs approach to statutory EHC assessment and planning.
8. Deliver training and professional development to the Pupil Services workforce as it relates to compliance with special educational needs and disability legislation.
9. Participate as a member of the SEN Management Team supporting in planning and reviewing the work of the LA in the identification, assessment and provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities
10. Support colleagues in the SEND Service regarding all aspects of the SEND processes (in line with the Education Act 1996, Children and Family Act 2014, SEND Regulations 2014, SEND Code of Practice 2015) including EHC needs assessments and Plans, securing appropriate provision for children and young people and ensuring that decisions on placement are taken in the context of available budgets and equalities issues.
11. Ensure that the SEN teams's database of Tribunal cases is up to date, and provide an analysis of the outcomes of SEND Tribunals to inform the development of the Council's policy and practice with regard to legal challenge.
12. Provide advice and guidance on process and planning as it relates to children whose parents 'electively home educate' and those children and young people receiving 'education other than at school', to ensure the authority remains compliant with relevant legislation and adheres to best practice.
13. Investigate and draft responses to complaints, enquiries from local councillors and MPs and investigations by the Local Government Ombudsman, as requested by the SEN Operations Manager.
14. Represent Pupils Services/SEND team at multi-agency meetings as appropriate

Leadership

As a member of the council's management team, to contribute proactively to the collective leadership for the council, working collaboratively with Members, services across the council, partners and stakeholders to deliver the council's objectives and priorities.

To drive positive cultural change, embodying and promoting the values and behaviours of the council and empowering staff to reach their full potential. Ensure that the performance and development framework is effective for all staff.

To lead on and ensure the effective implementation of corporate initiatives and transformation programmes that cut across the whole or part of the council's activities.

Resources and Financial management

Ensure effective Financial Management, cost controls and income maximisation in an ever changing environment, fluctuating demands and priorities. Ensure resources are well managed and effectively deployed to the best possible effects assuring value for money in all activities.

Compliance

Ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance under GDPR, Health and Safety and in area of your specialism identifying opportunities and risks and escalating where appropriate.

Budget responsibilities

None

Work style

Flexible/Office-Based

Person specification

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet the essential criteria. Please ensure that you address each of the criteria as this will be assessed to determine your suitability for the post.

Essential criteria

Qualifications

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
1	A relevant degree / professional qualification relevant to the post such as social worker, teaching, youth work or other relevant qualification	Application

Experience

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
2	Substantial special educational needs, and/or social work and/or teaching-based management experience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with schools• Ensuring equal opportunities• Working within child protection procedures• Interpreting and implementing statutory regulations, including legal procedures• Managing operational issues to agreed standards• Delivering presentations persuasively to a variety of audiences.	Application/Interview
3	Experience of managing a team, providing leadership and motivation and putting measures in place to manage performance.	Application/Interview
4	Demonstrable experience and knowledge of direct working with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their families.	Application/Interview
5	Extensive experience, knowledge and understanding, of legislation as it relates to the education of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	Application/Interview

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
6	Experience of working with professionals from other agencies and in a multi-agency context including schools and the services that support them.	Application/Interview

Skills

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
6	<p>Displays an awareness, understanding and commitment to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people and / or vulnerable adults, including knowledge and understanding of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pan London Child Protection Procedures • Working Together to Safeguard Children <p>Ability to work in accordance with national and local Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures</p>	Application/Interview
7	Proven ability to relate to and communicate effectively both orally with a broad cross-section of the community as well as other professionals, arbitrating and reconciling differing views, as well as the ability to write to a good standard of literacy with excellent report writing skills.	Application/Interview
8	Ability to grasp and analyse complex issues and to act effectively in relation to them, meet deadlines and manage a complex workload that may include stressful and often situations where parties have competing priorities.	Application/Interview
9	Ability to use IT systems effectively to produce reports, record information and monitor outcomes for individuals and groups, with a good understanding of issues linked to confidentiality	Application/Interview
10	Knowledge of national, corporate, and departmental policies and procedures on confidentiality and the management and sharing of information	Application/Interview

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
11	Ability to adhere to the Council's Dignity for All policy.	Application/Interview

Special requirements of the post

(Insert any special requirements of the post. Delete if this does not apply.)

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
12	This role will require you to obtain an Enhanced/Standard satisfactory clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service	Application

Our accreditations

Our accreditations include: the Healthy Workplace award, Timewise, London Living Wage Employer, Disability Confident Committed, The Mayor's Good Work Standard, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Time to Change.

