



brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Senior SEN Case Officer

Special Educational Needs Team

Job Description & Person Specification

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Job Information

Post Title	• Senior SEN Case Officer
Reports to:	• SEN Team Manager
Grade and Salary:	• RG8 (Spine Point 39-45) with Gateway at SCP 43
Location	• Civic Offices, Reading
Conditions:	• 37 hours per week
Direct reports to the post:	• Assistant SEN Case Officers

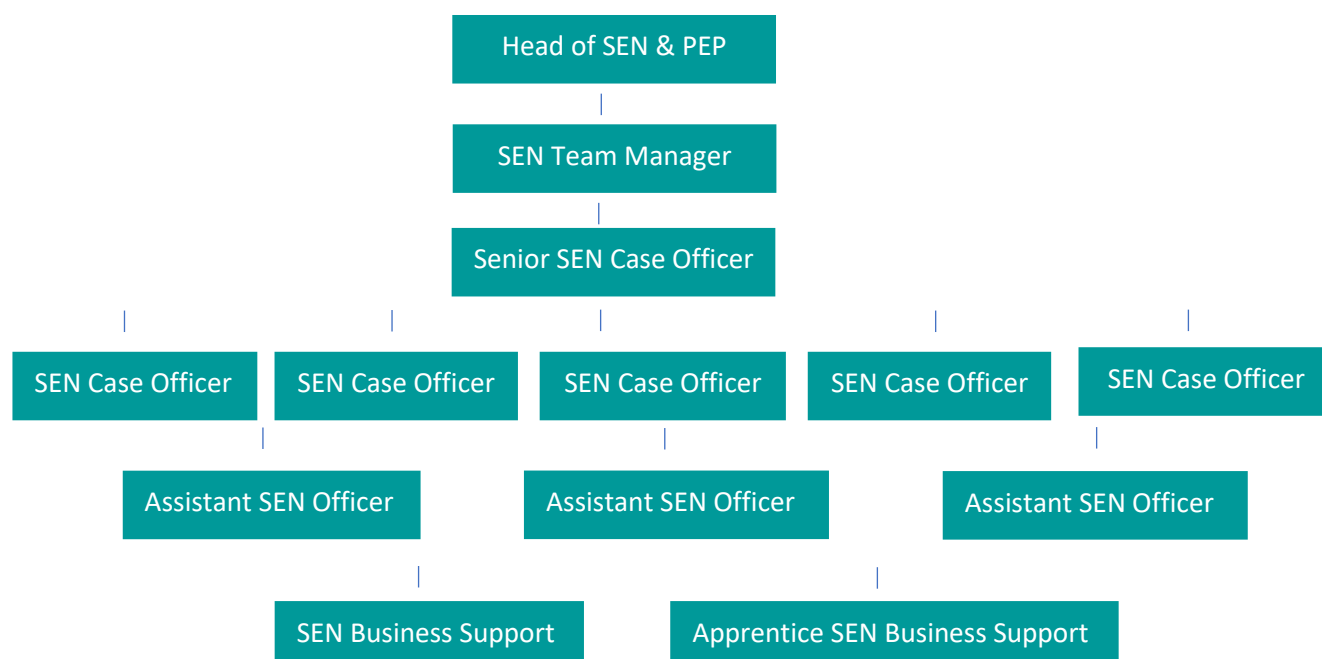
Job Purpose

Brighter Futures for Children is improving outcomes for Reading's children, young people and families.

We are an independent, not-for-profit-company, wholly owned by Reading Borough Council. Our responsibility is to deliver quality children's services, early help, education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services in the borough.

The position of Senior SEN Case Officer is to oversee the management of the statutory assessment, placement and monitoring of pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that the processes are carried out efficiently and effectively within statutory timescales. To oversee the production of good quality, outcome-focussed, co-produced EHCPs. To provide line management for Assistant SEN Case Officers and to provide case supervision for SEN Case Officers and case work advice as needed on a daily basis. This will include workflow management. To oversee the phase transfer process for year 6 and post-16, ensuring statutory deadlines are met. To work closely with Case Officers and the Legal Team to ensure the best outcomes from Tribunal Cases.

Designation of Post within Company Structure





1. Your role

- Dispute resolution for cases involving children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan, including preparation and negotiation in the event of SEN Tribunal Cases.
- To contribute to the strategic development of SEN provision, places & resourcing for the LA.
- Monitoring of performance against statutory timescales and reporting any exceptions.
- Application of BFFC's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding children, health and safety, security, confidentiality and data protection.
- To support the SEN team with the co-ordination of procedures, placement and funding relating to the statutory assessment, placement and monitoring of progress of pupils with special educational needs and travel.
- To monitor the quality of and amend EHCPs within given timescales.
- To ensure the phase transfer processes of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans are carried out and statutory deadlines are met.
- To contribute to the implementation and operation of monitoring procedures designed to ensure that annual reviews of EHCPs take place in accordance with statutory requirements, including attendance at reviews as necessary.
- To support SEN Case Officers in resolving complex or contentious cases and with the preparation of cases to be presented to the SEN Advisory Panel.
- To support the team as required on Tribunal cases.
- To provide supervision and daily management of work flow and work load.
- To provide line management for 3 x Assistant SEN Case Officers.
- To meet with parents/carers, and their advocates, in order to discuss issues relating to draft EHCPs and other matters and liaise with school staff, professionals and others as necessary, developing and maintaining good, effective working relationships.
- To attend case conferences, multi-professional meetings and other meetings as required.
- To liaise with staff from other departments within Brighter Futures for Children.
- To oversee and prioritise the time-tabling of attendance of colleagues at Annual Reviews.
- To liaise with external professionals, including schools, health professionals, special needs teams in other authorities, CYPIT, and Sensory Consortium.
- To assist the team manager/service manager with the preparation of responses to enquiries and/or complaints from parents/carers, legal representatives, the elected member of parliament and elected members of Reading Borough Council.
- To contribute to the arrangements for intake meetings and resource reviews for specialist resource bases.
- To deputise for the Team Manager as necessary, including chairing SEN Advisory Panel.
- To carry out additional duties and be involved in project and development work related to aspects of the statutory assessment process and SEN procedures as reasonably required.
- To oversee the effective administration of SEN Casework and to undertake the management of individual cases, including meetings and reviews as appropriate. To meet parents and their representatives as necessary to discuss issues relating to statutory assessment and provision for EHCP pupils.
- Ensure that the child or young person's welfare remains paramount and that any safeguarding issues are appropriately managed in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures.
- Promote equality as an integral part of the role and to treat everyone with fairness and dignity.
- Recognise health and safety is a responsibility of every employee, to take reasonable care of self and others and to comply with RBC Health and Safety policy and any service-specific procedures / rules that apply to this role.

- The list of duties is not intended to be exhaustive but simply highlights a number of the major tasks of the post. The post holder may be required to undertake additional duties which might reasonably be expected of them and which form part of the function of the post.

Criteria to progress through the Gateway to spine point 43:

- Co-ordinating and overseeing all Tribunal cases alongside the Legal Team to ensure the Local Authority is well represented.
- Co-ordinating and overseeing the delivery of training and sharing of specialist SEND knowledge to Education providers and other associated partners. This will include presenting at key stakeholder and Local Authority events, meetings and training days e.g. SENCO networks, EHCP learning events, bespoke training/ presentation meetings etc.

2. Relationships – who you will work with

Internal:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All levels of staff within Brighter Futures for Children
External:	Develop and promote strong partnerships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools & Colleges (both Reading & Out of Borough) • Parents & Families • Reading IASS • Health Professionals • Other LA SEN Teams

3. What your performance will be measured against

- Personal objectives set as part of probation, 1:1s, Appraisal & your continuous professional development.
- Quarterly performance targets including statutory timescales.

4. Your level of autonomy

- Required to work as part of a small team as well as using own initiative to deliver objectives.
- Responsibility for Quality Assurance particularly in relation to EHC plans.

5. Personal Attributes

- Confident
- Confidentiality
- Approachable
- Friendly
- Uses initiative

6. Scope of Job (Budgetary/Resource Control/Impact)

- The post holder has some financial responsibilities as outlined by Finance Officer & HOS.



Special/Other Requirements/Responsibilities of this Post

The post makes a key contribution to ensuring that:

- The Authority meets the Audit Commission requirements on the completion of Statutory Assessments within the statutory timescales.
- Schools and other professionals are provided with the information to enable them to carry out their duties in relation to Statutory Assessments.
- Parents and carers are provided with information to help them understand the assessment procedure and are kept informed throughout.

Level of DBS check required for this post	Enhanced with a check of the barring list(s)
If *, does the post require a check against the list of people barred from working with vulnerable adults?	YES
If *, does the post require a check against the list of people barred from working with children?	YES
What other security/safer recruitment clearances are required for this post?	NONE
Is this post “politically restricted”?	NO
Responsibility for Health & Safety:	Health & Safety Level 1
Please specify responsibility for implementing the company’s risk management strategy.	N/A
Please specify any other Statutory Duties and/or responsibilities of this post not already covered in the “Main Duties & Responsibilities” above	N/A

Person Specification

Qualifications & Education

Essential:

- Graduate in a relevant discipline or equivalent experience relevant to the post.
- Evidence of professional and personal development relevant to the post.

Experience

Essential:

- Previous experience of working within the education sector, either in a Local Authority or educational setting, including at least two years’ experience of managing a SEN caseload.
- Experience of working with parents and families - to be able to develop excellent working relationships with families and work effectively with them in a person centred way. To be able to deal with challenging situations.
- Experience of multi-agency working - to have an understanding of the roles of different agencies, to be able to lead multi-agency meetings effectively, manage negotiations, challenge where necessary and mediate if required.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities & Competencies


Essential

Knowledge

- A sound knowledge of the SEN Code of Practice, and understanding of the statutory assessment process for pupils with special educational needs.
- Knowledge of other related legislation, including legislation governing Adult Social Care, the Children Act and safeguarding processes - to ensure that practice is consistent with wider statutory requirements.
- Good working knowledge of a range of SEN and disabilities - to ensure that assessments and plans are of a high quality and appropriate to the child's specific needs. To be able to interpret professional reports from a range of agencies and use them to develop outcomes based holistic plans.
- To ensure that practice is fully compliant with legislation and statutory guidance on SEN and disability and that practice would stand up to scrutiny in the event of SEND Tribunals, LGO complaints or judicial review.
- Knowledge of the Equality Act particularly in relation to children and young people with disabilities - to ensure that practice is consistent with Equality legislation and to support schools and other agencies to work in a way which complies with this legislation.
- Understanding of and commitment to person centred approaches, personalisation and key working functions - to be able to work in a way which supports and empowers parents and to support other professionals to work in a person centred way, including participation in training as required.
- Thorough knowledge of the services and agencies which might be involved in EHC assessments and EHC Plan delivery - To ensure that appropriate and good quality assessments are carried out as part of the EHC process.

Skills & Abilities

- It is expected that candidates will possess skills in Customer Focus, Development, Relationships, Personal Effectiveness, Expertise, Communication Skills (if appropriate), Managerial (if appropriate), Health and Safety, Equalities & Finance.
- Excellent verbal communication and presentation skills including the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of situations, face-to-face, telephone or meetings/groups - to be able to manage meetings, discussions and negotiations effectively. To be able to participate in delivery of training for other professionals as required.
- High level writing skills and ability to write letters and reports for a range of audiences.
- Negotiation skills: ability to negotiate and to recognise and resolve conflicts between demands and resources, remain calm in stressful situation, empathise with service users and respect the roles and opinions of other professionals. To be able to manage parental expectations about resources.
- Interpersonal skills: the skills to relate effectively to parents, professionals and colleagues - to establish and maintain productive working relationships. To be able to influence behaviours of others in order to achieve the best outcomes.
- Ability to produce and interpret statistical information.
- Ability to work independently, organising and prioritising work in order to meet deadlines, using own initiative to solve problems and resolve difficult situations, but also to motivate others and work effectively as a member of a small team.
- Mediation skills - to be able to mediate between parents and professionals or between professionals where difficulties in relationships or differences of view arise.

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- Good ICT skills, including ability to use Word, Excel, Power Point and databases efficiently.
 - Ability to use SEN Module of EMS - to access data about children and store data electronically.
 - The ability to set and meet deadlines - to meet statutory and other deadlines and manage workload effectively.
 - Analytical thinking and ability to make sound judgements based on appropriate evidence - to be able to analyse complex issues and plan an appropriate way forward. To ensure that decisions are sound and can be clearly justified.
 - The Ability to work in a pressurised environment - to be able to manage a large workload, prioritise and meet deadlines.

Specific Working Requirements

- Ability to attend meetings in and outside Reading through being a Car driver with regular use of a car or other means.
- Be prepared to lead on service development and policy work within the service.
- A willingness to work outside office hours on an occasional basis in order to respond to specific service requirements.
- A satisfactory Enhanced DSB.
- Ability to work at any council site across the Borough to meet the needs of the service.
- Commitment to increasing knowledge of educational, legal and child development issues relating to special educational needs.