

Job Description

Job title	Medway Virtual School Officer Engagement & Participation
Directorate	Children and Adults
Division	Medway Virtual School
Range	MPR 4
Reports to	Virtual School Deputy Head

Main purpose of the job:

To be an effective member of Medway Virtual School (MVS), supporting the Local Authority in the duty to promote the educational achievement of all children and young people known to Medway Virtual School. Providing specialist advice, guidance and support to senior school leaders and other professionals to ensure that children and young people known to Medway Virtual School sustain their engagement and thrive in their education. Driving improvements in practice so that plans and actions are of high quality and effective, resulting in higher educational achievements for Medway's Children and Young people, and for these achievements to at least match their peers

To provide effective advice, training and support to a range of professionals. To ensure that plans regarding education, including Personal Education Plans (PEPs), are of high quality and focus on securing educational outcomes, making sure that there is no drift or delay in securing appropriate education.

Supporting school leaders to ensure that school policies and approaches appropriately reflect the needs of vulnerable pupils, particularly those known to Medway Virtual School. To challenge and improve practice that does not yet meet the needs of children and young people known to Medway Virtual School.

To work directly with pupils or a group of pupils known to Medway Virtual School to support engagement and participation in their learning

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the [One Medway Council Plan](#) and embeds our [values and behaviours](#).

Accountabilities and outcomes:

To work with social workers and education and employment settings to develop and promote effective strategies for raising achievement, ensuring that the needs of children and young people known to Medway Virtual School are understood and addressed by all those supporting them, directly and indirectly.

To work with the Head of Virtual School to monitor and raise achievement and other outcomes, improve the quality of plans, including personal education plan (PEPs and, where necessary, to model best practice. This will also include preparing and delivering training and support to social workers, designated teachers and other professionals to ensure that plans are of a high standard and that actions are completed within timescale.

Improve outcomes for all children and young people known to Medway Virtual School through effective support to young people and support and challenge to schools, colleges and training providers.

Attend and contribute to relevant meetings where needed to ensure progress against agreed goals and identified outcomes.

Actively promote external agency initiatives—such as university open days—to young people, schools, and social workers, and provide in-person support at these events where appropriate to enhance engagement and outcomes for young people.

To work with external agencies (e.g. employers, education and employment providers, voluntary organisations) to ensure that the needs of children and young people known to Medway Virtual School are understood and met.

Analyse quantitative and qualitative data regarding children and young people known to Medway Virtual School, working with the Service Manager to ensure that monitoring and tracking of key targets and objectives within the Corporate Parenting strategy and other plans is timely and effective.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

Accountabilities to Children and Young People

The children and young people of Medway have said the following qualities are really important to them:

- Be a good listener.
- Be non-judgemental.
- Be consistent and stable.
- Be contactable.
- Understand me.
- Be honest.
- Be focused.
- Be realistic.
- Be a good timekeeper.
- Be resourceful in your approach.

Be ambitious for young people and promote others to share the same drive.

Champion Children and Young People's views and rights in everything you do.

Ensure Children and Young People's voices are listened to and acted upon.

'Do what you say and say what you do'.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

As a corporate parent, all council employees are responsible for ensuring the well-being and positive outcomes of Medway's care-experienced children and young people.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Development Framework.

Work in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and improving the quality of life and opportunities for everyone living and working in Medway.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

Medway Council is a Category One responder in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and as a result all staff working for the Authority may be asked to carry out Category One response duties or stand into the role of another member of staff who is responding to a Major Civil Incident.

Organisation:

This role reports to the Medway Virtual School Phase leader.

The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.

Working Style:

Based at Gun Wharf, may be required to work from other Council buildings

Person specification

Qualifications

Educated to A level or equivalent

Person specification

All criteria at level A should be considered essential requirements.

Qualifications

Level A

Minimum 2 A level or equivalent level 3 qualification

Knowledge

Level A

- Good knowledge of specific school processes, i.e. Admissions, suspensions, Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and actions required to secure a school place or change of school.
- Good knowledge of trauma informed practice and key strategies
- Good knowledge of Department for Education (DFE) statutory guidance for schools and local authorities regarding the education of children in care and other vulnerable groups
- Good understanding of confidentiality and GDPR and how documents can be sent securely to partners through different methods.

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- Knowledge of how to target applications and responses to secure best outcomes for vulnerable pupils regarding education
- Excellent knowledge of statutory guidance across education and Children's Social Care (CSC) and wider best practice to inform actions and guidance
- Knowledge around ensuring children in care educated outside of Medway have an offer that equals that available to those residing.
- Knowledge of developing guidance and advice using key national legislation and local influences (Medway Council) for education and children in care / other vulnerable groups

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- Knowledge of how to develop guidance and advice with partners (local and national) using key national legislation and local influences (Medway Council) for education and children in care / other vulnerable groups
- Knowledge (theory and practice) of how to secure improved educational achievement for vulnerable children.

Experience

Level A

- Experience of working directly and indirectly with vulnerable children and young people to improve educational outcomes
- Experience of contributing to internal decision-making impacting outcomes for Children in care / other vulnerable groups
- Experience of participating in key partnerships (CSC, Health, education, region)
- Experience of calling and participating in multi-agency meetings to secure best outcomes to support education of children known to MVS
- Experience of developing internal systems and processes

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- Experience of coping well under extreme pressure and difficult situations
- Experience of leading multi-agency professional meetings to secure best outcomes to support the education of children in care / vulnerable children
- Experience of using data and information to design and implement a project to impact on cohort/phase securing improved educational outcomes for children in care / vulnerable children.
- Experience of representing MVS and participating in key partnerships (CSC, Health, education, region)

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- Experience and the vision to develop and maintain high quality practice across the service.
- Experience of working with others to improve practice across the wider multi agency partnerships

Skills

Level A

- Able to articulate accurately and clearly at panels to ensure informed decision making.
- Ability to identify and prepare for key challenges in multi-agency discussions regarding education and access to education.
- Able to implement cohort / phase plans efficiently and effectively.
- Can ensure Personalised Education Plans are completed in a timely manner and are of good quality.
- Able to use individual and cohort data and information to inform day to day practice.

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- Able to manage difficult conversations with skill and insight to ensure there is no drift or delay in securing the best outcome for a child or young person.
- Able to provide and explore a range of options for complex situations to ensure appropriate education for pupils.
- Good communication skills and interpersonal skills in a wide range of situations (training, meetings)

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- Ability to understand the vision for children in care and Medway as a Corporate Parent and interpret it to develop practical and achievable project plans, making effective use of data and best practice.
- Ability to resolve difficult, complex, and sometimes confrontational situations, imposing statutory guidance and local policies without access to more senior officers.
- Ability to analyse and interpret varied and complex information and develop strategies and solutions for the identified cohort (groups/ phase / whole cohort)
- Ability to build sound and productive working relationships with customers, colleagues, partners, and staff groups and can engage others in a credible, persuasive way.