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# **Job Description**

Job title Fostering Enquiry Officer

Directorate PEOPLE : Children and Adults

Division Children’s Services

Range MPR 3

Reports to Service Manager - Fostering

## **Main purpose of the job:**

Act as first point of contact for prospective foster carers for Medway Council by responding with warmth and enthusiasm to enquiries via multiple channels (including online, telephone, email and occasional face to face events).

This post is a pilot via the DfE’s Fostering Programme, so Medway is part of the Local Authority Fostering South East (LAFSE), So the Enquiry Office will be working closely with LAFSE management, ensuring all enquiries are completed and also complete the Initial Home Visit Assessment to the Propsetctive Foster carers. This will require travel to the prospective foster carers homes.

Promote the profile of fostering across the South East region by sharing knowledge and signposting applicants to information events.

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the [One Medway Council Plan](https://www.medway.gov.uk/onemedwayplan) and embeds our [values and behaviours.](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200783/our_values_and_behaviours)

## **Accountabilities and outcomes:**

Provide an excellent customer focused service to prospective foster carers by responding promptly and accurately to enquiries.

Provide appropriate information, support, advice and guidance to prospective foster carers throughout the enquiry, Initial Home Visit and application process to ensure consistent standards are maintained.

Maintain the fostering database by ensuring individual records are input accurately after each enquiry in order to provide up to date information, upon which decisions affecting service delivery can be made.

Work collaboratively with the local and LAFSE Recruitment and Marketing Officer to support with planning and implementing the marketing and recruitment strategy to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

Maintain an awareness of changes in policy and procedures within the fostering service, attending relevant courses where applicable, to ensure that a high quality of service delivery is maintained.

Complete compliance checks including DBS checks to verify applicant’s documents and ensure safeguarding procedures are adhered to.

To work as part of a team, attending and contributing to team meetings and service development in order to help maintain should and up to date business knowledge.

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 Team Manager – Fostering Recruitment and also LAFSE

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:**

HYBRID - a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis.

# **Person specification**

## **Qualifications**

Level 3 in Business Administration or equivalent.

GCSE’s grade 5 or above in English and Maths (or equivalent)

## **Knowledge**

An awareness of issues in recruiting and retaining foster carers and how this affects service delivery.

Knowledge of prospective carer assessments and the journey of a prospective foster carer

An awareness of Fostering Regulations and Fostering National Minimum Standards and the ability to develop this further.

An awareness of Safeguarding Procedures.

An awareness of GDPR regulations.

Knowledge of social media tools to build networks and communicate effectively.

## **Experience**

Experience of setting up and maintaining administrative systems and processes.

Experience of working in partnership with colleagues, other statutory agencies/professions and families/carers.

Experience of delivering marketing and recruitment campaigns for foster carers.

Experience of providing advice and guidance to prospective foster carers.

## **Skills**

Proficient in the use of Microsoft Windows applications and willingness and aptitude to learn other applications.

Excellent telephone manner and listening skills. Ability to focus and record information whilst working in an open plan environment.

Excellent administrative skills, with experience of adapting services, where possible, to meet service needs and can take the initiative to work with other agencies where necessary.

Ability to prioritise effectively and work on multiple work streams to meet deadlines whilst requiring minimal supervision.

Ability to work with sensitive and confidential issues tactfully.

Ability to effectively collate and analyse data.

Ability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders (including service users and parents/carers).