**LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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| Designation: | Fostering Recruitment and Enquiry Officer | Grade: SO1 |  |
| Reports to (Designation): | Team Manager (fostering Recruitment) | Grade: |  |
| Directorate: | CYPS | Section: |  |

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**Main Purpose of the job:**

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| * To support the implementation of the Lewisham recruitment strategy for the Family Placement Service delivering an increased number of fostering households through a targeted approach within relevant networks and localities, in line with standard 13 of the National Fostering Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (2011) and the Fostering Services Regulations (2011 & 2013) in enabling the recruitment and assessment of foster carers who can meet the needs of looked after children.
* To be jointly responsible for the Lewisham Fostering Service recruitment processes for foster carers and ensuring enquiries are dealt with efficiently and with reference to the relevant information and procedural requirements.

 * To promote and facilitate the achievement of standards and performance outcomes, as set by statute, national guidelines, policies and procedures, on the part of staff and foster carers as providers of a quality fostering service.
* To lead on regular (monthly) audits /analysis of foster carer applicants files to ensure statutory requirements are met, to make recommendations for action by social workers and to ensure team managers follow up in a timely manner.
* To be responsible for populating and maintaining the fostering database, tracking recommendations from the Fostering Recruitment Manager and actions from fostering panel (if cases are deferred).
* To ensure that Lewisham attracts suitable Foster Carers, and other types of carers who can provide the highest standard of care to Lewisham’s children in care, the strategy must address both quantity and quality issues so as to enhance placement choice
* To lead on enquiries from the public regarding fostering, providing an excellent standard of service and to provide a customer focused service to enquirers in line with statutory guidelines and locally set business rules.
* To support and facilitate events, both office based and community based to appeal to specified geographical areas and to generate further interest from and retain contacts with prospective enquirers and undertake regular analysis and insight activity into enquiry generation and report in order to inform recruitment and retention strategies for the Fostering Service.
* To work with colleagues business support teams, Fostering Team Manager, Therapeutic Fostering Team Manager, Communications and Marketing Officer to support with planning and implementing the relevant recruitment strategy to achieve service plan objectives/targets.
* To participate in Employee Development Scheme/Appraisals /Supervision and contribute to the identification of your own and team development needs and to actively promote the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy and Diversity Strategy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.
* To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 etc., the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.
* At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time may be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.
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**Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:**

* To undertake activities to support the implementation of the Lewisham recruitment strategy delivering on the targets for new foster carer households (mainstream and specialist) for the service to achieve the placement budget efficiencies and continued net growth in line with standard 13 of the National Fostering Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (2002 & 2009) and the Fostering Services Regulations (2011 & 2013).
* To work closely with the Fostering Recruitment Team Manager and Communication and Marketing Officer to deliver the Lewisham Fostering Service recruitment processes for foster carers and ensuring enquiries are dealt with efficiently and with reference to the relevant information and procedural requirements.
* To provide a complete and efficient response service for fostering and supported lodging enquiries which are generated by our recruitment campaigns.
* To engage, by telephone, face to face and digitally with people who are looking for information and to follow procedure to ensure enquiries are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner, providing excellent standards of customer service at all times.
* To lead on the initial response to prospective households, providing information and insight to enable the prospective carers to attend an information event
* To support the facilitation of regular fostering events.
* To lead on the follow up on previous enquiries and update data as necessary.
* To provide information in suitable formats for enquirers and be able to work with people, talking to people and offering information in a personable manner appropriate to the situation.
* To work with targeted community groups and networks (i.e. organised religion, education) to raise the awareness of the fostering service and generate enquiries with prospective carers.
* To develop relationships with relevant stakeholders, partners and internal teams/services to deliver effective recruitment activities.
* To lead on the review recruitment and enquiry generation performance reports, analysing and identifying trends, and producing an insight report each quarter with recommendations for the service to consider.
* To undertake required administration, tracking and facilitation within delivery of this role.
* To have a strong commitment to professional and personal development.
* To work in accordance with all required and relevant corporate policies, statutory and national policies (i.e. safeguarding, equalities).
* To work as part of a team, supporting colleagues as appropriate in order to achieve our overall targets.
* To identify clearly, through working with Managers, practitioners and carers, issues pertinent to the recruitment of local foster carers
* To coordinate the recruitment activity undertaken in the team from the point of first contact, through assessment and training to approval by Panel
* To coordinate the work of key individuals within the Fostering & Adoptions Service and Children In Care Service in so far as it impacts on the recruitment, training and assessment process relating to prospective foster carers
* To work with the Team Manager for Fostering recruitment and assessment team and the manager of Therapeutic Foster Carer Scheme, ensuring that all carers recruited meet the needs of this service.
* To assist the with the organisation of recruitment/ promotional events in a variety of venues enlisting the support of staff from across the Children in Care Service
* To liaise with the Head of Service and other Managers, and provide reports on the progress of all recruitment, training and assessment activity and to identify future placement needs for Children In Care within Lewisham.
* Manage and maintain a database of foster carers and foster carer applicants and to provide support and training where necessary
* To devise and maintain a tracking system that will support effective, efficient collection of information (all relevant background checks) required for a completed assessment to be presented to fostering panel in a timely manner, and highlight any areas where undue delay has occurred.
* To be responsible for organising materials and venues for the skills to foster course and other associated courses relevant to the recruitment of carers for Lewisham looked after children / care leavers.
* Maintain knowledge of relevant issues within fostering and adoption through contact and cooperation with key national agencies (Fostering, Network, BAAF, OFSTED etc.)
* To support organisational change, ensuring appropriate systems of performance and development, communications, quality measures, monitoring and review are both in place and delivered upon
* To promote a positive image of Lewisham’s Fostering Service
* To explore and develop innovative uses of new technology to enhance service delivery across enhance support service for children in care and other vulnerable groups
* To ensure and maintain confidentiality at all times.
* Carry out duties with due regard to the Council’s Customer Care, Equal Opportunities, Information Governance, Data Protection and Health and Safety policies and procedures.
* To produce written evidence as required where team managers, social workers and business support officers are unable to respond to the improvement plan.
* To prepare and present reports across the Fostering recruitment team highlighting areas of good practice and areas of concern.
* To rigorously monitor and track performance of assessing social workers in timescales for stage 1 and stage 2 assessments against regulatory requirements e.g. Assessment and approval of foster carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services July 2013
* To lead on the collection of relevant materials required by the Independent review mechanism should any applicants in stage 2 choose to appeal a negative recommendation.
* To exercise authority to report extreme concerns directly to the Fostering recruitment Manager and/or the Service Manager in order that the required action can be taken in a timely manner.
* Any other duties reasonably expected to be undertaken by a post holder at this level

Internal Contacts: These include maintain contact as necessary with colleagues and managers within the Children’s & Young People’s Division, Adult’s Care Services Division, Resources Division, and Strategy and Performance Division.

External Contacts: This will include Other Directorates within the Council, other Local Authorities, other agencies, such as the police, probation, health services, and members of the public.

To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council’s relevant codes and procedures.

All employees are required to participate in the Performance Evaluation Scheme (PES) and to undertake appropriate training and development identified to enhance their work.

Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled postholder

THIS JOB DESCRIPTION MAY NEED TO BE AMENDED BY THE DIRECTORATE TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SERVICE.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**JOB TITLE:** Fostering Recruitment and Enquiry Administrator

**POST NO:**

**DEPARTMENT: CYPS GRADE:**

Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person, but are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

**Equality & Diversity**

Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community **S**

Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post **S**

# Knowledge

* Knowledge or relevant experience of recruitment, and campaign / project delivery for foster carers and adopters. **S**
* Good general standard of literacy and numeracy. **S**
* Knowledge of prospective carer assessments and the journey of a prospective foster carer or adopter
* A working knowledge of relevant national legislation and regulation requirements including safeguarding policies and procedures **S**
* Knowledge of key local government issues associated with the role and how these affect service delivery
* Knowledge of online community facilitation tools and application of social media tools to build networks and communicate in a cost efficient manner. **S**

# Experience & Aptitude

* Experience of setting up and maintaining administrative systems and processes. **S**
* Experience of working on own initiative, organising own work effectively and meeting tight deadlines. **S**
* Experience of dealing with confidential issues discreetly and tactfully.
* Experience of developing, implementing and tracking effective recruitment campaigns. **S**
* Experience of developing creative and informative material that is effective
* Experience of work with the public, especially ethnic minority communities. **S**
* Experience of communications and marketing to raise prominence of the service
* Experience of working with and engaging a wide range of community groups and organisations **S**

# Skills

**(Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested)** (**To Be Tested** – **S)**

* Proficient in the use of Microsoft Windows Applications and mainframe Client Index systems **S**
* Database and advanced Excel skills **S, T**
* Effective communication skills orally and in writing.

**Aptitude:**

* Ability to work with IT systems to ensure performance metrics can be reported on. **S**
* Ability to analyse information, write business reports and use this for providing clear recommendations and decisions for informing service planning **S**
* Ability to prioritise effectively and work on multiple work-streams and meet deadlines whilst requiring minimal supervision
* A good use of I.T. to fulfil the job role, including desktop publishing
* Ability to work with sensitive and confidential issues. **S**
* Excellent telephone manner and listening skills required, able to focus and record information whilst working in an open plan office.
* The ability to communicate effectively, verbally, in writing, within meetings and effectively engaging service users
* The ability to work with internal stakeholders and external partners and bodies **S**

**Personal Qualities:**

* High standard of integrity.
* Ability to remain calm when working under pressure.
* Ability to interact successfully and confidentially with senior managers within and outside the organisation.
* Flexibility, Initiative and can-do positive demeanour.
* Confidence in working under own initiative.
* Works to the highest standards, demonstrating resilience to pressure and retaining professionalism at all times.
* Works hard, takes ownership and consistently meets or exceeds targets within agreed timeframes

# Circumstances

* Must be able to perform all duties and tasks with reasonable adjustment,
* Willing to work outside normal hours, work very flexibly and across the county in a variety of locations as and when required
* This position requires that the post holder undertake an Enhanced CRB Disclosure prior to employment and every three years thereafter.
* This post is exempt from section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974, as the duties give you access to persons who are under age of 18. Applicants are not entitled to withhold information about convictions, which would be regarded as spent for other purposes.

**DBS Disclosure Required? No Basic Enhanced**

x

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor)

**Physical**

* Meet the Council’s physical medical fitness and attendance requirements.

**Equal Opportunities:**

* Understanding of and commitment to the Council’s Equal Opportunities policies.
* Ability to identify specific contributions which this post might make to the Council’s Equal Opportunities policies.

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