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| **Job Description** |
| **Post title** | Placement Officer – Placements Team |
| **JE Reference No** | N9815 |
| **Grade** | Grade 7 |
| **Service** | Children and Young Peoples Service |
| **Service Area** | Childrens Social Care, Looked After Children – Resources |
| **Reporting to** | The postholder will be accountable to the Placement Manager, based within the Fostering Service. |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be an approved location, but you may be required to work at any Council workplace within County Durham. |
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| **DBS** | This post is subject to an enhanced disclosure. |
| **Flexitime** | This post is eligible for flexitime. |
| **Politically restricted** | This post is not designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the requirements of Section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State. |

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| **Description of role** |

The postholder will be part of the Placement Team. The function of the team will be:

* Work with social workers and their teams to identify foster carers for children and young people who need to be looked after by the Local Authority;
* To provide a child centred approach in their identification of suitable foster carers;
* To provide information to social workers to enable them to match the child/young person to the best available resource;
* To provide a single port of call for providers and commissioners;
* To increase capacity for the management of duty to deliver proactive planning for short, medium, long term and emergency placements, including rehabilitation plans;
* To establish maintain effective positive working relationships with external providers.

The postholder will:

* Contribute to ensuring timely, effective and cost-effective placements are sought for all Children and Young People to meet their needs through identifying in house resources and externally commissioned provisions
* Contribute to the development, implementation, delivery and management of countywide, multi-agency services for foster carers, children, young people and their families;
* Support a culture of learning and continuous development through encouraging and supporting team members to demonstrate their commitment to training and development activity.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

Listed below are the responsibilities this role will be primarily responsible for:

* providing an effective and timely response to all requests for placements for children and young people
* ensuring a professional and approachable manner, in person and via telephone and email communication
* working effectively in partnership with all other areas of the service
* ability to gather and analyse information effectively and efficiently
* approaching foster carers and Independent providers enthusiastically and proactively to maximise placement choice and placement stability for children and young people
* providing a child centred, respectful, persistent and solution focussed approach to requesting and securing placements for children and young people
* ability to respond to emergency requests for placements
* ability to work with foster carers and independent providers to effectively plan and prepare for future placement needs
* keeping effective written records of placement requests and searches

The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by the Head of Children’s Services.

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| **Organisational responsibilities** |

* **Values and behaviours**

To demonstrate and be a role model for the council’s values and behaviours to promote and encourage positive behaviours, enhancing the quality and integrity of the services we provide.

* **Smarter working, transformation and design principles**

To seek new and innovative ideas to work smarter, irrespective of job role, and to be creative, innovative and empowered. Understand the operational impact of transformational change and service design principles to support new ways of working and to meet customer needs.

* **Communication**

To communicate effectively with our customers, managers, peers and partners and to work collaboratively to provide the best possible public service. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to our public.

* **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

To take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety policy and procedures.

* **Equality and diversity**

To promote a society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live, free from discrimination and prejudice and ensure our commitment is put into practice. All employees are responsible for eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination in everything that they do.

* **Confidentiality**

To work in a way that does not divulge personal and/or confidential information and follow the council’s policies and procedures in relation to data protection and security of information.

* **Climate Change**

To contribute to our corporate responsibility in relation to climate change by considering and limiting the carbon impact of activities during the course of your work, wherever possible.

* **Performance management**

To promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. Contribute to the council’s Performance and Development Review processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

* **Quality assurance (for applicable posts)**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and service level so that the highest standards of service are delivered and maintained. Use data, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of service provision and support decision making processes.

* **Management and leadership (for applicable posts)**

To provide vision and leadership to inspire and empower all employees so they can reach their full potential and contribute to the council’s values and behaviours. Managers and leaders must engage in personal development to ensure they are equipped to lead transformational change; always searching for better ways to do things differently to meet organisational changes and service priorities.

* **Financial management (for applicable posts)**

To manage a designated budget, ensuring that the service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

*The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.*

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| Person specification |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * BTEC Higher in Public Admin, NVQ Business Administration Level 4 or equivalent qualification.
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| Experience | * Substantial experience in a relevant role.
 | * Experience of preparing and presenting analytical reports.
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| Skills & Knowledge | * Time Management skills.
* Negotiation skills.
* Effective written and verbal communication skills.
* Commitment to continuous professional development.
* Knowledge of social care and/or housing or health policy and practice.
* Understanding of markets.
* Understanding of partnership working.
* Understanding of performance information.
* Confidentiality
* Can work effectively with colleagues from a number of other agencies
* Research and gather information
 | * Understanding of joint commissioning processes.
* Good presentation skills
* Understanding of commissioning processes including service design/re-design, value for money, procurement, contracting, post contractual quality and performance management.
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| Personal Qualities | * Demonstrable commitment to Equal Opportunities.
* Personal commitment and drive.
* Interpersonal skills.
* Self-motivating with good organisational skills.
* Ability to work on own initiative and in a range of situations.
* Ability to contribute to team and partnership working.
* Observe integrity, openness and accountability.
* Access to a car or access to a means of mobility support (if driving, must have a current valid driving licence and appropriate insurance).
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