



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

**DEPARTMENT Children, Schools and Families**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**POST TITLE: Service Manager, Access to Resources**

**Grade: MG2**

**DIVISION/SECTION: Children Schools and Families, Access to Resources**

**Location: Civic Centre and satellites**

**Responsible to: Head of Commissioning, Strategy & Performance**

**Responsible for:**

**Strategic development of commissioned services for placement care, to reduce dependency on high cost residential placements and improve outcomes for vulnerable children,**

**All placements for children in care and relevant budgets for children with complex needs (SEN) etc. around £10 to £15m**

**A team of specialists covering all aspects of commissioning and procurement for these groups of children and young people.(across Education, Social care and wider corporate services)**

**Recruitment & assessment of foster carers**

**Management of Contact supervision service**

**Post number:**

**Date: June 2011**

- **MAIN PURPOSE** To lead the development and implementation of Merton's strategies for commissioning and procuring placements and support services for Children Looked After, children with complex needs and other vulnerable children as part of our approach to preventative care of children being placed

in residential out borough placements, in line with Merton's Children and Young People's Plan

- To lead, develop and implement a 'One Stop Service' for the accommodation and placement of children, by ensuring social workers and SEN officers to identify appropriate resources from a range of in-house and external suppliers. [Initially, this will include developing the service in line with agreed outcomes.]
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- To ensure the effective strategic and operational use of resources including managing the Looked After Children and Residential Schools procurement budget, ensuring detailed management information reports to Departmental Management Team on current, planned and future spend. This and other budgets monitored by the team represent significant departmental spend.
- To establish and manage appropriate working relationships with strategic partners across a range of agencies as well as colleagues across CSF and the Council Services, and external suppliers of services.
- Undertake strategic and specific service needs analyses and identify gaps in service provision, inappropriate use of resources and trends in service, in order to recommend, manage and take appropriate remedial action.
- To take decisions on appropriate responses to childrens' identified needs balancing safety, quality and cost
- To contribute significantly to the strategic development of a Children's Commissioning Strategy.
- To represent the council on commissioning- and procurement-related matters and support packages to courts and tribunals where necessary.
- To ensure that the team offers a consistently high standard, meets the needs of Merton's diverse communities, and the quality and standards of professional practice and performance are met.
- To provide advice to Members, MPs and senior managers within the Council and to represent the Department/Council in regional and national forums.

## **1. MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. To manage the Access to Resources team so as to meet the objectives of the Business, Service and Individual Performance plans of the Directorate and to meet agreed national and local standards.
2. To manage the team within a multi disciplinary and inter agency framework.
3. To monitor and review the performance of the service. This to include the use of appraisals, supervision and quality assurance systems in accordance with Merton's supervision guidelines.
4. To ensure the team develops to offer improved services, through initiatives via individual workers and ongoing programmes of staff development.

5. To manage the recruitment of staff as required, acting in accordance with agreed personnel procedures.
6. To maintain and apply expert professional knowledge of childcare and all relevant legislation in the management and delivery of services to individuals, families and user groups.
7. To contribute to the maintenance of a central computer system for dealing with referrals, case recording, financial control, management planning and all related activities.
8. To monitor patterns of need, patterns of provision, gaps in provision etc and to assist in the formulation of ideas with regard to policy and action to address these needs. To be responsible for recommending and implementing the required policy and action to DMT and other appropriate lines of management.
9. To monitor budgets and operate a sound professional service with the resources allocated, and to ensure that the services commissioned are of high quality and provide best value.
10. To take responsibility for the relevant budgets and report on them in a timely fashion in a way that is clear and understandable for officers and members of the council.
11. To authorise payments to users within permitted delegated powers and to comply with the Council's financial regulations at all times.
12. To inform DMT (through line management) about spending, actual and projected, on different forms of care and education provision and to recommend appropriate corrective action as and when required.
13. To ensure the efficient implementation of departmental strategic policy through the implementation and development of appropriate procedures and guidance.
14. To assist DMT in providing a strategic overview of the service areas.
15. To review and monitor policies within the service area and recommend changes as necessary.
16. To initiate and direct projects and activities within the service areas as appropriate.
17. To advise DMT on policy and practice issues in relation to placements across the service.
18. To maintain a database with information about placement resources, and assist in the general collection of statistics as required (by Department Education and other relevant bodies).
19. To produce a variety of written reports, as appropriate, including reports to Committee.
20. To provide advice and guidance in order to help resolve complex placement issues, particularly where a care plan is unclear or disputed or where an SEN case is subject to appeal or Tribunal procedures.

21. To organise the monitoring of contracts with providers including liaison with other London Boroughs through London Councils and the NASS contract, as well as with relevant Health Trusts and private and voluntary providers of health services.
22. To develop and maintain a programme of inspections of service providers focusing on standards of care and education whilst incorporating best value.
23. To ensure that the resources that the borough uses provide safe and suitable care for the differing needs of Merton children (including those that relate to race, culture, religion, gender, language and disability).
24. To ensure that the team performs in a competent way, meeting standards in responding to requests for help from social workers SEN case workers and giving sound professional guidance in accordance with the authority's policies and procedures.

### **3. GENERAL**

1. To strategically lead on specific service development priorities in line with the council strategies for children and young people.
2. To ensure all services are delivered within the parameters and desired outcomes for the Council's Comprehensive Area Review (new JAR/APA).
3. To produce a range of reports for the service manager, DES, cabinet members and wider partnerships/forums as required.
4. Lead, support and inspire staff to reflect on and develop their own understanding, knowledge and skills to ensure effective leadership at all levels, strong succession planning and a workforce committed to raising outcomes for children and families that are in receipt of Merton's services.
5. To line manage staff including overseeing recruitment, induction support and supervision and performance management.
6. To manage budgets and monitor in line with LB Merton finance policies and procedures.
7. To explore opportunities for generating funding via links with other initiatives across the Council or partnerships to support the development of SEN & Inclusion services across the borough.
8. To undertake all duties and interactions with employees, partner providers and customers fairly, without unlawful discrimination and with due regard to the Council's Diversity and Equality in Employment and Service Delivery policies.
9. To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Council's Core Values, Equal Opportunities Policy, Health and Safety Policy and all other borough and departmental policies and procedures, in particular the non-smoking policy and confidentiality in line with the Data Protection Act.
10. To maintain a working environment in which diversity is respected and responded to and equality of opportunity is promoted.

11. To ensure complaints are responded to in accordance with the Customer Complaints Procedure.
12. To use computers and other ICT in the normal performance of the duties of the post. To ensure that robust information relating to the relevant performance indicators and any other relevant targets is reported in accordance with the Council's Data Quality Strategy and to work proactively to improve data quality where issues around timeliness or robustness of data have been identified.
13. To contribute to the development of effective teamwork establishing good communication systems, including team training and regular team meetings.
14. To keep up to date with new developments in appropriate fields, attend training and supervision sessions and contribute to workshops, seminars and conferences.
15. Deputising for the line manager as appropriate
16. To work flexibly and to undertake any other duties commensurate with the post.

#### **FUNCTIONAL LINKS**

- Suppliers of Care Services for Looked After Children
- Suppliers of Educational Services in Maintained and Non-Maintained Sectors
- Children's Centres, Schools & Settings
- Operational Staff
- Parents/Carers
- CSF Teams
- Private & Voluntary Sectors
- Statutory Agencies
- London Councils

#### ***OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS***

The Officer appointed might be required to work during some evenings and weekends for which time off in lieu will be negotiated.

**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

**Children, Schools and Families DEPARTMENT**

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**POST TITLE: Service Manager, Access to Resources**

**Grade: MG2**

**DIVISION/SECTION: Children Schools and Families, Access to Resources**

**Location: TBD – located with main core services**

**Responsible to: DMT**

**Responsible for:**

- **All placements for children in care and related budget.**
- **All non-Merton school placements that involve a cost and related budget.**
- **A team of specialists covering all aspects of commissioning and procurement for these groups of children and young people.**

**Post number:**

**Date: August 2010**

**Experience / Qualifications / Skills / Knowledge:**

1. A good honours degree in the fields of social work, education or health (or General Social Care Council recognised equivalent qualification).
2. A recognised and appropriate management qualification (or a willingness and ability to study for such)
3. Experience of managing a diverse service in a social care, education or health setting.
4. Proven experience or very good knowledge of social care management.
5. Clear understanding of how budgets work with the ability to represent complicated financial data in an understandable manner.
6. Experience of controlling expenditure and balancing service requirements with available resources.

7. Excellent understanding of the needs of children and young people with additional needs, their families and those who work with them.
8. In depth knowledge of issues affecting children and young people with additional needs and their families.
9. Ability to contribute to the professional development needs of the other officers in the service in respect of children and young people who require services outside of the family home or local education settings.
10. Understanding of and commitment to Equal Opportunities policies, social inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice.
11. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, good negotiation, persuasion and organisational skills.
12. Good time management skills.
13. Ability to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines.
14. Ability to deal with difficult and challenging situations with tact and sensitivity.
15. Ability to travel around the borough as well as across London and nationally when required.

**Martin Parry**  
**15<sup>th</sup> October 2010**