



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**  
**CHILDREN, SCHOOLS & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**POST TITLE:** Director of Children, Schools & Families

**Grade:** Directors

**DIVISION/SECTION:** Director's Office

**Location:** Civic Centre

**Responsible to:** Chief Executive

**Responsible for:** Children Social Care and Youth Inclusion; Education Access, Opportunity & Inclusion; Early Years; Educational Services, Inspectors, Consultants & Governor Support; Online Research Services; Youth Offending Team; Youth Service and such other matters as may be added or changed from time to time.

To also be the Equalities Lead for the Council.

**Post number:** M3007815

**Date:** December 2020

## **1. MAIN PURPOSE**

- To be professionally responsible and accountable for the effectiveness, availability and value for money of the Council's statutory children's services and functions, specifically:
  - the Council's functions in its capacity as a local education authority under the Education Acts except certain functions relating to further education, higher education and adult education;
  - the Council's social services functions within the meaning of the Local Authorities Social Services Act 1970, insofar as they relate to children, and the Council's functions for children and young people leaving care;
  - any health related functions exercised by the Council on behalf of an NHS body under section 31 of the health Act 1999, insofar as they relate to children; and
  - the Council's functions as a children's services authority as set out in the Children Act 2004, in particular building and leading the arrangements for inter-agency co-operation.

- To ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies for the provision of service and support that are responsive to client needs and are sufficiently dynamic to respond to changes in governmental direction and legislative change.
- To manage the provision of quality services that reflect the Authority's core values.
- To participate in the corporate management of the Authority.

## **2. MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Generic**

- To participate in the corporate management of the Authority and to contribute to the preparation of both short and medium term plans for the Authority in close co-operation with others as required.
- To evaluate the performance of the Department against stated objectives, developing performance measures and ensuring feedback to staff on the department's performance in meeting targets and objectives.
- To ensure the development of a departmental organisational structure that meets changing service needs. To promote sound departmental management practices and to be responsible for the effective recruitment and retention, motivation and development of staff within an effective industrial relations climate.
- To ensure the development of effective working relationships between the department and others across the Council. To lead, and participate actively in inter-departmental working groups, as required.

### **Specific**

- To provide accurate and timely advice to the Council, its committees, elected members, the Chief Executive and Directors, on developments, trends in the areas of children, schools and families services and all matters relating to the strategic planning of those services and their resourcing.
- To develop, implement and evaluate policies and programmes for the provision of cost-effective, high-quality services which accord with the Council's policy objectives and meet both statutory and local needs.
- To ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to promote cooperation between the Council and its partner organisations to improve the well being of children and young people in the Borough.
- To make arrangements to ensure that the Council's functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare.

- To maintain and develop productive links with schools headteachers and governors based on mutual respect, shared goals and shared responsibility for the improvement of standards within the Borough.
- To ensure that the Authority's statutory responsibilities in regard to such things as the provision of the school places, access, monitoring of standards and statements of children with special needs are met.
- To consider the establishment of, maintain and operate a database of basic information on all children and young people in the Borough or if another body has the statutory duty to create a database or databases, to participate in its operation.
- To chair the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) to coordinate board members' activities for the purpose of safeguarding the welfare of children and young people in the Borough.
- To promote the educational achievement of looked after children.
- To provide the Secretary of State, if so directed, with information on individual children and young people.
- To coordinate statements of proposed action in the light of a Joint Area Review report and to exercise a key role in monitoring and evaluating implementation of the proposed action (subject to consultation and the laying of Regulations).
- To create and sustain a framework for the effective delivery of services to children and young people through leadership and by creating the conditions for others to perform and to innovate.
- To lead the cultural, workforce and other changes necessary to secure the transformation of children's services.
- To lead the transformation of children's services by creating a sharper focus on prevention and early intervention, while strengthening protection and improving achievement and attainment for all children and young people.
- To build and lead robust partnership arrangements under which public, private voluntary and community sectors work effectively together in relation to the planning, commissioning and provision of services which improve outcomes for children and young people and place them at the centre of service provision.
- To harness the distinctive contributions of children, young people and their families and carers in designing and delivering services and in evaluating how effectively services improve outcomes.
- To direct the operation of the Council's contracted out and commissioned children's services provision through the establishment of suitable arrangements for performance management arrangements across all children's services.

- To ensure that services are developed in close consultation with departments, the community, local action groups and external agencies and to promote public understanding of the Council's policies in order to facilitate their effective implementation and wider credibility. To develop effective relationships with the private and voluntary sectors and to encourage joint development initiatives wherever appropriate.
  - To represent the Authority to external agencies such as Government Departments, Local Authority Associations, private developers, etc to develop effective relationships to advance the Council's objectives.
  - To ensure the effective implementation of the Council's Equal Opportunity and Health and Safety policies in all aspects of the Department's work.
  - To act as nominated deputy in the absence of the Chief Executive and to undertake any other duties as directed by the Chief Executive.
3. The duties, roles and responsibilities of the post and the methods of working may be amended from time to time by the Chief Executive.



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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**POST TITLE: Director Of Children, Schools & Families**

**Grade: Directors**

**Date: November 2017**

**1. Knowledge**

- Educated to degree level and/or full relevant professional qualification, with evidence of continuous professional development.
- An understanding of the legislative framework governing the work of the department. Understanding of issues impacting on service delivery within an urban, multi cultural environment.
- A clear understanding of the workings of local government and the wider environment in which it operates.

**2. Skills**

- Ability to demonstrate a clear vision of the future for Local Authority children, schools and families services and the challenges facing those services in the short and medium term.
- Well developed analytical skills and proven ability of setting/achieving strategic objectives through performance management and of evaluating and achieving service quality.
- Ability to communicate effectively, negotiate and network through highly developed written, oral and presentation skills.
- Ability to develop innovative solutions whilst maintaining continuity of services through setting of clear goals/targets.

- Ability to lead, motivate and enthuse individuals and teams within a rapidly changing environment.
- Ability to work effectively within a political environment and to manage the member/officer interface.
- Commitment and ability to implement the Council's Equal Opportunities policies in employment and services.
- Commitment to working in partnership with a wide range of bodies both internally and externally.

### **3. Experience/Training**

- Significant senior management experience in the provision of public sector children care and/or education services within a multi-racial urban community. Experience of participation at senior management level in the corporate affairs and decision making of a large complex organisation.
- A successful track record and background of consistent achievement at senior management level (second tier or above) in a local authority or other large complex organisation.
- Experience of managing, motivating and developing a multi-disciplinary workforce and harnessing the talents of employees at all levels.
- Experience of successfully leading management of change within a service setting.
- Experience of working in co-operation and partnership with a wide range of internal and external bodies including statutory agencies/organisations.
- Experience of having successfully managed substantial budgets through rigorous control procedures, as well as delivering budget options within a corporate framework.
- Experience of establishing and implementing business planning processes and performance management systems to ensure appropriate and cost effective service delivery.

### **4. Others**

- Successful Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.