

Placement Officer (LAC Placements)

Grade 7

At Kirklees we want to be innovative and creative in the way we work to deliver our services to our communities. We know we have challenging times ahead so we are always looking for better and smarter ways to work.

The needs of Kirklees looked after children will be at the centre of everything you do, by ensuring that services are of a good standard and quality, and that children are placed in the best provisions that match their assessed needs. Under the supervision of a Team Manager, Placement Officers work as part of the team to identify fostering, and residential placements or semi-independent living arrangements for children & young people in care based on their individual needs assessed by their Social Worker. You will regularly liaise with Social Work professionals, individual foster carers, residential placement providers and establishments; you will use your communication and research skills to secure options that meet expected outcomes for children and young people in line with procurement expectations. The work is fast paced and rewarding.

This role is based within Children and Families. Find out more about [working for Kirklees](#).

The Job

As a Placement Officer you will be allocated referrals by a Team Manager. Your role will be to check referrals for accuracy, balance and completeness referring back to the Social Worker for additional information where needed. Referrals will relate to children and young people from babies to age 17.

The majority of the referrals you will deal with will require you to identify in-house and external placements for children in need of accommodation, priority will be given to internal provision. Your role will include providing recommendations on the strengths and weaknesses of each placement based on research and your knowledge of the market.

If no suitable matches can be identified within Kirklees an external search may be needed requiring discussion with the Social Work Manager responsible for the child. You will use the regional procurement framework; additional research and discussion with placement providers may be needed before presenting options to the social worker.

In addition your role will also include:

- Conducting quality assurance/contract compliance visits to providers-completing set Quality Assurance paperwork and producing follow up letters - as well as using existing regulatory frameworks.
- Dealing with complaints and/or concerns. You will collate information in relation to complaints from Social Workers and providers and make recommendations about whether remedial action may be required.

It is important that you keep accurate and up to date records relevant systems in relation to your work to create reports to be shared with Social Workers and managers.

Your role will be reactive and fast paced so a flexible approach will be key.

Job Checklist

- Responds quickly, positively and proactively to request for placement matching to achieve the best possible match for the child with available placements in line with the Quality Assurance Framework.
- Makes every effort to identify placements in internal Kirklees provision prior to seeking authorisation to search for external agencies.
- Checks placement referrals to ensure that the referral is balanced and accurate
- Checks referrals against current placement vacancies and ensures consideration of the child's needs and the foster carer's or home's skills and registration.
- Effectively liaises with the child's Social Worker to ensure informed and accurate placement search.
- Liaises with the supervising fostering social workers and identified Foster Carers to discuss potential placement and feeds back to the child's SW potential matches.
- Conducts Quality Assurance/compliance visits to providers.
- Collates information in relation to complaints from Social Workers and providers, making recommendations on any required action.
- Deals with queries and issues relating to placement packages in a timely and efficient way
- Works effectively with education and health to agree funding where applicable
- Seeks support when required.
- Makes full use of IT systems.
- Communicates effectively with internal and external stakeholders.
- Participates in learning and development relevant to the job.
- Please see your responsibilities related to [safeguarding](#).

The Person

We need our employees to be driven to achieve the best, to be hard working, respectful and thoughtful to each other and our customers and to be creative, wherever they work.

Your excellent communication skills will mean you are able to engage effectively with internal and external stakeholders at times providing constructive challenge. You will be able to maintain positive working relationships with colleagues and providers whilst advocating for the needs of the children and young people, you will at times need to be assertive in your approach. Your research skills will mean you will be able to identify strengths and weaknesses of placements in line with the quality assurance and regulatory framework.

Your understanding of the needs of children and young people and the challenges they face means you are able to articulate these to providers.

You will be flexible in your approach to a reactive workload and be able to use your initiative in the tasks you are set although support is readily available. Motivated and conscientious, you will be able to prioritise effectively.

Keen to develop your knowledge of the market, Ofsted requirements and relevant legislation you will explore opportunities to develop your knowledge of these areas and take advantage of the learning and development available.

The right behaviours and attitudes are as important to us as the skills you bring to the job. We expect all our employees to demonstrate the following behaviours:

- Positive
- Honesty
- Respectful
- Flexible
- Communicative
- Supportive

You will also promote and role model the Council's Expectations of a New Council employee within the organisation. This role is at level 1. Please read our [Behaviours and Expectations](#).

Person Checklist

- Awareness of the placement market and regulations that govern it
- Ability to negotiate with providers.
- Understanding of the needs of young people placed in care.
- Awareness of legislation, regulations and guidance relevant to this role including:
 - the Children Act 1989 including the Family Placement Regulations and Guidance.
 - Fostering regulations
 - Children's Home Regulations
- Understanding of Equality and Diversity in relation to placement provision.
- Understanding of Children's Social Care and child development issues.
- Effective communication skills to type accurate minutes and write formal letters to providers to rectify any issues raised in QA visits or complaints.
- Experience of working as part of a team.
- Experience of using computer packages and undertaking administrative tasks.
- Ability to travel to various locations in order to carry out the duties of the job.
- Willingness to work flexibly to meet the needs of the service including some later evenings on occasions where same day placements have to be secured.
- Accepts that a DBS check will be required.
- Awareness of social work processes in relation to placements.

This Role Profile is intended to provide an understanding and appreciation of the responsibilities of this particular job. It is not possible to specify every detail and we expect you to work flexibly within your skills, knowledge, experience and grade of this job.

For Recruitment Purposes: In order to be considered for this role you will need to demonstrate in your application how you meet the points in the Person Checklist.