

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:	Senior SEND Information and Advice Support Caseworker
Service:	Harrow SENDIAS
Salary:	Grade 2 (upper) Points 16-19
Hours:	22.2 hours per week
Location:	Harrow
Responsible to:	Harrow Project Coordinator

Summary of job:

To deliver casework provision of the service, informing parents, children and young people who reside in Harrow, of their rights as regards the SEND process, by keeping abreast of education and other relevant legislation and SEND policy, and support their navigation through the SEND assessment process empowering them to express their views and needs. To work with families and other stakeholders to achieve the best outcomes for the education, health and care of the child/young person concerned. Deputise for the project coordinator when required.

Principal accountabilities:

1. Provide direct and impartial information, support and advice to parents, carers, young people and young adults via the helpline, email and face-to-face or virtual meetings. Undertake and follow up agreed actions such as discussions with schools, local authorities or other relevant agencies.
2. Undertake outcome focussed casework through supporting service users to express their views in meetings with local authority, schools and other professions, or in writing; tailoring support to individual's need to ensure equal access to the service; researching and signposting to other services as necessary.
3. Maintain positive and collaborative working relationships with all stakeholders, working in a conciliatory way to facilitate communication between all stakeholders, keeping the child/young person at the centre of the process.
4. Plan support to ensure the best use of time ensuring that the appropriate type of support is offered for the enquiry and throughout all casework actively empowering families to develop confidence and skills to advocate for themselves.
5. To undertake outcome focussed casework through supporting service users with social and health care enquiries.
6. To hold a complex caseload of families accessing the service. To provide support when there is a disagreement, including by:
 - arranging and/or attending early disagreement resolution meetings;

- helping parents to manage mediation, appeals to First-tier Tribunal, exclusions and complaints;
 - making children, young people and their parents aware of the Local Authority's and Health services for resolving disagreements and for mediation, and the routes of appeal and complaint.
7. Maintaining up-to-date, accurate records of all work undertaken using electronic systems in place, and ensure that these are accessible to team members and management at all times for continuity of service provision.
 8. Ensure all qualitative and quantitative data is available to management and contribute to outcome monitoring reports.
 9. Alongside Project Coordinator support the implementation of the Advisory Board and Young People engagement to support service provision.
 10. Supervise volunteers where required and deputise for the Project Coordinator when needed in line with Family Action policies and procedures.
 11. Support workshops/conferences/forums for parents, young people and other agencies to promote understanding of current SEND issues.
 12. Ensure own knowledge and practice of SEND information is maintained. Work in line with the Information, Advice & Support Service (IASS) Network Quality Standards and in accordance with SEND Code of Practice 2015, including the completion of IASS Legal Training. Undertake further training as required.
 13. To advocate for children, young people and their families with additional needs and empower service users to develop confidence and skills to increase resilience, reduce risk factors and increase their own ability to actively self-advocate.
 14. To ensure you have an understanding (appropriate to your role) and to comply at all times, with Family Action's procedures for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as well as undertaking regular Child Protection and Adult Safeguarding training.
 15. Uphold and demonstrate in practice, the principles of inclusion and equal opportunities in all aspects of the role and comply with Family Action's Diversity & Equality and Ethical Policies, promoting these principles amongst colleagues, service users and other members of the community.
 16. To assist Project Coordinator at developing SEND resources and digital presence of the service, linking directly with borough's Local Offer in order to provide families with impartial information, advice and support outside of office hours and to facilitate the development of self-advocacy by families and young people.
 17. To be able to evidence Family Action's values at all times, which underpin Family Action's mission of "building stronger families" by:

- a) Being **people** focused
 - b) Reflecting a '**can do**' approach
 - c) Striving for **excellence** in everything we do
 - d) Having **mutual respect** for everyone we work with, work for and support through our services.
18. To comply with Family Action's Health and Safety Policy, Data Protection policy and to protect your own and others' health, safety and welfare.
19. To work flexibly as required by the service and the needs of the families which may involve working occasionally outside of core hours.

Person Specification

Senior SEND Information and Advice Support Worker

1. Degree or equivalent qualification in relevant subject, such as: education, health, social care or equivalent and evidence of a commitment to continuing learning and professional development.
2. Independent Provider of Special Education Advice IPSEA legal training qualification, or a willingness to work towards completion within 12 months of commencing employment.
3. Experience of working with children, young people and their families with additional needs and the ability to promote positive outcomes for children and actively empowering families to represent themselves..
4. Excellent knowledge of current special educational needs procedures and SEND Reforms and proven experience of delivering impartial advice and support to families where children and young people have special educational needs and disabilities.
5. Experience of supervising volunteers or mentoring staff members.
6. Excellent up-to-date knowledge of current special educational needs procedures such as statutory assessments process, EHC plans, exclusions, admissions, transitions, health and social care as well as ability to communicate SEND-related procedures to a variety of audiences.
7. An excellent understanding of the issues children, young people and their families face when they have additional needs and an excellent knowledge of the risk factors children and adults experiencing these issues. In addition, an excellent awareness of the impact of disadvantage and social exclusion and a commitment to promote inclusion and equality of opportunity for all.

8. Ability to empathise with and advocate for children, young people and their families with additional needs and an ability to stay calm under pressure and in difficult situations. In particular empower service users to develop confidence and skills to increase resilience and reduce risk factors and increase their ability to actively self-advocate.
9. Experience of establishing and sustaining a broad range of professional partnerships and engage, as well as consult, with service users and stakeholders through effective collaboration and communication skills.
10. Excellent written and verbal communication and listening skills.
11. Excellent organisational skills, ability to prioritise workload, self-motivate and work to tight deadlines on own initiative as well as part of a team.
12. Excellent ICT skills and presentation skills, including experience of using database software and experience of collating and analysing data for evaluation and outcome monitoring procedures.
13. Proven commitment to reflective practice and ability to develop professionally through self-evaluation, others' feedback, use of supervision, appraisal and training.
14. A working understanding of education, health and social care local provision and ability to speak one of the most common languages in Harrow can be an advantage (most common languages in Harrow currently are, Gujarati, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Arabic, Persian/Farsi, Tamil, Pashto, Polish and Romanian).
15. Knowledge and understanding of pan-London Child Protection procedures and Working Together to Safeguard Children, as well as ability to work in accordance with local and organisational Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures.
16. Ability to maintain confidentiality, impartiality and professionalism and mediate between families and professionals, in line with GDPR.
17. Able to evidence Family Action's values at all times, which underpin Family Action's mission of "building stranger families" by:
 - a) Being **people** focused
 - b) Reflecting a '**can do**' approach
 - c) Striving for **excellence** in everything we do
 - d) Having **mutual respect** for everyone we work with, work for and support through our services.
18. Ability to work flexibly to meet the needs of the service, which may involve working occasionally outside of core hours.