

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Education and Engagement Officer		
Directorate	Children and Families		
Reporting to	Team Leader		
Grade	12		
Evaluation ref:	AG0938	Job ref:	Family RPG12
Role purpose			
<p>The Education Engagement Officer plays a crucial role within the Children and Families Directorate, focusing on safeguarding and ensuring educational access for children, young people, and adults with special educational needs (SEN) aged 0-25 years. The role involves working closely with education providers, early years settings, and other stakeholders to address complex safeguarding issues, support child protection procedures, and promote the welfare of children and young people. The officer will use specialist knowledge to build and maintain relationships with attendance leads, headteachers, and other professionals, ensuring collaborative efforts to support educational entitlement and safeguarding. Additionally, the role includes legal responsibilities such as leading criminal investigations related to non-school attendance and preparing prosecution cases. The post holder will also contribute to quality assurance processes, provide training and support to colleagues, and engage in revenue-generating activities to promote the service's offerings.</p>			
Responsibilities			
Caseload			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold an allocation of education providers including early years settings, colleges, independent provision and schools. Follow agreed processes to challenge and hold parents and schools to account to help ensure that children, young people and adults with SEN, 0-25 years are safeguarded and can access their educational entitlement. 2. Advise and support education providers and early years setting, to find solutions to resolve complex safeguarding issues; identify and participate in child protection procedures; signpost to other services for child protection advice, information and support to school staff. Escalate issues, where necessary, to the Senior Education Safeguarding Officer, or other professionals as required. 3. Use specialist knowledge to build, maintain and develop good working relationships with attendance leads, Head Teachers, and other services/professionals concerned with the safeguarding and education of children. Promote the service and its offering through contact at meetings, email correspondence, telephone and face to face meetings. 4. Share information to allow for collaborative work with partner agencies to produce agreed action plans to support children and young people. Partner agencies may include attending meetings such as Team Around the School 			

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- (TAS), Panel for Excluded & Vulnerable Pupils (PEVP), Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), multi-professional meetings, and other strategy meetings.
5. Promote the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people of 0-25 years and where relevant support and advise early years settings and all education providers in safeguarding children through working knowledge of relevant policies and procedures. Use these to ensure that children and young people are protected, and any safeguarding concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately through the appropriate escalation process including Elective Home Education (EHE), Child Missing Education (CME) and use of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) processes.
 6. As the service develops and as required, provide day to day support and basic training to the Education Safeguarding Assistants and check the quality of their work.
 7. Where necessary, contribute to the successful completion of Quality Assurance processes within the service to ensure work is completed on time, accurately and to service standards.

Legal

8. Convene and chair meetings with parent/carers, pupils and schools; commence and lead criminal investigations using statutory powers under Section 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 and Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) interviews.
9. Prepare, on behalf of the Local Authority, prosecution cases in relation to non-school attendance, preparing accurate Section 9 statements for Magistrates' Court in relation to proceedings under the Education Act 1996 for irregular school attendance.
10. Prepare disclosure schedules and documents for Trials within specific timeframes.
11. Prepare applications for Education Supervision Orders under section 36 of the Children Act 1989, acting as the Supervising Officer as appropriate.
12. Appear as a witness in Magistrates' Court and Family Proceedings Courts in respect of irregular school attendance, as required. Give evidence in court to Magistrates and be subject to cross examination in Trial proceedings.
13. Consider and make public interest arguments in line with national guidance to the Senior Education Safeguarding Officer and/or Service Manager about commencing, continuing and withdrawing prosecutions.

Knowledge of Legislation

14. Demonstrate a sound understanding of the Education Act 1996 and 2002 and the Children Act 1989 and 2004, Keeping Children Safe in Education and legislative framework in accordance with LA statutory responsibilities and service guidelines for Children in Employment and Entertainment, Elective

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Home Education and Children Missing in Education, making employer/home visits, advising school personnel and employers on their statutory duties.

15. Ensure LA policies and procedures are followed so that children receive their educational entitlement, escalate concerns to the Senior Education Safeguarding Officer.

Practice

16. Organise own workload and operate in accordance with relevant legislation and service procedures; maintain quality of work and prioritise workload to meet timescales. Keep personal practice up to date with changes in legislation, policy and procedure and in accordance with the council's statutory responsibilities.
17. Keep accurate, timely and up-to-date electronic records in accordance with Somerset Council policies and procedures. Maintain customer confidentiality in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Keep an accurate and up-to-date Outlook calendar to be made available to all colleagues. Use IT packages, including email, Capita 4, and Excel.
18. Responsible for promoting the safeguarding of children and young people and where relevant support schools and early years settings in safeguarding children though being aware of relevant policies and procedures and understanding how to use these to ensure that children and young people are protected, and all suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Project & Revenue Generation

19. Contribute to school improvement and raising achievement. Work with other Education Safeguarding Officers, Senior Education Safeguarding Officers, Education Safeguarding Advisors and the Service Manager to continuously improve processes and practices, responding to the changing needs of customers, changes in legislation and service priorities.
20. Undertake education safeguarding related project work, as required. Use contacts in early years setting and education providers to identify and gain opportunities for revenue generation and to promote the full range of revenue generating activities available from SC. Deliver in-service training packages.
21. Contribute to training for other Education Safeguarding Service staff and for student/staff on placement from other agencies. Work to ensure continuing professional development through participation in team training days, team meetings, reading and other activities.
22. Deliver a range of training programmes to schools. This includes following occupational standards where relevant and ensuring the training complies with relevant legislation.

Impact

Contacts & Relationships

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- Work closely with the Senior Education Safeguarding Officers and Safeguarding Advisors to ensure relevant legislation is complied with. Will substitute for the Senior Education Safeguarding Officers at meetings, as required.
- The postholder is based in the relevant district and will normally be expected to spend their working time within an SC base when not in school meetings or on visits.
Will have direct contact with a large number of early years settings and school leaders and with early years and school administrators and pastoral leads and will have contact with the parents of school age children.
- Will build and maintain good working relationships with service users and other professionals. There will be contact with courts, legal services, statutory bodies, public services, voluntary agencies. There may be involvement in multi-agency and joint working arrangements.
- Work closely with colleagues in the Education Safeguarding Service attending and contributing to area and county meetings.
- Attend and participate in SC meetings as required.

Resources

Will receive regular line management and appraisal from an Education Safeguarding Advisor and will be part of local and county team meetings tackling issues for the service.

As the service develops and as required, provide day to day support and basic training to the Education Safeguarding Assistants and check the quality of their work.

Will have support with administrative functions from the Education Safeguarding Administrative team based at County Hall.

Knowledge / Experience / Skills

	Essential	Desirable	
Knowledge			
Sound understanding of the Education Act 1996 and 2002, and the Children Act 1989 and 2004.	x		
Knowledge of safeguarding policies and procedures.	x		
Knowledge of the legislative framework for Children in Employment and Entertainment, Elective Home Education, and Children Missing in Education.	x		
Understanding of the Data Protection Act and confidentiality requirements.	x		
Awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion policies.	x		
Experience			

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Experience in working with children and young people including children with SEND.	x		
Experience in safeguarding and child protection procedures.	x		
Experience in building and maintaining professional relationships with education providers, partners and other stakeholders.	x		
Experience in preparing and presenting cases in court.		x	
Experience in providing training and support to colleagues.		x	
Experience in assessment, planning and review of childrens needs		x	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications			
Relevant professional qualification in education, social work, or a related field.		x	
Relevant qualification to a minimum level 3 or equivalent	x		
Training in safeguarding and child protection.		x	
Qualification in legal studies or a related field.		x	
Evidence of continuous professional development	x		
Continuous professional development in a relevant field.		x	
Skills			
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.	x		
Strong organisational and time management skills.	x		
Ability to work independently and as part of a team.	x		
Proficiency in using IT packages, including email, Capita 4, EHM and Excel.	x		
Ability to handle sensitive information with confidentiality.	x		
Problem solving and decision-making skills.	x		
Working Conditions			
<p>This role involves working within a dynamic and supportive local authority environment. Candidates should be prepared for the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Hours: Standard working hours are 37, with occasional requirements for evening or weekend work to meet project deadlines or attend community events. 			

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- **Location:** The work location is at either at council office hub or locality base, across the county, with opportunities for remote working as per organisational policies.
- **Travel:** travel within the local area will be required for visiting children meetings, site visits, and community engagement activities.
- **Work Environment:** The role involves working both independently and as part of a team, with access to modern office facilities and resources.
- **Health and Safety:** Adherence to all health and safety regulations is mandatory, ensuring a safe working environment for all employees.

Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.

Corporate Responsibilities

- Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Date: 6 January 2025