

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Customer Service Specialist – Education Inclusion Advice Line		
Directorate	Children's, Families & Education		
Reporting to	Education Relationship Manager		
Grade	13		
Evaluation ref	TR0270	Job Family ref:	
Role Purpose			
<p>To provide live advice to school-based professionals on SEND issues and Somerset systems through telephone, email and Form submissions. Through their early advice and intervention, the Inclusion Advice Line reduces the traffic into other services by resolving many enquiries at the front door. Where this is not possible, they triage and signpost queries to ensure effective follow-up.</p>			
Accountabilities			
<p>The Inclusion Advice Line provides live advice and guidance to school-based professionals on complex SEND issues and Somerset systems, including the graduated response. They communicate through telephone, email, and online form submissions. The role focuses on resolving enquiries at the earliest point of contact, reducing demand on other services by addressing issues at the front door. Where queries cannot be resolved immediately, the postholder undertakes triage and signposting to ensure effective follow-up with the appropriate services or named contacts within Children's Services.</p> <p>This position requires the ability to assess often complex issues using structured prompts and information drawn from multiple IT systems and databases, applying professional judgment to determine the best course of action. Acting as the first point of contact for professionals seeking SEND-related support, the role ensures advice is clear, accurate, and consistent with Somerset's Graduated Response and statutory requirements. All enquiries and actions are logged accurately using relevant IT systems, including MRI-Capita, Microsoft, Power BI- Family View databases, in compliance with data protection and confidentiality standards.</p> <p>The postholder prepares and issues documentation such as letters, reports, and information packs to support professionals and service users as required. They handle challenging or sensitive calls with professionalism, using advanced call-handling skills and escalating to service experts or managers when necessary. In addition, they monitor and improve service quality by reporting inaccuracies or gaps in systems and suggesting enhancements to processes, presentation, or functionality.</p>			

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Promoting digital access channels such as Somerset.gov.uk, e-forms, and SMS is a key part of the role, alongside providing guidance on their use to improve efficiency and accessibility. The postholder collaborates closely with specialist teams across Children's, Families & Education to maintain strong working relationships, share updates on service changes, and ensure consistent messaging. They take ownership of personal development, identifying training needs and engaging in regular supervision to enhance knowledge and skills.

The role also contributes to service evaluation through caller surveys and feedback mechanisms, supporting continuous improvement. Responsibility for data integrity within assigned databases is essential, ensuring information is accurate, current, and proactively updated. The postholder monitors real-time service levels using telephony tools, managing availability to meet KPIs and support team performance, and provides flexible support by handling calls and tasks for other Customer Contact teams during peak periods or staff absences.

All calls are managed in accordance with the County Council's policies and procedures, including those relating to Equality and Diversity, and in compliance with relevant legislation such as the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act. The postholder ensures that all data recorded is accurate, relevant, and handled with the highest standards of confidentiality and integrity.

The role also requires a proactive approach to personal training and development. The postholder takes ownership of their learning needs, using initiative to seek out appropriate opportunities and resources. Regular one-to-one meetings with the line manager are used to discuss progress, raise any issues, and request guidance or support where necessary, ensuring continuous professional growth and alignment with service objectives.

Knowledge / Experience / Skills

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Detailed understanding of existing service delivery with a clear specialism of education and SEND.	X	
Evidence of computer literacy and good IT competency.	X	
Knowledge of the Graduated Response Tool.	X	
Handling confidential and sensitive information in compliance with data protection legislation.	X	
Knowledge of the SEND code of conduct.		X
Knowledge of early intervention including inclusion strategies across the four broad areas of need - Cognition and learning, Communication and interaction, Sensory and physical, Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH).		X

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	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Experience of working with children/young people.	X	
Experience of working in an education setting.	X	
Experience of using Somerset SEND processes or systems.		X
Working within a contact centre or advice line environment, particularly in education or social care.		X
Skills		
Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, with the ability to provide clear, accurate advice to professionals.	X	
Ability to build and maintain professional relationships with internal teams and external partners.	X	
Ability to deal with some highly sensitive subject matters with empathy and understanding.	X	
Ability to work under pressure, manage competing priorities, and maintain service standards.	X	
Ability to speak fluent English as stated in Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016).	X	
Good diagnostic and questioning ability.		X
Ability to proactively improve processes to achieve better outcomes.		X
Ability to extract relevant from irrelevant information from a conversation.		X
Problem solving.		X

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Working Conditions

Dimensions of the role

Working Arrangements

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

This role is based on a hybrid working model. The postholder will be expected to work from the office as their primary base, with the option to work from home on agreed days. Home working arrangements must be discussed and agreed with the line manager to ensure service needs are met and effective collaboration is maintained. Flexibility will be required to attend the office for team meetings, training, and other business-critical activities as necessary.

Corporate Accountabilities

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: 18/11/2025