



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

**POST TITLE:** Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO)

**Grade:** ME15

**DIVISION/SECTION:** Support and Safeguarding  
Children with Disabilities Team

**Location:** Merton Civic Centre

**Responsible to:** Service Manager

**Responsible for:** Quality of Children's social Care element of SEND reforms and EHCPs

**Post number:**

**Date:** 8 August 2021

## **1. MAIN PURPOSE**

- This role will strategically lead in framing and developing social care elements of the SEND strategy across the local authority, in compliance with legislative requirements of the SEND Code of Practice (2015). The role will directly inform and influence the direction of wider SEND services through intelligence and insight. The DSCO will have in-depth knowledge and understanding of both social care processes and the SEND reforms agenda and will look to strengthen practice and generate solutions.
- Key to success will be the ability of the post holder to negotiate with and influence others build and nurture effective partnerships, working collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders across the LA and exploiting opportunities for co-production with partners within and

outside of the Local Authority including health partners. The post holder will represent Merton Council at key regional and national events, and will be a source of expert professional advice on SEND reforms relating to social care within Merton and will seek to learn nationally from the evidence base of best practice.

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

- A strategic role accountable for developing strategies, action plans and processes which support and enable the SEND reforms agenda to become embedded within social care operations and practice.
- Contributing to and influencing SEND organisational design, and assisting in the development of the All Age Disability Service as well as work with the whole of Children's Services in respect of children with an EHCP Plan.
- Establishing and leading a network of social care SEND 'champions' and link workers in the All Age Disability Service and across Children's Social Care. Facilitating and overseeing the implementation of the SEND agenda within social care through this network, and gathering insight and intelligence from them and other groups such as the parent carer forum to inform future planning.
- Responsibility for developing social care aspects of the Local Offer that provide relevant advice and information and meet all legislative requirements.
- Analysing complex and varied work strands across functions, services and agencies in order to identify and exploit opportunities for co-production and integrated working between social care, health and education to progress SEND reforms agenda.
- Working collaboratively with social care directors and service managers to ensure social care meet statutory responsibilities under the Children & Families Act (2014) and Care Act (2014), and to drive forward organisational culture change aligned to the SEND reforms.
- Operationally to attend as the Social Care lead the weekly all day SEN Panel and to ensure Social Care actions are communicated and followed up from the Panel as well as wider learning from Panel helping to impact practice.
- Constructively challenging practice, systems, processes and protocols to enhance SEND reform compliance as part of this collaboration.

- Responsibility for framing social care elements of the local authority's self-evaluation process to ensure readiness for SEND Ofsted & Children's Social Care Ofsted inspections
- Involvement in and initiation of varied multi-stakeholder projects and work streams. Themes include: participation and engagement, person-centred approaches, joint working initiatives, outcomes frameworks, operational function design, IT systems connectivity, EHC processes, quality assurance, joint commissioning, Early Years, Preparing for Adulthood, the Local Offer.
- Contributing to social care workforce development by formulating programme of blended learning/training relating to the SEND reforms across varied audience profile and functions.
- The duties and responsibilities outlined in this job profile are indicative of the role, however they are **not exhaustive and** may be subject to change. In addition, you will be required to undertake other **reasonable duties** as directed by your manager.



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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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**Grade: ME15**

**Date: August 2021**

**1. Knowledge**

- A recognised qualification to at least degree level in a relevant profession eg Social Work, Education or Law. If replying on a social work qualification the applicant will need to demonstrate current Social Work England registration. Other professionals will need to demonstrate current Social Work England registration. Other professionals will need to demonstrate equivalent professional registration (if appropriate).
- Evidence of knowledge, understanding and practice in relation to the implementation of SEND legislation, particularly within social care.
- Evidence of understanding and ensuring compliance and best practice in respect of the regulatory frameworks including the Ofsted framework for SEND inspection and Children's Social Care Inspection.
- Knowledge of roles and responsibilities of key children's agencies

**2. Skills**

- Thinking creatively and challenging the norms: existing practice, process to achieve the best outcomes for children.

- Communicating clearly and persuasively both orally and in writing to a varied audience profile, including writing reports, guidance, templates, presentations, training materials and programmes.
- Strong influencing and confident interpersonal skills to achieve best outcomes for children and families whilst balancing Social Care and the local authority's interests.
- Ability to utilise technology effectively and work with information management systems to produce quality data in a variety of formats and analyse information.
- Ability to prioritise tasks, meet deadlines, manage own workload and be accountable to the service.
- An understanding of relationship management and the capacity to establish and maintain effective communication and working relationships across all different services and departments.

### **3. Experience**

- Relevant experience of working with children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Experience of organising, chairing or regularly participating centrally in meetings/conferences involving Senior Managers and decision makers.
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- Experience of successful working with a wide range of stakeholders including children and young people, parents and carers and those within social care, education and health (including the voluntary sector).
- Evidence of effectively and sensitively dealing with a wide range of people regarding difficult and complex issues including the use of effective negotiation.