

ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH

JOB DESCRIPTION

DEPARTMENT: Children's Services

POSTHOLDER

SECTION: Quality Improvement

GRADE: PO6

POST DESIGNATION (TITLE): South-East London Fostering Hub Programme Manager

Purpose of Job:

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is the lead borough for the development and delivery of a South-East London Fostering Hub service on behalf of Royal Greenwich and the London Boroughs of Bromley, Southwark, Lewisham and Bexley.

The five boroughs care for 20% of London's looked after population. Foster carers provide essential, loving, and stable homes for many of these children however, the fostering system is under significant strain, with national declines in approved carers. The Government's *Renewing Fostering* policy has set a target to create 10,000 new foster places by April 2029 and has called for enhanced regional collaboration.

South-East London is embarking on an ambitious programme to develop an end-to-end sub-regional foster carer recruitment pathway. Local Authorities identified above have agreed to pool their resources and, with the support of a Department for Education Grant, establish a South-East London Fostering Hub which delivers a comprehensive, resilient, relationship-driven pathway where prospective carers are approved quickly, supported deeply, and children are provided with local, stable and loving homes.

The Programme Manager will provide strategic leadership for the design, mobilisation, implementation and long-term embedding of the South-East London Fostering Hub, delivering a complex, multi-agency transformation programme across five London boroughs on behalf of the Department for Education.

The post holder will be accountable for ensuring that programme governance, benefits realisation, partnership arrangements, service redesign and organisational change are delivered successfully, creating a sustainable regional operating model that improves outcomes for children and delivers national fostering reform ambitions.

The role will influence strategic decision-making across participating authorities, providing expert programme leadership, challenge and advice to senior leaders, Heads of Service and Programme Boards.

This will include:

- Establishing a multi-authority foster recruitment support service team and offer
- Establishing digital foster carer interfaces, case management systems and team performance reporting

- Developing a sub-regional foster carer recruitment communications campaign
- Developing a foster carer retention-focused training and support programme

The PM will be responsible for developing the ways of working in partnership with senior leaders and Heads of Service across five authorities and then continue to track the impact of the hub until the end of September 2027. They will work with all participating authorities to ensure the distinct but complementary assets of each authority inform the delivery of the South-East London Hub. Further, they will engage with other London Fostering Hubs, pan-London initiatives and sector stakeholders to ensure Hub model delivery is informed by and influences national reform and best practice and aligns with broader London foster carer recruitment and retention initiatives.

The primary aim of the South-East London Fostering Hub is to increase the number and diversity of participating boroughs' approved foster carers to meet the needs of children in care thereby increasing the proportion of children cared for in local, stable, family settings.

To deliver this aim, the objectives of the South-East London Fostering Hub will be to deliver the following on behalf of each participating authority:

- Improve the foster carer journey from enquiry to application and approval
- Increase foster carer enquiries
- Increase enquiry to application conversion rates
- Reduce application withdrawals
- Increase foster carer approvals
- Increase foster carer retention

There will be a regional focus on communications, building on what we know works in foster care recruitment. Adverts will direct prospective foster carers to the recruitment support hub. A critical part of the role will be to work across the various authorities and other Fostering Hubs in London to help develop a new brand that is aligned, as far as possible, across London whilst maintaining a strong brand and identity for individual local authorities.

The Programme Manager will be responsible to the **Head of Delivery and Improvement** and **Head of South-East London Fostering Hub** for:

Main Duties

- 1) To help lead the strategic transformation at programme level including securing appropriate resources, support and holding senior leaders to account.
- 2) Providing advice and guidance to senior leaders.
- 3) Influencing organisational policy that will support the development and delivery of the new end-to-end Fostering Recruitment and Retention Hub.
- 4) Ensuring governance provides effective oversight of this complex change programme.
- 5) Working with the Hub Manager to drive cultural and practice change including a culture of continuous quality improvement.
- 6) Representing the organisation at senior meetings including with Heads of Service, Assistant Directors and Directors of Children's Services across the regional partnership.
- 7) Leading without direct authority across complex systems
- 8) To facilitate and manage the programme initiation, developing a clear project management plan that includes outcomes, project roles and responsibilities and key milestones.
- 9) To ensure appropriate programme governance is established with working groups set up where required.
- 10) To manage multiple concurrent workstreams and/or projects within the programme structure
- 11) To monitor and report progress of the programme against the project plan to the governance board

- 12) To identify and assign project tasks based on the skill sets, experience and strengths of different staff across the cluster
- 13) To manage stakeholders across the cluster, maintaining effective working relationships with external organisations and partner agencies to successfully develop a recruitment hub,
- 14) To engage with legal, HR, and commercial teams across the cluster to deliver key elements of the implementation plan
- 15) To identify, record and escalate programme issues/risks and develop solutions to mitigate the issues or risks as required
- 16) To lead on the co-ordination of submissions to the Department of Education, working with the programme team to ensure required information and data are submitted on time
- 17) To engage with the programme's delivery partner to support the development and implementation of the hub.
- 18) To line manage/matrix manage the wider programme implementation team
- 19) Statutory requirements:
- 20) Comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 in relation to the management of prospective foster carers records and information and respect the privacy of personal information.
- 21) Comply with the principles and requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 22) Comply with Lead LA information security standards, and requirements for the management and handling of information.
- 23) Use information for authorised purposes only.
- 24) The post holder must carry out his or her duties with full regard to Equal Opportunity Policy, Code of Conduct and all other policies.
- 25) The post holder must comply with Health and Safety rules and regulations and with Health and Safety legislation.
- 26) To participate in supervision, training, and appraisals as required.
- 27) To undertake other duties within the competence of the post holder that may be required from time to time.
- 28) To undertake any other work appropriate to the level and general nature of the post's duties.
- 29) Where necessary for the job role or appropriate for continued development in the role, the post holder may be required to participate in training and development courses made available via the Council's Apprentice Levy funding.
- 30) To undertake all duties with due regard to the provisions of health and safety regulations and legislation, Data Protection/GDPR, the Council's Equal Opportunities and Customer Care policies.
- 31) To perform all duties in line with Council's staff values showing commitment to improving residents' lives and opportunities, demonstrating respect and fairness, taking ownership, working towards doing things better and working together across the council.
- 32) *This post requires a Standard DBS and will be supported by Safer Recruitment tools.*
- 33) You may be required to undertake alternative, additional or ancillary duties from time to time or transfer to another service department within the Council as the Council may reasonably direct to meet service user demand in the event of a crisis or emergency.

Person Specification

Job Title	Programme Manager – South-East London Fostering Hub
Grade	PO6
Service/Section	Quality Improvement
Directorate	Children's Services

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable
Knowledge	
Understanding of the role of local authorities and their complexities and how to lead transformational change that benefits children, young people, families through the delivery of effective service.	E
An ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of delivering major projects and programmes	E
Strong understanding of delivering a programme or project in partnership with stakeholders	E
Demonstrate knowledge of delivering projects by both traditional and agile methods	E
Degree level or equivalent workplace experience.	D
Prince2 Project Management Practitioner or Managing Successful Programmes or other industry qualification	D
Skills and Abilities	
An ability to think analytically and work effectively in a complex and challenging environment, delivering multiple work streams.	E
An ability to engage employees in the design and delivery of effective services.	E
Excellent customer service focus and an understanding of how to support improved service delivery and value for money.	E
An ability to effectively manage budgets, performance and deliver services.	E
Good negotiation and influencing skills of colleagues, peers and partners at a range of organisational levels.	E
Highly effective presentation and communication skills, both oral and written.	E
A proven ability to build effective and productive working relationships at all levels with colleagues, staff and other stakeholders.	E

Ability to use management information and a range of other insight to understand a service's strengths and areas for improvement.	E
The ability to manage staff capability	E
Experience	
Experience of delivering transformational change within a Children's Services or related context.	E
Experience of working within a complex environment and delivering change through times of uncertainty.	E
Equal Opportunities	
Understanding of and commitment to the Council's equal opportunities policies and ability to put into practice in the context of this post.	E
Understanding of and commitment to achieving the Council's staff values and ability to put into practice in the context of this post.	E