

Job Description

Management Group:	Children's Services
Department:	Leaving Care
Job Title:	Personal Advisor
Reports to:	Team Manager, Leaving Care

Main purpose of the job: Young People/Care Leavers

- The leaving care team works with young people aged 18-25 who were previously in care. Following ongoing assessments, the team provides information, advice, guidance and support to enable young people to make a successful transition into adulthood.
- To hold an allocated caseload. To signpost and support young people that are leaving care to access direct appropriate services according to departmental policies and procedures and statutory guidance.

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- Personal Advisors will be responsible for delivering high quality practice in all allocated cases to improve outcomes for young people 18+, ensuring where possible a multiagency approach is facilitated to safeguard and support all care leavers with particular regard to those with complex needs and vulnerabilities.

Work to national legislation, policy and guidance within the London Borough of Bexley procedures and team/service plan objectives and standards.

- To be responsible for recording all activity on Bexley's Information database accurately and in a timely fashion. Ensure that departmental records are consistently correct and all activity can be properly accounted for.
- Carry out assessments of need and provide practical and supportive services based on those assessments.
- Provide individual personal support and advocacy to young people based on an assessment of their learning and personal development needs.

The key roles of a Leaving care Personal Advisor are to:

- ✓ To provide information, advice and guidance; based on the individual needs of the young people
- ✓ To complete assessments of need to inform the Pathway Plan
- ✓ To take a lead role in the preparation and completion of the Pathway Plan;
- ✓ To regularly monitor the progress of the young person's Pathway Plan;
- ✓ To facilitate the reviews of the Pathway Plan;
- ✓ To liaise with various agencies, including other local authorities in the implementation of the Pathway Plan and to advocate for the young person;
- ✓ To coordinate the provision of services under the Pathway Plan and take steps to encourage and support the young person to access such services;
- ✓ To build and maintain supportive, professional relationships with all care leavers
- ✓ To maintain regular contact with young people wherever they live. This may mean travel throughout the UK and overseas depending on the young person's individual circumstances
- ✓ To complete full and concise records of contact with the young person within timescale and using Signs of Safety model (training given).
- ✓ To provide support cover as part of the office duty rota

Job Activities:

- To manage a caseload of young people, prioritise workload, manage diaries, and visit and record all contact using Signs of Safety model (training given) and within set deadlines.
- Actively engage young people in decision making about their future providing structured, individual and impartial support, advice and guidance using the Pathway Planning tool, to help guide and enable SMART personal development outcomes and transition into successful adults,
- Ability to attend Signs of Safety training and thereafter use the model in a range of ways including (but not limited to) to support direct work with young people and develop suitable, strength based pathway plans
- To regularly visit and have contact with young people in line with a regular assessment of their needs and with policies and procedures. This may involve travel throughout the UK and overseas depending on the young person's individual circumstances. This may also involve overnight stays.
- To have an understanding of the legislation relating to and the needs of young people who have unresolved immigration issues; for example, those who were unaccompanied young people, those who have been given limited leave to remain or those who have had their immigration claims refused in order to support them appropriately.
- Where required, to complete Human Rights Assessments to help find next steps for young people whose asylum claims may be refused.
- To have a knowledge and understanding of the Voluntary Returns Scheme, in order to support, guide and assist completion of the NASS 95 & 4 applications in accordance with social care policies and procedures.
- To support care leavers to manage formal meetings. This could include supporting their attendance at court, in a tribunal hearing, placement meetings or mental health and medical assessments. This may also involve arranging translators.
- To support care leavers to attend meetings with external agencies such as; Health, Probation, Solicitors, Job Centre, College and University appointments
- To work closely with young people and partner agencies including Job Centre+, colleges and employers to support young people to access suitable employment, education or training opportunities
- To support young people to access appropriate college and university courses including attending interviews, open days and graduation ceremonies as appropriate.
- To complete risk assessment, referral and application for appropriate social housing. To liaise with the Housing Team within Bexley and other authorities nationwide and to support young people to move into appropriate accommodation
- To manage and formally monitor young people's setting up home grant.
- To utilise a Purchasing card where required ensuring that expenditure is undertaken with the agreement of a manager within the service in accordance with a young person's assessed needs and to input financial data onto Purchasing Card account receipting system (Smart Data- training given).
- To manage and formally monitor the allocation of a young person's leaving care university bursary.
- To have an understanding of the benefit system in order to offer information and advice to the young person if required and liaise with the appropriate Benefits agencies within the local authority of Bexley and local authorities outside of the borough.
- To have an understanding of the referral for early years assessments process, to support a young person preparing for parenthood and to ensure the safety of the child.
- To offer advice and guidance with budgeting, and if applicable, signpost to appropriate external agencies for financial advice and support.
- To have an understanding of substance misuse, domestic abuse and mental health issues to enable appropriate support, advice and guidance to the young person in these areas and to complete risk assessments, safety plans and referrals to relevant organisations for further support where necessary
- Identifying the appropriate manner in which to communicate with young people, their parents and carers, specifically where a young person has additional needs.

- Where it is in the best interest of young people, work with their parents, carers and families to ensure that they are appropriately engaged and are supporting the young person into a positive and successful young adulthood.
- Develop a thorough understanding of available local provision and make appropriate referrals to meet the needs of the young person. Respect professional boundaries within specialist support services, monitor and track their progress providing additional support as necessary.
- Develop areas of expertise with respect in particular to young people's needs or circumstances as appropriate and in line with guidance from managers.
- Act as an advocate and identify individual and group needs, help develop and lead imaginative learning programmes and link with social support agencies aimed at those not in work or education.
- To be available for supervision and appraisal with line manager in order to assess the progress of work, make decisions about the management of cases, plan future activity and provide information about work undertaken.
- To undertake any other duties deemed appropriate for the role.
- In order to deliver the service effectively, a degree of flexibility is needed and the post holder may be required to perform work not specifically referred to above. Such duties, however, will fall within the scope of the post.

Person Specification

Management Group: Children's Services

Department: Leaving Care

Job Title: Personal Advisor

Selection Criteria	Essential/ Desirable (E/D)	Method of Assessment (A/I/T)*
(a) <u>Education and Formal Training</u> NVQ3 in Health and Social Care or equivalent professional qualification. At least 5 GCSE's, including maths and English	E	A
(b) <u>Experience and Knowledge</u> A high level of understanding of the educational, employment and social care needs of young people leaving care and making the important step into adulthood. Significant experience of direct work with teenagers and young adults. Knowledge of the formal assessment processes relating to young people and the ability to formulate, implementation and review individual pathway plans in partnership with managers and partner agencies. Knowledge of relevant legislation related to young people leaving care, asylum seeking young people and welfare reform. Knowledge of adult safeguarding Knowledge of child development and the potential impact of neglect and abuse on looked after young people and care leavers. Experience of working with young people who have been the victims of, or who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation, gang involvement, drug and alcohol misuse or criminal activity.	E	A/I
(c) <u>Skills and Abilities</u> The ability to carry out assessments of need complete, complete Pathway Plans, implement and review work with young people and key professionals. Demonstrable ability to work constructively with other professionals and agencies and to make arrangements on behalf of users of the service. Demonstrable ability to work within the frameworks as defined by legislation, departmental procedures and policies relevant to work with children, their families and carers. Excellent communication skills, written and oral. The ability to maintain appropriate records and an understanding of information security and governance. The ability to carry out Human Rights Assessments in line with the requirements of Home Office guidance. Demonstrable ability to prioritise and complete a range of complex tasks such as report writing, detailed assessments, financial calculations and giving presentations.	E	A/I

Demonstrable ability to analyse complex data in order to identify needs within the care leavers group. Ability to manage Finances: Care Leavers setting up home grant, Care leavers university grant and Purchasing card for care leavers needs and input date into Bank data accounting and receipting system Ability to independently and under general guidance, manage own workload on day to day basis and make efficient use of time and resources, meet deadlines and achieve objectives. A commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and the ability to understand and implement the policies in relation to the job description. <u>English Language Requirements for Public Sector Workers:</u> • Ability to speak with confidence and accuracy, using accurate sentence structures and vocabulary. • Ability to choose the right kind of vocabulary for the situation in hand without a great deal of hesitation. • Ability to listen to customers and understand their needs. • Ability to tailor your approach to each conversation appropriate to the customer, responding clearly even in complex situations.		
(d) <u>Other Additional Requirements</u> Full driving license and access to own transport. Ability to travel throughout the Borough, nationally and overseas (with overnight stays where necessary). Ability to work unsociable hours when required.	D E E	A/I A/I A/I

***Selection Method key:**

I = Interview

A = Application Form

AT = Ability Test

Applicants will be assessed against these criteria and high performance indicators throughout the recruitment process.

High Performance Indicators

Values	Behaviours for staff	Behaviours for managers
Innovation	I respond flexibly and adapt to changing demands I am prepared to take managed risks to achieve better outcomes I ask 'What if...?' to develop fresh thinking and innovative approaches to generate and implement solutions to improve performance and challenge the status quo	I routinely look for innovative and cost-effective ways to improve performance and customer service I champion change and deal successfully with ambiguity, enabling people to see positive and exciting possibilities for the future I take calculated risks based on available evidence and my professional judgement to learn and try new things
Leadership	I demonstrate a clear sense of purpose and direction, in line with organisational objectives	I take responsibility for my service and for making things happen to make a difference to my service users

	I am willing to take difficult decisions My personal actions promote a positive image of Bexley	I create an environment where staff can thrive and show I value and trust staff, give praise and recognise good work I inspire, lead and encourage staff to move forward
Collaboration	I show respect for others and value contributions from internal and external partners and customers I recognise the right solution, regardless of who initiated it I seek out and work with partners who can help me achieve the outcomes and objectives I need to deliver	I encourage the feeling that the team is a collective unit with shared goals I engage with service partners and other areas of the Bexley organisation to understand the demands on others and seek solutions as One Council I network internally and externally
Listening and Responding	I acknowledge other people's viewpoints and work with them to find a win-win solution I prepare and present information anticipating questions and problems I adapt my style to the audience and their needs, using the most appropriate communication channels	I seek regular service user feedback and review customer data to shape service improvements I ask staff for ideas on how to improve our service and how I can improve as a manager, listen to them and act on them I empower staff to make decisions and changes to improve value for money, customer service and productivity
Open and Accessible	I see issues from the customer / user perspective I monitor customer feedback and level of satisfaction with the service they receive, and use this to improve and pre-empt customer needs I seek to build and maintain positive relationships with customers and partners	I am accessible to my service users, customers, staff and Members I communicate and share a clear vision for the bigger picture as well as specific service areas I outline what is expected of individuals and their contribution to the whole, and am consistent in my expectations
Impact	I prioritise my activities and resources to focus on those which have the most impact for residents I take responsibility for making things happen and achieving my objectives I make decisions and clear recommendations based on my professional opinion, experience, and informed by a range of information and evidence	I design services that provide value for money and deliver our outcomes, informed by evidence I produce, prioritise and adapt plans to meet changing requirements I set interim goals to achieve notable wins on the way to larger objectives I deal with poor performance