

Role Profile

Job Title:	Lawyer (Childcare and education)	Grade: 12/13/14	Spinal column point range: 38 - 46
Department:	Legal & Democratic Services	Post no:	
Directorate:	Chief Executive Department	Location:	Perceval House

Role reports to:	Senior Lawyer (Children's Social Care)
Direct Reports:	None
Indirect Reports:	Legal support staff

This role profile is non-contractual and provided for guidance. It will be updated and amended from time to time in accordance with the changing needs of the council and the requirements of the job.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Recruitment practices to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and/or vulnerable adults apply to this post in addition to the possible requirement to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

PURPOSE OF ROLE:

Working under the leadership of the Senior Lawyer and Principal Lawyer to:

- Provide legal advice and support on all matters relating to children's social care, adoption and education and to ensure the provision of a high quality, efficient, cost effective and customer focused service;
- To conduct legal proceedings and represent the client department on issues arising within the Social Care and Housing team with a particular focus on the Council's functions with regard to children's social care, adoption and education;
- To provide legal advice on other council functions as appropriate and if requested to do so.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- To conduct straight forward and complex legal proceedings relating to social care and education matters, including
- Deal personally with children social care matters, including:
 - Providing legal advice and support on children's social care, adoption and education, conduct case work in all levels of court, issuing and defending proceedings on behalf of the Council and representing the council at court hearings undertaking advocacy, as appropriate, in the Family Court, Court of Protection, Education Tribunal and other courts and tribunals as necessary;

- To manage case work and advise on strategic case management with a view to cost effectiveness;
- Provide expert advice and assistance on the law and practice in relation to children's social care, adoption and education matters including judicial review claims and information governance issues;
- Develop and maintain an expert knowledge of the law and practice in relation to children's social care, adoption and education;
- To assist in the development of policy and delivery of training relating to social care, adoption and education related matters;
- To attend committees, working parties and other member level panels or meetings as required and to advise on procedural and specific legal issues;
- To represent the Council in meetings with other authorities, government departments and other bodies;
- To assist the Senior Lawyer, Principal Lawyer and Head of Legal (Litigation) in identifying the training needs of clients in the fields of children's social care, adoption and education and to participate in the provision of appropriate training for those clients.
- To assist in the recruitment of legal support staff in the Social Care and Housing Team;
- To undertake other duties and responsibilities of a similar professional nature and at a similar responsibility level to those described above which may be allocated from time to time;
- To be responsible for the promotion and implementation of all the Council's policies and procedures including equalities and diversity, health and safety, security and the use of personal data;
- Work collaboratively with Legal and Democratic Services senior team and senior officers across the council, ensuring core legal functions make a valuable contribution to the Council and the community it serves;
- To provide a consistent and fair approach towards members of the public and Council employees in accordance with the Council's Customer Care and Equal Opportunities Policies.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Organisational effectiveness as measured through customer satisfaction and performance measures;
- Benchmarking data for Legal Services, including LEXCEL requirements;
- Business Plan targets and performance indicators;
- KPIs and other local performance data;

- Supply of appropriate, accurate and timely management information;
- Effective budget management and delivery of efficiencies;
- Performance appraisal targets including chargeable hours targets.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL):

- Head of Legal Services and Principal Lawyer
- Staff in the Chief Executive's directorate
- Managers and internal clients
- All relevant partner organisations for whom and with whom the Council does business including other local authorities
- Elected Members
- External firms of solicitors and barristers
- Council-owned companies directors and professional advisers
- Government departments & agencies, national & regional bodies and network groups
- Local and regional courts, tribunals and inquiries

AUTHORITY LEVEL (PEOPLE, POLICY, FINANCIAL):

- Supervision responsibility, subject to progression criteria

Person Specification

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES:

1. Knowledge and understanding of the law and procedure relating to the Council's children's social care, adoption and education functions.
2. Ability to obtain and evaluate evidence, prepare cases and advocate effectively on behalf of the Council before courts, tribunals, inquiries and other bodies.
3. A clear and systematic approach to problem solving, including the ability to effectively research new law and policy and to apply that research to meet the needs of the client.
4. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing with non-lawyers and with lawyers and advise at all organisational levels including Members and Directors.
5. Ability to supervise the work of support colleagues in the team.
6. Ability to represent the Council at meetings with other public authorities and stakeholders at Perceval House or elsewhere.
7. Ability and willingness to contribute to the continuous improvement of Legal Services.

8. Competent IT skills including basic keyboard skills, familiarity with word-processing packages, case management systems and simple databases and the ability to maximise the use of these systems in support of the work of the team.
9. Ability to provide a consistent and fair approach towards members of the public and Council employees in accordance with Council policies.

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND REGISTRATION:

- The post-holder must be an admitted solicitor, a barrister or a legal executive.

Values & Behaviours

Improving Lives for Residents	Trustworthy	Collaborative	Innovative	Accountable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is passionate about making Ealing a better place • Can see and appreciate things from a resident point of view • Understands what people want and need • Encourages change to tackle underlying causes or issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does what they say they'll do on time • Is open and honest • Treats all people fairly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambitious and confident in leading partnerships • Offers to share knowledge and ideas • Challenges constructively and respectfully listens to feedback • Overcomes barriers to develop our outcomes for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tries out ways to do things better, faster and for less cost • Brings in ideas from outside to improve performance • Takes calculated risks to improve outcomes • Learns from mistakes and failures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages all stakeholders to participate in decision making • Makes things happen • Acts on feedback to improve performance • Works to high standards