Job Description

Job Title: Senior SEN Tribunals Officer	**Service Area**: Education: Learning, Inclusion and Achievement	
Directorate: Children and Young People Directorate	**Post Number:** 10024746	**Evaluation Number:** LBNJE - 855288319
Grade: PO5	**Date last updated:** **July 2026**	
Accountable to: Tribunal Lead		

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are committed to and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of employment with the London Borough of Newham. All employees are expected to understand and promote our Equality and Diversity Policy in the course of their work.

PROTECTING OUR STAFF AND SERVICES

Adherence to Health and Safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good Health and Safety practices and manage risks appropriately.

Overall Purpose of Job

To provide key leadership, representation and case management to ensure that the Council discharges its responsibilities effectively in relation to statutory appeals to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST), which is part of His Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS).

To provide support and advice to the casework team in the resolution of complex casework, ensuring that local authority professionals build strategic links with schools, parents, education provider services and other agencies to deliver positive outcomes for children and young people and to limit the Local Authority's exposure to risk of appeals to Tribunals.

To hold and manage tribunal cases and ensure robust compliance with all elements of the statutory process and legal framework, advising the team and other professionals on specific cases and processes.

Provide advice on learning/case law from previous lower and upper tier tribunals in order to limit the local authority's exposure to risk of appeals, litigation and judicial review/complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). On occasion the Senior Tribunal Case Officer will deputise for the SEND Tribunals Lead at professional meetings.

Key Tasks and Accountabilities

The responsibilities set out below are intended as a guide to the range and level of work expected of the post holder. They are not exhaustive, and the post holder may be required to undertake other duties commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the role.

The post holder will support the Council's vision of enabling every resident under 25 to be safe, happy and cared for, with access to positive opportunities that secure their long-term wellbeing.

Strategic Leadership and Practice Development

- Provide strategic support, guidance and training to the SEND 0–25 Service, ensuring statutory responsibilities are fulfilled in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and performance requirements.
- Provide relational leadership through challenge, reflection and support to promote high-quality, consistent practice across the service.
- Share and promote best practice through the dissemination of statutory guidance, learning from appeals and disputes, and developments in SEND practice.
- Maintain oversight of practice across the service, identifying opportunities for improvement and working with managers to address concerns and improve outcomes.
- Engage with schools, settings and partner agencies to develop understanding of effective assessment, planning and person-centred approaches.

Complex Casework, Dispute Resolution and Tribunals

- Lead on complex SEND casework, providing expert advice, mediation, negotiation and problem-solving to achieve timely and effective resolution of disputes.
- Coordinate and collate information to support the Local Authority's position where there are disagreements regarding special educational needs provision, placement or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans.
- Attend and advise at resolution meetings, working collaboratively with families, educational settings and professionals to resolve disputes and avoid formal legal proceedings wherever possible.

- Manage the preparation of tribunal and appeal cases, including gathering evidence, preparing chronologies and supporting documentation, liaising with Legal Services and coordinating contributions from relevant agencies.
- Represent the Local Authority at mediations, First-tier Tribunal hearings, case review hearings and other legal proceedings, presenting evidence and defending the appropriateness of proposed provision and decisions.
- Support decision-making through the preparation and presentation of information to mediation and tribunal panels, deputising for the SEND Tribunal Lead where required.
- Ensure all appeal and tribunal documentation is accurate, compliant and submitted within statutory timescales.

Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Working

- Build and maintain respectful, transparent and effective relationships with children and young people with SEND, their families, educational settings and partner agencies.
- Arrange and coordinate appropriate representation from SEND and wider local area services at meetings with families, schools and providers, chairing meetings where required.
- Communicate statutory decisions and outcomes clearly, appropriately and within required timescales.
- Respond professionally and effectively to complex enquiries, concerns and challenges, supporting positive outcomes through a relational and restorative approach.

Performance, Data and Financial Management

- Maintain accurate and up-to-date records on the Council's systems, ensuring the integrity of casework, appeals and tribunal data.
- Analyse performance and appeals-related data to identify trends, inform service development and support strategic decision-making.
- Use management information and business intelligence to improve service efficiency, effectiveness and consistency in EHC assessments, plans and annual reviews.
- Prepare and present high-quality performance reports and management information as required.
- Ensure value for money in all aspects of the role and maintain records that support effective financial monitoring and stewardship of public funds.
- Champion the effective use of technology and case management systems to support performance monitoring and service improvement.

General Responsibilities

- Deliver work independently and to agreed deadlines, escalating risks, delays or challenges appropriately.
- Work flexibly within a changing environment to achieve service objectives and promote the service positively.
- Participate in professional development activities and maintain up-to-date knowledge of legislation, policy, guidance and best practice relating to SEND, education, data protection and freedom of information.
- Contribute positively as a member of the team through active participation in service and corporate meetings and the development of effective working relationships.
- Implement and promote the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies and actively challenge discrimination.
- Undertake special projects and initiatives as directed by the SEND Tribunals Manager.
- Attend conferences, exhibitions, open days, parent events and forums, including occasional evening and weekend work where required to meet service needs.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Personal Specification</td><td>Newham London</td></tr>
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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

The criteria listed in this Person Specification are all essential to the job. Where the Method of Assessment is stated to be the Application Form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. If you do not address these criteria fully, or if we do not consider that you meet them, you will not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.

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QUALIFICATIONS: To hold a relevant qualification (e.g., teaching, law, social work, psychology). Or Considerable experience of case management of SEND tribunals, complaints or mediation.	Application Form/ Professional qualification certificate
KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCE: Substantial relevant experience of working in the service area / related profession field, with evidence of work responsibilities appropriate to the role and evidence of appropriate professional expertise.	Application Form/Interview/Test
Extensive knowledge of current legislation, research, policies and guidance and its implications for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.	Application Form/Interview/Test
Extensive knowledge and proven track record of successfully applying SEND Law and SEND Code of Practice.	Application Form/Interview/Test
Extensive knowledge of, and proven ability of working successfully in, the SEN appeals process to Tribunal.	Application Form/Interview/Test
Extensive knowledge of the types of special needs and disabilities that effect children's education and an ability to develop this knowledge.	Application Form/Interview/Test
Extensive knowledge of the issues faced by children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their families.	

Significant experience of successfully managing conflict and disputes, and remaining solution focused, and person-centred, in difficult situations. Significant experience of effectively negotiating resolutions. Significant experience of providing support, advice and guidance to education settings and families on special educational needs and disabilities Knowledge and experience of contributing to the development of services, policies procedures and practices. Experience of supervising or line management of staff. Significant experience of promoting the effective use of public funds.	Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test
SKILLS AND ABILITIES Excellent interpersonal skills. Proven ability to negotiate and persuade and build and maintain effective working relationships at all levels. Proven ability to communicate with, engage and influence children, young adults, carers, partners and stakeholders, in complex situations. Experience of supporting partnership working to deliver service provision to children and families. Excellent written skills to produce high quality appeal reports and legal case responses. Good planning and organisational skills, with experience of working within general professional guidelines or organisational policy, to achieve service requirements. Proven initiative and judgement to identify and resolve problems	Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test

Good ICT skills - both standard Microsoft applications and social care record and data systems. Good reporting and recording skills in accordance with expected statutory and internal processes. Proven ability to cope with conflicting and changing demands through good time management and the ability to work under pressure. Ability line manage and motivate teams to deliver to the agreed objectives and outcomes	Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview Application Form/Interview/Test Application Form/Interview/Test
OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS This post is subject to a standard DBS check. Willingness and ability to work occasional evenings and weekends to maintain service delivery. **Politically Restricted Posts** The Local Government & Housing Act 1989 imposes restrictions on political activities for certain categories of local government employees. In accordance with this legislation, this post is politically restricted and as such the post holder must refrain from being a candidate for election, an election agent or sub agent, an officer of a political party, or subcommittee of such a party or canvass, speak to the public at large, publish written or artistic work or display posters in support of a political party or subgroup of such a party.	Satisfactory clearance at conditional offer stage