

POST TITLE	SENIOR EARLY YEARS OFFICER
DIRECTORATE	CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND JUSTICE SERVICES
SERVICE	SCHOOLS AND LIFELONG LEARNING
RESPONSIBLE TO	HEAD TEACHER/HEAD OF CENTRE
NUMBER OF POST HOLDERS	1
ACTING UP/ SECONDMENT	NO

BACKGROUND

The early years' service delivers direct services to children in a variety of ways: in nursery schools, nursery classes and early years centres and in public green spaces. The size of establishment and the type of service required by the client group of children and parents will determine the management structure. Each service will be managed by a Head Teacher, Manager or Head of Centre who may occasionally be responsible for more than one site. Larger establishments and/or those where children and parents have particularly complex needs may have a Senior Early Years Officer (SEYO) who will act as lead practitioner in the absence of the manager, and who will have direct responsibility for managing staff. The SEYO will have a management role and in many establishments, will also be keyworker for individual children.

Some establishments are open 50 hours a week so a shift system will operate and the SEYO will make all the head of centre decisions in the absence of the manager. As such the SEYO will be expected to be a leading professional with the breadth of vision and range of skills and knowledge necessary for the post.

The principles of the Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) programme will underpin the work of the establishment and the postholder e.g. putting the child at the centre; keeping the child safe; taking the whole child approach; working in partnership with families; co-ordinating help from across services and practitioners. To provide a service compatible with good practice in the education and care of young children and young

PURPOSE OF JOB

To assist the Head of Establishment with the management, co-ordination and development of a needs-led responsive service for children 0-8 years old. To ensure services are inclusive and meet the needs and maximise the potential of these children and their families.

MAJOR TASKS/JOB ACTIVITIES

The SEYO will take part in the management, co-ordination and development of a setting.

Co-ordinate the admissions procedures by taking initial referrals from families and other professionals, making assessments of needs and admissions decisions. Chair admissions groups where appropriate taking a lead role to ensure service provision and prioritising need.

Manage the staff team, providing professional support, supervision and leadership to staff and manage the establishment in the absence of the Head of Setting.

Plan and deliver the pre-birth to three and pre-school curriculum directly to children and dependant on the needs of the establishment be counted in the staff child ratio.

Undertake GIRFEC assessments of need and ensure that services in the Child's plan are delivered in an integrated way.

Work in partnership with parents in a range of ways including facilitating parenting groups providing advice and guidance to promote confidence and independence.

Liaise with other staff and organisations to ensure that individual children are kept safe and input to the development of appropriate care packages

Ensure that a good standard of professional practice is maintained, achieving high quality standards of care and service, within the establishment, outreach and community-based services

Leadership role in identifying, co-ordinating and planning agreed use of public green spaces.

Overview the delivery of the service:

- Build and maintain strong management information and effective evaluative approaches.
- Ensure the development and implementation of an appropriate curriculum in response to the requirements of the Pre-Birth to Three Framework and Curriculum for Excellence. Advise staff on the best approach to dealing with individual children and developing appropriate resources
- Hold regular meetings to discuss features of the centre's curriculum, aims and objectives. Ensure regular tracking and monitoring of children's progression through pre-birth to three and Curriculum for excellence.
- Review the needs of individual children using agreed criteria, to identify what level of service is appropriate. Ensure child's plans are developed and implemented as appropriate.
- Ensure that the progress of each child is monitored and recorded, and appropriate referrals made.
- Review reports written by staff e.g. progress reports for parents, transition reports for children moving on to primary school, reports to case conferences, etc
- Mentor and where appropriate, accompany staff on initial home visits, to case conferences and other reviews.
- Develop and maintain strong, collaborative and positive partnership working arrangements with other key professionals and agencies.
- Manage the provision of support and advice to parents and carers, such as parenting groups facilitated by staff in the establishment, outreach work, or referral to other services such as health services and skills training, with the aim of building confidence and wellbeing in families.
- Ensure appropriate written and electronic records are kept by staff. Monitor quality of record keeping and take action as required.
- Ensure that staff understand and follow Child Protection Procedures.
- Promote the welfare and wellbeing of children, in line with HMIE Guidance Care Inspectorate standards SSSC Codes of Practices.
- Attend meetings as delegated by the Head of Establishment and where appropriate chair Child's planning meetings.
- Uphold the Principles of Scottish outdoor access code, rights and responsibilities of using green spaces in partnership with other Council departments.

Take part in the management of the establishment

- Notify property issues as they arise.
- Along with the Head of Establishment develop the vision, the curricular and social aims of the establishment in consultation with staff.
- Assist the Head of Establishment in the evaluation process producing and reviewing the SQIP and producing Standards and Quality Improvement plans
- Support and assist in the development and management of office systems, administration and monitoring of budgets and preparation of statistical returns.

Deliver direct services to children and parents

- Act as a key worker for a designated individual or group of children. In doing so being sensitive to circumstances at home and in the family in partnership with parents/carers in the care and early learning of their children.
- Review the needs of individual children using agreed criteria to set objectives for each child. Develop appropriate Child's plans and PLPs as required.
- Where appropriate provide personal care for babies and children, including toileting, bathing and feeding. Administer medication as required within Departmental policy. Maintain first aid/medical records.
- Where appropriate, attend and contribute to case conferences and other child's planning meetings of children for whom the postholder is the keyworker.
- Build effective and sensitive transition programmes/arrangements for children and parents/carers from home into the centre and centre into school.
- • Write reports e.g. transition reports, progress reports for parents and where appropriate reports to case conferences etc.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to build confidence and well-being by engaging them in the life of the establishment.
- Where appropriate undertake outreach work in parents'/carers' own homes to offer support and guidance. Use observations made in the home visit to adapt services accordingly. Where appropriate undertake risk assessments on initial home visits.
- Participate in self-evaluation information, improvement planning, including identifying and responding to identified gaps in service provision.
- Work with multidisciplinary teams e.g. health visitor, social workers occupational therapy etc to establish Child's plans.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (E.G. CREATIVITY & INNOVATION, CONTACTS & RELATIONSHIPS, DECISION MAKING)

Deliver the pre-birth to three and curriculum for excellence, through support to parents in looking after their children in their own homes and in the establishment. The postholder must ensure that a culturally sensitive approach is taken to early learning, development and care. The postholder must ensure that GIRFEC principles underpin the work of the establishment.

Lead staff in providing comprehensive written reports for; child protection case conferences; court; LAAC Reviews; case discussions, children's hearings, care co-ordination meetings; adoption and permanency panels. These will be complex in nature; demanding creative thinking in a structured, planned, comprehensive way which demonstrates professional practice.

Effectively and immediately deal with a crisis when it occurs. This could include Child Protection, violence within the home and workplace, or Health and Safety issues.

Have an ability to motivate, initiate and develop new ideas and approaches along with an ability to support staff in effecting changes within the Department.

Use resources imaginatively, using different approaches e.g. curriculum development and delivery, group work, develop tailored packages of care based on a needs assessment of the child and their family and engage parents

Have a high degree of self-motivation and an ability to look for imaginative options and solutions.

Have team development and leadership skills

Contribute to the identification of gaps in services and service delivery and to respond creatively.

The SEYO will take responsibility for delegated aspects of the management of the establishment, in areas such as budgeting, service planning. He/she will also be responsible for staffing issues for staff managed, such as absence management, grievance and discipline.

Members of the staff team providing mentoring and coaching and ensuring the smooth delivery of the service.

The postholder has considerable contact with children attending. They will ensure that the delivery of care early learning needs. Promoting children's emotional wellbeing through modelling, e.g. use of praise and encouragement, positive feedback

Daily contact with parents and carers particularly those who are harder to reach. Engaging in regular feedback about their children and providing advice, guidance, information, support, crisis intervention, group work to parents, and carers.

Assess parent and child relationships and report to referring agencies through written reports, SWIFT records and attendance at children's planning meetings, case conferences, children's hearings and court

Regular contact with members of the Early Years Senior Management Team.

Other Children and Families colleagues, staff within Health and Social Care and a range of other professionals, voluntary agencies, community groups and parents and families.

Contact with HR and Finance and assist in resolving problems with the administration of the Centre.

Early stages forums and networks Communicate effectively with the public and groups associated with public green spaces

Make decisions as appropriate when deputising for the Head of Establishment

Participate in the operational management decisions for the establishment and the staff working there.

Make regular decisions on issues presented by staff on more complex issues in relation to individual children/parents. Participate with a range of other staff in deciding the pattern of attendance of families and the programmes of work to be undertaken.

Participate in the decisions about the application of legislation and policy to the work of the establishment.

Contribute to the decisions regarding service planning and curriculum development including vision and aims

Participate in the decisions regarding the management of the Centre's budget and resources.

Participate in the decisions about the engagement of the Centre within the community and with a range of professionals.

Make recommendations to the Children's Hearings about safety and welfare of the child

The impact of children's early years upon their lifelong health and wellbeing is widely recognised. The SEYO will be responsible for the immediate impact on the care and early learning of individual children, and this will have long term consequences. They will plan, track and report on progression.

The SEYO will be responsible for deciding when parents have achieved the desired outcomes agreed in their Child's plan.

Make decisions to refer families to other agencies for assistance.

Make decisions relating to child protection issues and instigating child protection procedures.

Engage with parents where there is resistance to work on identified problems

The person must hold an HNC/SVQ3 in a relevant Childhood Practice award and an advanced early years qualification which accords with the requirements of the Standard for Childhood Practice and meet SSSC registration requirements **without conditions**. A commitment to undertaking the BA Childhood Practice is essential.

ENVIRONMENT (WORK DEMANDS, PHYSICAL DEMANDS, WORKING CONDITIONS, WORK CONTEXT)

The post holder will have a specific workload as part of the establishment's senior team, as agreed by the Head of Establishment. The workload will consist of direct work with families, within the child staff ration and the supervision of staff with the responsibility for delivering care and early learning to children and support to parents.

Allocation of this work is reviewed on a regular basis within the context of the centre's annual evaluation and service improvement process and through the monthly supervision received from the Head of Establishment.

The focus of the work will respond to the changing needs and demand of the service as determined by the National and local strategic plans and priorities.

Undertake physical tasks which are consistent with the care and delivery of services to young children as well as operate within an office environment

A percentage of time will be directly with children working outdoors in a public green space

- The work can take place within the establishment, or in families' homes or other locations within the community, such as schools and public green spaces.
- Support and challenge staff to ensure the smooth delivery of service. This will include following council policies and procedures such as absence management, grievance policy, etc
- Have knowledge of Council's Health and Safety Guidelines and Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures.
- Support parents and children, including those who are vulnerable and who may, at times, be challenging. Some aspects of the work may have the potential to affect the postholders emotional well-being for instance.
- Working with parents who are verbally abusive, angry, suffering from mental health problems
- Listening to difficult and traumatic disclosures from parents and children
- Dealing with conflict
- Working with people, daily, who are suffering from personal distress, trauma, depression, mental health difficulties, illness, loss, poverty, drug and alcohol misuse, living with neglect, suffering from abuse, homelessness
- Dealing with conflicting needs of parents and children, e.g. parents whose own emotional needs have not been met and are unable to meet their children's needs.
- Working with people whose lives are unlikely to significantly change
- Working with parents who have had their children removed from the family home by the department
- This post is considered Regulated Work with Vulnerable Children and/or Protected Adults, under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. Preferred candidates will be required to join the PVG Scheme or undergo a PVG Scheme update check prior to a formal offer of employment being made by the City of Edinburgh Council.
- You will be required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) in the category of Practitioner and adhere to the codes of practice set out by SSSC **without conditions**

SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE

The postholder will receive support from the Head of Establishment. The postholder holds management responsibility within the establishment and will plan and overview the work of delegated staff and specific areas of the service providing formal supervision and Professional Review and Development (PRD)

Co-ordinate the allocation of work to staff; prepare staff rotas, allocate work to staff making the most effective use of available resources. Authorise leave in the absence of the manager.

Manage the application of staffing policies e.g. absence management, grievance and discipline.

Undertake regular formal supervision and Professional Review and Development (PRD) of identified staff. Assist staff to provide an effective learning environment which nurtures, motivates and engages children in the active learning process.

Provide training to staff as identified in response to changes in legislation or procedures.

Participate in all staff recruitment and selection procedures.

Ensure that staff work with multidisciplinary teams e.g. health visitor, social workers, occupational therapy etc to plan, structure and evaluate support for individual children.

The Head of Establishment will have full management responsibility for staff but delegate management tasks such as PRD absence management and employee relations to the SEYO. Management responsibility will vary depending on establishment from 3 to 12 staff, Early Years Officers, Early Years Practitioners, Early Years Assistants, Clerical staff and other support staff.

The SEYO will deputise in absence of the Head of Establishment when required.

Manage student placements, including Social work, Art therapy, Occupational therapy and HNC in Childcare and Education students.

RESOURCES

Assist in the administration of Centre Budgets and other financial management responsibilities

Prepare and submit pay returns, accounts, claims and statistical information including Centre data base/client index, HMI statistical information.

Implement and use of SWIFT system, SEEMIS and tracking monitoring tools.

Identify the need for and the ordering of equipment, furnishing and supplies through the oracle system and the maintenance of resources

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Protecting the health and safety and welfare of our employees, and our third parties including members of the public, contractors, service users and pupils, is the starting point for a forward-thinking Council.

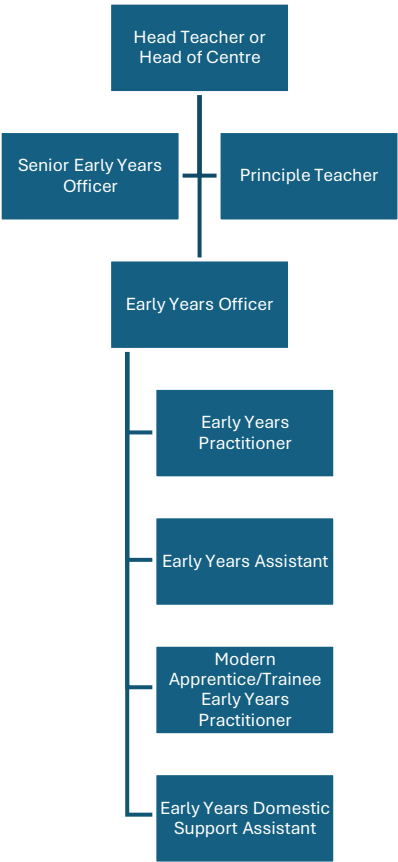
All employees are responsible for:

- Taking care of their own health and safety and welfare, and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- Co-operating with management and following instructions, safe systems and procedures.
- Reporting any hazards, damage or defects immediately to their line manager; and
- Reporting any personal injury and work-related ill health, and accident or incident (including 'near misses') immediately to their line manager, and assist with any subsequent investigation, including co-operating fully with the provision of witness statements and any other evidence that may be required.

Line managers have additional responsibilities for ensuring all health and safety risks under their management are identified, assessed and controlled, with specialist input from H&S Advisers and others including Occupational Health where required. Where the risks cannot be adequately controlled the activity should not proceed.

Additional information can be found in the [Council Health and Safety Policy](#).

Organisation Structure



Recruitment person specification

Post being recruited for: **Senior Early Years Officer**

Council behaviours

These apply to all posts

Respect	We're inclusive, we promote equality, we treat people with fairness, understanding and kindness, and we consider others in all our decision and actions.
Integrity	We're open and honest, we take responsibility, we build trust, and we pull together to do what's right for our residents, colleagues and city.
Flexibility	We're open minded, we keep it simple, we adapt to provide great service and find better ways of doing things, and we embrace opportunities for shared working and learning.

Person specification

Category	Essential	Desirable
Experience	<p>Proven experience in an early year setting</p> <p>Experience of working with parents and carers</p>	<p>Lead a six-week block of Forest School with a client group of early years children</p> <p>Experience in leading quality assurance / improvement within a team</p>
Knowledge, skills and understanding	<p>Knowledge of child development and the care needs of children</p>	<p>Knowledge of relevant childcare legislation, in particular the Children (Scotland) Act 1995</p> <p>Understanding of policy writing</p> <p>Knowledge of Health and Safety policies</p> <p>Knowledge of budget management</p>

	<p>Knowledge of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)</p> <p>Knowledge of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIFREFC)</p> <p>Knowledge of child protection issues</p> <p>Good standard of verbal and written communication</p> <p>Skilled in engaging with children</p> <p>Proven ability to work as part of a team and with other agencies</p> <p>Organisational skills</p> <p>Skills in engaging with children</p> <p>Proven ability to work as part of a team and with other agencies</p> <p>Organisational skills</p> <p>Skills in observations and report writing</p> <p>Staff management skills, or skills transferable</p> <p>Ability to work under pressure</p>	
Qualifications and training	<p>HNC Childcare and Education</p> <p>Or</p> <p>SVQ 3/SCQF Level 7 Social Services (Children and Young People)</p> <p>A qualification which provides credits towards the BA in Childhood Practice and meets SSSC registration requirements without conditions.</p>	<p>Child Protection Certificate</p> <p>BA in Childhood Practice</p> <p>Level 3 Forest School Leader</p> <p>Forest Kindergarten Practitioner training</p>

Job specific requirements	<p>Interpersonal understanding</p> <p>Flexibility</p> <p>Emotional awareness</p> <p>Self Confidence</p> <p>Team Working</p> <p>Working within professional boundaries</p> <p>This post is considered Regulated Work with Vulnerable Children and/or Protected Adults, under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. Preferred candidates will be required to join the PVG Scheme or undergo a PVG scheme update check prior to a formal offer of employment being made by the City of Edinburgh Council.</p>	
Applicants should always check the Job Vacancy for any specific employee specification requirements for the advertised vacancy		