



SEN Support Officer - Mediations and Tribunals

Barnet Education & Learning Service (BELS)

Closing date: 17th May 2024

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Barnet Education & Learning Service (BELS)

Our Services

<https://www.bels.org.uk/>

In September 2020, Barnet Council entered into a new strategic partnership with Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS), a limited company wholly owned by the council, to provide the council's education services.

The partnership was established in consultation with Barnet schools and the steering group of the Parent-Carer Forum.

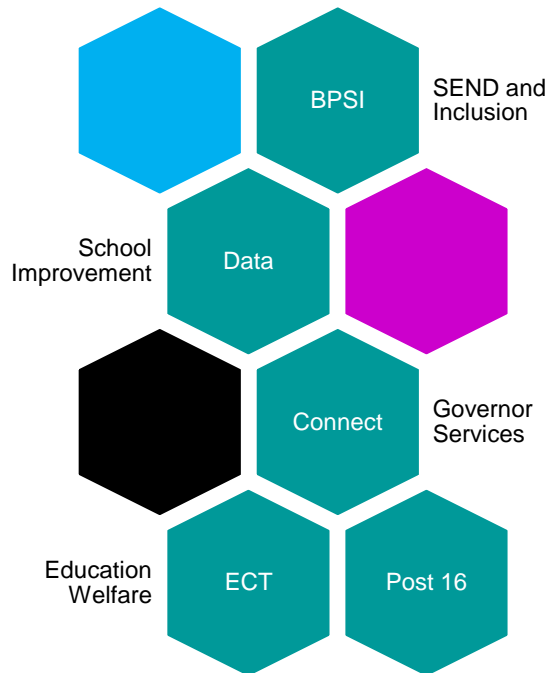
The aim of establishing the partnership is to

- Maintain and continue to develop Barnet's excellent education offer.
- Maintain and continue to develop the excellent relationship between the Council and schools.
- Achieve further budget savings if required.

The partnership is governed by a series of boards on which schools, settings and other stakeholders are represented that steer the strategic direction of the partnership in delivering school improvement, services for children with special educational needs and school place planning.

Performance against all three objectives for the partnership has been strong both before BELS was established and since then. Between April 2016 and August 2020 the service was run through a partnership between the council and Cambridge Education. Educational progress and achievement have improved consistently year on year. 97% of Barnet schools are good or outstanding and Barnet is now in the top 10% for almost all measures and the top 5% for many of the measures. The service has met all the budget targets for savings that were agreed with the council over the last five years.

There is also a very strong and experienced management team in place within the Education and Learning service, which has the confidence of schools, members, Council officers and other stakeholders.



BELS is responsible for the following services:

- Development and implementation of the council's education strategy, along with its Schools and Settings Improvement Strategy, SEND and Disabilities Strategy, School Places Strategy and Post-16 Education and Skills Strategy.
- Strategic support and advice to the Schools Forum and oversight of the Dedicated Schools Budget
- School and settings improvement (including early years)
- Statutory local authority services, such as monitoring, supporting and challenging schools, and intervening in maintained schools where necessary

- The Virtual School
- Special Educational Needs statutory processes including assessment and placements
- SEN Transport – assessment, brokerage, contract and budget management
- Educational psychology team
- SEN specialist support services
- Pupil place planning
- Admissions
- Education welfare service
- Post 16 education and skills, including monitoring, tracking and supporting participation
- Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance service
- Traded services to schools:
 - Barnet Partnership for School Improvement (BPSI)
 - Governor services
 - Newly Qualified Teachers support
 - Education Welfare Service
 - Educational psychology
 - Inclusion Advisory Team
 - Connect (formerly North London Schools International Network)
 - Foreign Language Assistants
 - Data Service

Staff Terms and Conditions

Staff working for BELS are employed on terms and conditions that are aligned with national agreements for staff working in local authorities except in respect of pensions.

New staff joining BELS who join and want to contribute to a Pension Scheme will become members of AVIVA – the Pension provider for BELS. Staff can contribute 4.5% of their salary into the Scheme and BELS will match this. There is also an option of increasing contributions to 7% with BELS also contributing at this rate. Contributions higher than this will not be matched by BELS.

As BELS is not a Local Authority, the company does not come under the Modification Order and therefore does not recognise continuous employment from other Local Authorities/schools. Your continuous service will start on the date you join the organisation.

Your annual leave is based on the grade and years of continuous service. Upon their start, employees will be entitled to 26 days plus 8 Bank holidays per annum – pro-rated for part timers and this would increase with service.

It is a standard practice that prospective employees are offered the starting point of the pay scale and it is expected that staff will progress through the spine points on an annual basis. However, if there is a strong case to pay above the minimum of the scale, the relevant service Director would consider the case.

Letter to applicants

April 2024

Department: SEN Assessments and Placements Team
Contact Officer: Nanda Gorasia
Telephone: 020 8359 7007

Dear Applicant

Post: Tribunals Support Officer

Thank you for the interest you have shown in the above opportunity.

This Job Information Pack gives a full explanation of the job and working for Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS), which I hope will encourage you to apply for the post.

To apply for this post, please click on 'Apply' button below. If you need assistance, please email the BELS HR Team at: hr.barnetbels@barnet.gov.uk. quoting job title.

The closing date for applications is 17/05/2024.

Interviews will be held – TBC - 24/05/2024 or 28/05/2024.

If you would like to discuss this position on an informal basis, please contact Feray Souleiman at Feray.souleiman@barnet.co.uk

It is important to us at BELS that our organisation reflects all members of our community and we strongly encourage members of ethnic minority communities to apply.

I look forward to receiving an application from you.

Yours faithfully

Feray Souleiman

Head of SEN Assessment & Placements

Job Title: SEN Mediations and Tribunals Support Officer
Contract Type: Permanent- All Year Round
Hours: 36 hours per week
Salary: £30,495 to £32,925 per annum

Barnet Education and Learning Service is a company wholly owned by Barnet Council, delivering the Council's education services to schools, children and young people.

We are seeking to appoint a support officer to work within the busy SEN team with the responsibility of supporting our work involving mediations and tribunals with the SENDIST.

The successful candidate will have regular contact with parents and other external parties and will be responsible for ensuring completing tasks to ensure that all aspects of disagreement resolution, mediation and appeals are managed in line with statutory requirements. We are looking for someone who is competent and confident in the use of standard Microsoft Office products and with a proven competence in handling confidential/sensitive personal information in an appropriate and secure manner.

This is an excellent opportunity to join a highly effective SEN Team to support us in the delivery of a quality SEN service. This role may suit newly qualified graduates of Law and who are looking for employment within a Para-legal arena.

For an informal discussion about the post please contact Nanda Gorasia on 020 8359 7007 to arrange a telephone discussion with Feray Souleiman, Interim Head of SEN Assessment & Placements.

To apply for this post, please click on 'Apply' button below. If you need assistance, please email the BELS HR Team at hr.barnetbels@barnet.gov.uk. quoting job title.

Feray Souleiman, Head of SEN Assessments and Placements Team

The closing date for applications is 17/05/2024.

Interviews will be held – TBC - 24/05/2024 or 28/05/2024.

Barnet Education and Learning Service are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

An enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) with barred list check is required for all successful applicants. In addition, if this post is likely to come under the requirements of the Childcare (Disqualification) 2009 Regulations, the successful applicant will be required to declare.

We value diversity.

Job Description

Service:	Skills
Location:	Colindale Offices
Job Title:	SEN Support Officer: Mediation and Tribunals
Grade:	13 - 18
Reports to:	Senior SEN Support Officer

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF JOB

1. To provide an efficient, effective and timely SEN casework related support function as part of the SEN Assessment and Placements team to support the delivery of a specialised service relating to pupils with SEN.
2. To ensure that the support functions are administered within priorities set by the SEN Casework Manager: Mediation and Tribunals or the Senior SEN Caseworker and promote timely and accurate responses relating to all aspects of disagreement resolution, mediation and appeals.
3. To work closely and collaboratively with the members of the SEN Assessment and Placements team to plan, develop, implement and maintain robust administrative processes to support the functions of the service.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Provide high quality and pro-active business and organisational support to the SEN Casework Manger: Mediation and Tribunals and the Senior SEN Caseworker, including diary management, word processing, filing, photocopying, handling post, preparing routine and non-routine correspondence, reports, spreadsheets and other documents using ICT based systems, etc as required.
2. In particular ensure tasks are dealt with according to plans and arrangements put in place by SEN Casework Manager: Mediation and Tribunals to ensure that all aspects of disagreement resolution, medication and appeals are managed in line with statutory requirements.
3. Ensure timely and accurate data input to Synergy, checking consistency and coherence with file and any other records, including decision making records.
4. To act at the first contact with parents, education providers, specialist service staff and other professionals in relation to disagreement resolution, mediation and appeals, dealing with enquiries where possible and providing briefings to the SEN Casework Manager: Mediation and Tribunal where appropriate.
5. To manage emails to the senappeals@barnet.gov.uk inbox in an efficient and timely manner, communicating information to the relevant member of staff where actions are required.
6. Ensure files for the cases the post holder is allocated responsibility are well maintained and located according to casework filing standards, roles and responsibilities and as set out in Team Protocols.
7. Ensure all casework records and records of individual pupil contracts are accurate and kept up to date.

8. Inputting into LA database systems and spreadsheet records to provide information and analyse and evaluate data for management purposes. Prepare relevant statistical and management information as directed, including data for local and national performance indicator measures.
9. Organise, administer and attend the weekly SEN Mediation and Tribunals Panel. To include collating required information, preparing and circulating minutes, agendas, document, record and communicate decisions and undertake allocated actions.
10. Have regard to statutory timescales and local performance standards for written correspondence and administration ensuring these are met. Inputting into the relevant monitoring systems to ensure statutory timescales are met and a high standard of database case information is maintained.
11. Maintain records and management information systems ensuring that all data is handled in a confidential and secure manner.
12. Handle a range of queries and provide accurate and timely information to a wide range of clients, parents, schools, outside agencies on statutory requirements and procedures and progress on Tribunal cases.
13. Maintain efficient working relationships with other teams and service areas, e.g.: transport as required, and where their service relates directly to enabling access to education.
14. Take the lead on preparing the Appeal Bundle ensuring a high level of accuracy and attention to detail.
15. Contribute to the planning, development and delivery of the SEN Assessment and Placements team including input to creative suggestions for improvement.
16. Ensure that the responsibility of safeguarding the welfare of children is a fundamental aspect of this job and that the principles are embedded in all procedures, practices, professional advice and decision making. Ensure full compliance with Barnet safeguarding standards.

Staff Responsibilities

1. To ensure that all personal data is handled in a secure and safe manner and in strict compliance with the Data Protection Act and with Barnet's policies and protocols relating to data handling.
2. To support new members of the team in explaining administrative and procedural processes, protocols and practices in relation to disagreement resolution, mediation and appeals.
4. To work collaboratively across the SEN team ensuring a flexible an approach to changes in work pressure throughout the year

FLEXIBILITY

1. In order to deliver services 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, at the appropriate grade.

BELS COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

1. To deliver the council's commitment to equality of opportunity both in the provision of services and as an employer. All staffs are expected to promote equality in the workplace and in the services the council delivers.

Person Specification

Service:	Education & Skills
Location:	Colindale Offices
Job Title:	SEN Support Officer: Mediation and Tribunals
Grade:	13 - 18
Reports to:	Senior SEN Support Officer

Essential Qualifications required.

Type	Level required
Professional qualifications/memberships	Nonspecific
Education	<p>Educated to GCSE level with passes in English.</p> <p>and Maths or equivalent Highly literate and numerate</p> <p>A degree in Law is desirable</p>

Technical / Knowledge Requirements

Type	Description
ICT skills	Highly developed and proven ICT skills in use of Microsoft Word, Excel Outlook and PowerPoint.
	Proven experience and competency in the effective use of ICT databases and record storage and retrieval systems.
	Proven ability to handle confidential personal information in an appropriate and secure manner
	Knowledge of and commitment to the adherence to the principles of data

protection and safeguarding of sensitive data.

Specific Competencies

Type	Description
	<p><i>Knowledge, experience, understanding and competency in complex administrative systems.</i></p>
	<p><i>Experience of operating effectively in a pressurised administrative environment with competing deadlines.</i></p>
	<p><i>Experience of working with other agencies such as health, social care, and education.</i></p>
	<p><i>Experience of dealing effectively and sensitively with internal and external colleagues, clients, schools, parents, agencies in a highly customer focused manner.</i></p>
	<p><i>Experience of preparing correspondence, reports and other documentation using Word, excel and other PC based systems in an accurate and competent manner.</i></p>
	<p><i>Ability to use the appropriate data sources to conduct straightforward research as directed.</i></p>
	<p><i>Commitment to the safeguarding of the welfare of children and young people.</i></p>

Behavioural Competencies

Competency	Key to role
Communicating and influencing	<i>Effective written communication skills, able to prepare correspondence and minutes.</i>
	<i>Ability to communicate complex issues in a clear and effectively manner (oral and written) with a wide range of stakeholders and to empathise and be assertive as appropriate.</i>
	<i>Good listening skills, ability to handle confrontation with confidence, discretion and diplomacy under pressure</i>
	<i>Influencing skills to effectively chase up and secure information and data to demanding deadlines</i>
	<i>Proven ability to deliver a customer focused service to defined quality standards.</i>
Political Awareness	<i>Appreciation of the political make-up and decision-making processes of the council and its impact on the role</i>
Leadership	<i>Willingness to take personal responsibility for the delivery of relevant service priorities.</i>
	<i>Ability to ensure that children and young people and their parents are the focal point for decision making</i>

Problem solving	Highly developed organisational skills, ability to work independently and unsupervised to tight deadlines using own initiative and whilst managing conflicting priorities
	Ability to build and nurture good working relationships with colleagues and across a wide range of outside agencies
Safeguarding	Sound understanding of the principles of safeguarding and a commitment to improving safeguarding the welfare children and young people.
Partnership working	Recognises the importance to the council of active partnership working and embraces partnership working where relevant to deliver services most effectively and efficiently
	Ability to provide accurate guidance and information to parents and other stakeholders
Striving for excellence	Attention to detail with a proven record of producing work to high levels of accuracy and quantity standards.
	Ability to manage a complex workload and meet tight timescales, using ICT skills to support office procedures
	Demonstrates a determination, ability and proven experience of successfully delivering a service to demanding targets and objectives
	Commitment to embrace the principles of equality in the delivery of the service
	Evidence of successfully reviewing and improving an administrative service.

<p><i>Team working</i></p>	<p><i>Ability to work effectively, flexibly, and constructively with colleagues in a team and make a positive contribution.</i></p>
	<p><i>Ability to work effectively with senior managers, staff, schools, external partners and to establish confidence, trust and credibility.</i></p>
	<p><i>Demonstrable experience of working effectively and participating with other colleagues on an inter-agency basis to ensure an effective response to complex issues.</i></p>

How to apply and key dates

The closing date for applications is 17/05/2024.

Interviews will be held – TBC - 24/05/2024 or 28/05/2024.

Completing Application Forms

Particular attention should be given to the Supporting Information section within the application form. Shortlisting is based on the candidate's ability to meet the selection criteria within the person specification. Therefore, it is essential that you outline clear examples and evidence of how you meet the requirements of the person specification. Examples and evidence should also relate back to the duties/accountabilities contained in the job description.

Reply Details

Your application form must reach us by the closing date. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

To apply for this post, please click on 'Apply' button below. If you need assistance, please email the BELS HR Team at: hr.barnetbels@barnet.gov.uk. quoting job title.

Please note CVs will not be accepted.

Further Information

Should you have any queries relating to any aspect of this appointment process, or require additional information, then contact the Schools HR Team.

It is important that you complete ALL sections of the application form.

Next Steps

If you are selected for interview, we will contact you by email and/or text message.