

Young Director for Children's Social Care

Executive Summary

The role of Young Director will support and develop corporate understanding and commitment to the Leaving Care and Children in Care Council (EMPIRE) pledge.

The Young Director will also work with the Director for Children's Services to support and engage Frontline Workers, Managers, Leaders and Councillors in understanding the experience and perspective of young people who have experienced care. Ensuring that any differences in expectations between the local authority and the care it provides to children and young people are appropriately managed.

The Role

When advertising the role we will be targeting Care Leavers aged 18 – 25, ideally Croydon Care Leavers. To achieve this we will rely on the Leaving Care Service to promote this opportunity and support the young people they work with to apply. All candidates must have the right to work in the UK and have been a resident for a minimum of three years.

Due to the ESFA phasing out frameworks from 31st July 2020 the apprenticeship frameworks suitable for this post are limited to either Youth Work or the Children and Young People's Workforce framework.

Croydon Works will be responsible for screening all candidates to ensure they are suitable for the post. Should the successful candidate declare any health issues they will require a Health Assessment, from start to finish this process takes approximately 2 – 3 weeks

Young Directors Responsibilities:

- The Young Director will be responsible for delivering a range of EMPIRE and Leaving Care activities
- Attend decision making professional forums and meetings to ensure the view and opinions of young people are heard and influence the decision-making process
- Talk, listen and report the views and feedback of children in care and care leavers
- Plan and organise meeting, events and seminars
- Collect suggestions from Bright Spots surveys and prepare reports from the information collected
- Help prepare training events for new staff and workers within Early Help and Children's Social Care
- Working with the Children and Young People in Care and Leaving Care Service and Corporate Parenting Panel
- Being part of events, which promote Children and Young People in Care and Leaving Care
- Shadowing the DCS and being the voice at set meetings
- Mentoring a child or young person in care

Research and Development

We discussed various models and did research which included liaising with Bexley Councils Virtual School Head, Young Director and Ex Young Director. They were very positive about the role of

Young Director and believe it has had a great impact on helping Frontline Workers, Managers, Leaders understand the experience and perspective of children and young people who have experienced care. They have also been able to develop their participation offer for children and young people in care and care leavers and have various activities available weekly.

In Bexley, the Young Director sits within the Virtual School and their line manager is the Participation Leader who is responsible for all activities related to children in care. Bexley have had multiple Young Directors with one young person seeing out the full term of the role who has now gone on to a different post within the Virtual School. When recruiting for the role they advertised the role as an open apprenticeship meaning the young person was able to choose an apprenticeship that was best suited to them. The options available were Social Media, Business Administration, Youth Work, Child Care, Children and Young People’s Workforce. Their current Young Director is studying business administration.

It took Bexley a while to find a care leaver that was suitable and committed to the role. This was down to multiple factors such as the level of the candidate, financial support, workload and apprenticeship. Even though this has been a negative it has given Bexley an opportunity to learn and shape the role further.

To ensure their Young Director is well supported, Bexley’s Leaving Care Service support their Young Director by assisting with their universal credit claim, paying for travel and direct payments towards rent to avoid the young person’s universal credits being affected. The Young Director also has robust day to day line management and daily work plan. Any personal matters regarding the Young Person’s care are dealt with outside of work to ensure there are clear professional boundaries.

Based on the success and impact of the role in Bexley we believe this role will be a great asset to Croydon.

Apprenticeship Pathways

We looked at two potential apprenticeships, Children and Young People’s Workforce and Youth Work. Unfortunately the Children and Young People’s Workforce Framework was not viable.

Youth Work Framework

Depending on the level of candidate that we recruit will depend on the length of contract. The Level 2 apprenticeship will take 12 – 15 months to complete and level 3 will take 15 – 18 months.

All candidates will complete an initial Math’s, English, IT and Youth Work assessment ahead of interviewing.

Below are the mandatory units and optional units that best match the role of Young Director:

Mandatory Units Level 2 & 3	Optional Units Level 2 (1 unit required)	Optional Units Level 3 (5 units required)
Theory of Youth Work	Anti-Discriminatory Practice in Youth Work	Support Young People who are Looked After or are Leaving Care
Safeguarding in a youth work setting		Support Young People’s Transition to Independence

Young People's Development		Support young people to develop, implement and review a plan of action
Engaging and Communicating with Young People		Work Effectively with Vulnerable Young People
Group Work within a Youth Work Setting		Anti-Discriminatory Practice in Youth Work
Working with Challenging Behaviour in Youth Work Settings		
Reflective Practice in a Youth Work Setting		
Work-based Practice in Youth Work		

Supporting the Young Director

Care Leavers often don't have a close support network and can be almost entirely alone. That is why it is important that this young person is closely supported during their time in post.

The role of Young Director will be paid however a financial assessment will need to be completed by the Leaving Care Service, to see if we need to support the Young Director financially in a way that won't affect their universal credit. This could be through paid travel and/or direct payments towards housing.

The apprenticeship training assessor will have weekly or bi-weekly workshops with the Young Director and a review will take place every 10 weeks.

Costings

The grade category of apprentice does not fall within the regular local authority grading system.

Young Director Salary £19,802 + 30% on cost
Total cost to the service: £25,742.60

Please note that the above costings may increase by the time we recruit as the London living wage is currently under review.

When will the project start?

Preparation for the role of Young Director will begin January 2020 with the Young Director in post by June 2020

Who will need to be involved?

- Leaving Care Service
- Head Early Help and Youth Service
- Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care
- Head of Service for Children Looked After and Care Leavers

- Head of the Virtual School
- Croydon Works
- Economic Growth (Employment Pathways)

Recommendations

Young Director Line Management

1.1 - The Young Director to be line managed by the Service Manager for the Youth Service and have dedicated mentors in the Engagement and Participation Team, Virtual School, Children and Young People in Care and Leaving Care Service and Workforce Development team. By siting within the Youth Service the Young Director will have direct links to EMPIRE.

The Young Director could equally be line managed by a key professional in the Virtual School, Children and Young People in Care and Leaving Care Service, or Workforce Development team.

In Bexley the Young Director is line managed by their Engagement and Participation Lead who sits within their Virtual School.

1.2 - A clear work plan to be created with the training provider ahead of the Young Director starting

1.3 - Line Manager to have monthly meetings with the Mentors to ensure the young person is receiving adequate support

1.4 - Young Director to have weekly 1-2-1's with their line manager for the first 4 months, then bi-weekly thereafter

1.5 - A financial assessment to be completed by the Leaving Care Service

1.6 - Champions to be identified from the Leaving Care Service to support with the recruitment process start to finish

1.7 - Selected EMPIRE and Leaving Care Forum members to be part of the interview panel

1.8 - Ensure that all staff that have had involvement with this young person understand professional boundaries

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