

Best Start in Life Coordinator

Salary: Band 9, £40,443 to £44,252 per annum

Hours per week: 37 Hours per week

Contract type: Fixed Term until March 2029

Location: Civic offices

Office attendance is required minimum 2-days a week for full time staff, this remains flexible, subject to business needs

Portsmouth City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Every post is subject to PCC and Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership safer recruitment procedures.

This role requires a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at Standard/Enhanced level which will be required prior to any offer of employment and this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

About the role

The role is about supporting practitioners to provide help early, promoting consistent family-centered practice, and helping children and families access the right support at the right time. Support offered through the service will be needs-led rather than diagnosis-led, meaning families can receive advice, guidance and practical help without needing to wait for a diagnosis or meet a referral threshold.

The postholder will provide operational management, practice support and quality assurance to Best Start in Life Inclusion Practitioners. The role will help ensure the service is consistent, accessible and responsive across Family Hubs, community settings and partner sites. The coordinator will work in partnership with existing services and will complement the established inclusion offer across Early Years, Family Hubs and community settings.

You will help ensure the service supports access and inclusion across the full Best Start offer. This will include overseeing outreach activity, monitoring accessibility and engagement, supporting practitioners to strengthen family confidence, and ensuring the service contributes to early outcomes including speech, language and communication development and school readiness.

Key principles of the Best Start in Life Inclusion Service

- Early identification and support at the earliest opportunity.
- A needs-led rather than diagnosis-led approach.
- Promoting inclusion, participation and accessibility for all children and families.
- Improving school readiness and developmental outcomes.
- Supporting speech, language and communication development.
- Building parent carer confidence, knowledge, resilience and capability.

- Reducing inequalities through outreach and engagement with underserved communities.
- Working collaboratively with families, Family Hubs, early years settings and partner services.
- Using feedback, outcomes and evidence to support continuous improvement.

Responsibilities

In this role, you will coordinate the day-to-day work of the Best Start in Life Inclusion Practitioners. This will include allocating work, supporting effective caseload management, monitoring demand and capacity, and ensuring appropriate practitioner availability across Family Hub locations, community settings, and partner sites.

You will provide practice support to practitioners working with children and families where there are emerging or identified additional needs. This will include providing advice, supporting problem-solving, facilitating reflective practice discussions, and helping practitioners identify appropriate interventions, strategies, and support options.

You will help promote consistent, strengths-based and family-centered practice across the service. This will include supporting practitioners to use agreed tools, resources and processes, maintain accurate records and deliver support that is child-centered, inclusive, relationship-based and needs-led.

You will support practitioners to build family confidence, knowledge, resilience and capability, ensuring support is not only focused on navigation of services but also on helping parent carers feel confident to understand, support and advocate for their child.

You will support practitioners and partner organisations to identify and address barriers to participation, helping ensure children with additional or emerging needs can access the full range of Family Hub and community services. You will monitor accessibility, inclusion and engagement across the service and support improvements where required.

You will promote consistent approaches to the early identification and support of speech, language and communication needs. This will include ensuring practitioners have access to appropriate resources, tools, guidance and training, and supporting the consistent use of evidence-informed screening or identification approaches where these are part of local pathways.

You will support practitioners to deliver interventions and strategies that contribute to school readiness, positive developmental outcomes and successful transitions into education, including support focused on communication, social interaction, emotional wellbeing, independence, play and participation.

You will undertake quality assurance activity to monitor the quality and consistency of practitioner records, support plans and case work. This will include routine audits, monitoring service activity, identifying learning themes and supporting continuous improvement across the team.

You will oversee targeted outreach activity designed to improve engagement with underserved communities and families who may face barriers to accessing support. You will use information from practitioners, families and partners to identify opportunities to improve reach, accessibility and inclusion.

You will work closely with Family Hub colleagues and partner services, including Early Years settings, schools, health services, SEND, Early Help, social care, Portage, the EY Inclusion Team, Speech and Language Therapy where appropriate, and voluntary/community sector

partners. The role will help strengthen joined-up working, reduce fragmentation for families and support smooth transitions between services and stages of support.

You will coordinate induction arrangements, identify development needs across the practitioner team, arrange or facilitate training opportunities, share learning and support the development of resources, guidance and practice information.

You will monitor service activity and performance information, collate information relating to demand, capacity, access, engagement, family outcomes, feedback and impact measures, identify themes or gaps and produce operational reports and updates as required. You will use service information to identify trends, evaluate effectiveness, support continuous improvement and demonstrate the impact of the Best Start in Life Inclusion Service.

The role may also include providing direct support to families where required, offering consultation regarding complex situations, supporting practitioners during periods of increased demand and participating in joint visits or multi-agency meetings where appropriate.

Who is the person?

You will have/be:

- A relevant level 4 qualification, or equivalent experience, in early years, education, health, social care, family support, SEND or a related field, alongside evidence of continuing professional development.
- Experience of supporting children aged 0-5 with additional, emerging or complex needs, and experience of working directly with children, families and carers. Experience of delivering family-centred support and working in partnership with other services is essential.
- Experience of coordinating services, staff, volunteers or caseloads, alongside experience of supporting and supervising practitioners. You will also need experience of monitoring service activity and performance, and of contributing to quality assurance, audit or service monitoring.
- Experience of collecting, collating and using service information, feedback or outcome information to identify themes, support improvement activity and contribute to reports or updates.
- A good understanding of child development from birth to five, additional needs and SEND within the early years, Early Help principles, Family Hub approaches, safeguarding, strengths-based practice and inclusion.
- An understanding of approaches to improving access, inclusion and engagement for underserved communities and children with emerging or additional needs.
- Knowledge of early speech, language and communication development, the importance of school readiness, and how early identification and support can improve outcomes for children and families.
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills who can work positively with families, practitioners and partner agencies. You will need strong organisational and coordination skills, the ability to prioritise and manage competing demands, and confidence analysing information to identify patterns, concerns or areas for improvement.
- The ability to support, motivate and develop practitioners, facilitate meetings and reflective discussions, maintain accurate records and produce clear written updates or reports.



- Approachable, solution-focused, resilient and committed to collaboration, inclusion and reducing inequalities.
- Committed to family-centred, relationship-based practice, partnership working and continuous improvement. You will value the voice of children, families and communities, and work in a respectful, inclusive and culturally responsive way.

Desirable

Experience includes working within Family Hubs, children's centres or early help services; knowledge of local early help and SEND pathways; experience contributing to service development or improvement activity; experience supporting outreach or engagement work; familiarity with communication or developmental screening approaches; and confidence using data and feedback to identify themes and support service improvement.

You will need to demonstrate that you have the Right to Work in the UK. No post will be offered without it.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Portsmouth City Council is the Data Controller of any personal information you provide when applying for a job. It will only be used in connection with the recruitment process and will not be kept for longer than necessary. For more detailed information you can access the Data Protection Privacy Notice on our [careers portal](#).