

Resources Directorate

Head of Children's Commissioning – All-Age Commissioning Job Description and Person Specification

March 2026

Job Description

Job Title:	Head of Children's Commissioning
Department:	Resources Directorate
Function:	All-Age Commissioning
Team:	Children's Commissioning
Post number:	S007371
Grade:	LBR19
Hours/weeks: <i>E.g. 36 hours/52.14 weeks</i>	36 hours/52.14 weeks
Base location:	Lynton House / Hybrid
Reports to: <i>Job title</i>	Director of All-Age Commissioning
Responsible for: <i>Job titles of direct reports</i>	<i>Commissioning Managers, Contract Officers, Sufficiency & Market Development Leads, Brokerage Teams</i>
Role purpose and role dimensions: <i>Overview of the job</i>	The Head of Children's Commissioning provides strategic leadership across Education, Inclusion, SEND and Children's Social Care, ensuring the commissioning of high-quality, safe, sustainable and outcome-focused services. The postholder leads the full commissioning cycle, sufficiency planning, market oversight, quality assurance and strategic partnerships across the children's system
Key external contacts: <i>Organisations</i>	Integrated Care Board (ICB) NHS providers (NELFT, acute trusts) Education settings and schools Specialist and independent providers Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Regional commissioning networks Ofsted, DfE and regulatory bodies
Key internal contacts: <i>Job titles or groups of staff</i>	Director of All-Age Commissioning Children's Social Care Senior Management Team Education & Inclusion Senior Leaders Finance Business Partners Legal Services Procurement & Contracts Teams Performance & Intelligence Teams
Financial dimensions: <i>Budgetary responsibility & amount. Equipment, cash, property etc. for which employee is responsible.</i>	Oversight of High Needs Block (HNB) budgets Oversight of placements budgets and transport commissioning budgets Responsibility for £multi-million commissioned services Authorisation of commissioning decisions within delegated limits Ensuring robust financial planning, forecasting and savings delivery
Key areas for decision making:	Strategic direction of children's commissioning priorities Approaches to sufficiency, market shaping and provider intervention Contract award decisions (within delegated authority) Decisions relating to high-risk providers and market contingency planning Decisions on resource allocation and commissioning model design Escalation of statutory non-compliance or market risk
Other considerations: <i>E.g. working patterns</i>	Hybrid working Requirement to attend evening meetings on occasion Requirement to travel between sites and provider settings Participation in emergency or urgent system responses (e.g. provider failure)

Key accountabilities and result areas:	Key elements:
1. Strategic Commissioning Leadership	<p>This will involve:</p> <p>Leading commissioning strategies, sufficiency plans and market oversight across Education, Inclusion, SEND and Social Care</p> <p>Leading multi-agency commissioning with ICB, schools, health providers and VCS partners</p> <p>Setting outcome-focused commissioning priorities aligned with statutory duties.</p>
2. SEND Commissioning	<p>This will involve:</p> <p>Leading SEND commissioning including therapies, placements and transport services</p> <p>Working closely with SEND services to ensure high-quality, value-for-money provision.</p> <p>Ensuring sufficiency of specialist education and support services.</p>
3. Children’s Social Care Commissioning	<p>This will involve:</p> <p>Leading commissioning for Looked-After Children (LAC) placements and brokerage.</p> <p>Developing placement sufficiency strategies and supporting complex case decision-making.</p> <p>Monitoring quality, outcomes and contract compliance.</p>
4. Market Quality Assurance and Risk Oversight	<p>This will involve:</p> <p>Overseeing provider quality assurance, market risk management and contingency planning.</p> <p>Working with regulatory bodies to identify performance concerns.</p> <p>Leading system responses to provider failure or safeguarding concerns.</p>
5. Statutory Compliance and Inspection	<p>This will involve:</p> <p>Ensuring compliance with Ofsted ILACS, SEND inspection frameworks and Children’s Act duties.</p> <p>Leading evidence preparation for inspections and validation processes.</p> <p>Maintaining commissioning policy frameworks required for assurance.</p>
6. Leadership of Commissioning Functions	<p>This will involve:</p> <p>Leading and developing commissioning, contracting and brokerage teams.</p> <p>Embedding a culture of continuous improvement and co-production.</p> <p>Ensuring equitable, inclusive and transparent commissioning practice.</p>
General accountabilities and responsibilities	
Green Statement	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seeking opportunities for contributing to sustainable development of the borough, in accordance with the Council’s commitment to making Redbridge a cleaner, greener place to live. In particular, demonstrating good environmental practice (such as energy efficiency, use of sustainable materials, sustainable transport, recycling and waste reduction) in your job.

Data Protection/Confidentiality	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complying with the Data Protection Act 1998 – treating all information acquired through your employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence and in accordance with Caldicott principles. ▪ Complying with the Code of Conduct, other practice guidelines and the rules and protocols defining employees’ access to and use of the Council’s databases and systems. Any breaches could result in disciplinary measures. ▪ Maintaining client records and archive systems in accordance with departmental procedure, policy and statutory requirements.
Conduct and Whistleblowing	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complying with the requirements of the Code of Conduct and maintaining high standards of personal conduct, honesty and integrity. You have a duty to raise any impropriety or breach of procedure to the appropriate level of management. Employees making such disclosures (whistleblowing) are protected and may make them without fear of recrimination.
Safer Working	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Where you work in such a post the Council will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and references will be taken up prior to interview.
Equalities	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complying with the Council’s strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity and outcomes in its services to the community and in the employment of people. You are expected to understand, comply with and promote Council policies in your work, to undertake any appropriate training and to challenge any prejudice and discrimination.
Customer Care	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complying with corporate and service area customer service standards and promoting the development of high quality, individualised and customer-led services.
Health and Safety	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being responsible for your own Health & Safety, as well as that of colleagues, service users and the public. Employees should co-operate with management, follow established systems of work, use protective equipment where necessary and report defectives and hazards to management.
To contribute as an effective and collaborative member of the team	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taking responsibility for continuing self-development and participating in training and development activities. ▪ Participating in the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of the service plans. ▪ Supporting and contributing to value for money, service efficiencies and improvements.
Flexibility	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The above-mentioned duties are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. From time to time you may be required to undertake responsibilities outside the normal remit of your Job Description as required by the line manager, and are broadly within your the grading level and competence.

Person Specification

Job Title:	Head of Children's Commissioning		
<i>Method of candidate assessment: A = Application form I = Interview T = Test. Weighting: 3 =Essential, 2 = Desirable</i>		A - I - T	Weighting
Minimum education/ qualifications:	Degree-level qualification or equivalent experience	A/I	2
	Relevant professional qualification in commissioning, social care, education, health, or management (desirable)	A/I	2
Minimum experience/ knowledge/ skills:	Extensive experience in children's commissioning across SEND, education or social care	A/I	3
	Experience in sufficiency planning, market development and provider quality assurance	A/I	3
	Multi-agency commissioning experience with health, education and VCS partners	A/I	3
	Experience managing high-value budgets and complex contracts	A/I	3
	Strong understanding of ILACS, SEND Code of Practice and Children's Act statutory frameworks	A/I	3
	Knowledge of commissioning policy, procurement, contract law and provider markets.	A/I	3
	Strategic leadership and planning skills	A/I/T	3
	Strong financial management and analytical capability	A/I/T	3
	High-quality negotiation and partnership-building skills	A/I/T	3
	Ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams in complex systems	A/I/T	3
Minimum competencies: Customer focus	Demonstrates commitment to high-quality, child-centred service delivery.	A/I	3
Communicating and influencing	Able to communicate complex issues clearly and influence senior stakeholders.	A/I	3
Building relationships, working together and in partnership	Builds trusted, collaborative relationships across systems and sectors.	A/I	3
Respecting & implementing diversity	Committed to inclusive practice and equitable outcomes.	A/I	3
Planning, organising & achieving results	Able to manage competing priorities and deliver against targets.	A/I	3
Embracing change	Able to lead and embed change in complex organisations.	A/I	2

For those with managerial responsibility Leadership	Demonstrates clear, ambitious and compassionate leadership	A/I	3
Managing and developing people	Ability to lead, performance-manage and develop teams to achieve excellence.	A/I	3
Special conditions:	Enhanced DBS check (due to work with children) Ability to travel across the borough and region Occasional evening work This post is politically restricted		