**THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

**Further Information for Applicants**

**WHAT IS THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

Sometimes children cannot be looked after by their parents or relatives. When this happens the local authority steps in to act as parents and the child becomes "looked after".

We aim to support all school-age children looked after by the London Borough of Sutton, including children who are being educated in other local authority areas. Wherever possible we work with our Early Years providers to help ensure the needs of these children are also met. We also work with our Leaving Care Team and local Post 16 providers to ensure support for children in care moving on to higher and further education. We monitor the progress of all Sutton’s LAC and are there to provide additional support when it is needed. While many children in care do very well at school, a significant number have had such major disruptions to their learning that they fall behind. This has a huge impact on their future life chances. The Virtual School aims to raise the profile of children in care, so that everything is done to ensure they have a successful education and achieve the best they can. There are currently 245 LAC who are in Early Years, statutory school age, or 16-18 and ‘on roll’ with the Virtual School.

**WHERE THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL IS BASED**

The Virtual School is based at The Grove, Carshalton Sutton SM5 3AL as part of Cognus Limited, who deliver education improvement and support services on behalf of London Borough of Sutton. Within Cognus, the LAC Education Advisor will work across a multi-disciplinary service including Education Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy and a range of education focused services including Early Years and SEN services.

**AIMS OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

The Virtual School exists to ensure that children in care have access to good quality education, providing them with improved life chances. We work to ensure that every child in care will

* have a school place
* maintain a high level of attendance
* are not excluded from school
* have a current [Personal Education Plan](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/children-families/childrensocialcare/children_in_care_services/hvs/hvs-faq.htm#whatispep)(PEP)
* attend a full time educational placement
* achieve their potential

*It is our responsibility to:*

* promote the attainment of children in care
* raise awareness of the importance of education and lifelong learning with all people associated with children in care
* help create opportunities for children in care to achieve success in their educational careers
* work closely with all agencies to improve educational opportunities for children in care

**WHAT WE DO**

* Manage the Personal Education Plan Process
* Manage the Pupil Premium Budget for the LA
* Run training for Social Workers
* Attend Personal Education Plan meetings as needed
* Run training for schools’ Designated Teachers
* Gather and maintain data on looked after children
* Attend relevant professionals meetings
* Help run training for carers

**VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEAD**

The Virtual School Head is a post established by the government to promote the education of all [children in the care](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/children-families/childrensocialcare/children_in_care_services/hvs/hvs-faq.htm#section20) of a Local Authority. It places responsibilities on the London Borough of Sutton to improve the standards reached by its children in care. It aims to do this by supporting and challenging all agencies to re-think their current policies and strategies in relation to this very vulnerable group. The Virtual Head must have the ability to be involved across LA directorates to address the problems of groups working in isolation and effectively bring about necessary changes. The Virtual School Head is also part of a pan-London network of Virtual Headteachers. The Virtual School Head line manages the team of Assessment and Quality Assurance Managers, LAC Education Advisors and the full time Liaison Officer.

**LAC EDUCATION ADVISOR**

The Looked After Children Education Advisor has direct case management, decision making and organisation for a case load of Looked After Children. The LAC Education Advisor will coordinate PEP meetings, and will also provide advice, guidance and outreach to children and professionals associated with their caseload. This may also involve acting as commissioner, to secure additional support for children using the LAC Pupil Premium.

**PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP)**

The Personal Education Plan is a statutory requirement and all [children in care](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/children-families/childrensocialcare/children_in_care_services/hvs/hvs-faq.htm#section20) **must** have a Personal Education Plan as part of their care plan. The Care Plan is incomplete without a current PEP. The PEP should be initiated by the child’s social worker, in partnership with the designated teacher for LAC at the school. The Virtual School ensures the PEP meetings take place and that the PEP is fit for purpose and designed to support the LAC in achieving and progressing well.

**PUPIL PREMIUM (PP)**

The Virtual School is responsible for the Pupil Premium Budget for LAC and for discussing with schools and other professionals how the PP is used to the benefit of the looked after children educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP). Looked After Children are entitled to Pupil Premium of £1900.

**A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE POST**

If you wish to have an informal conversation about this post before or after applying, please contact: Rosemarie Zaubzer, Virtual School Head, on tel: 020 8770 6740 or email: [rosemarie.zaubzer@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:rosemarie.zaubzer@sutton.gov.uk)

**INTERVIEW INFORMATION**

Candidates will be shortlisted and successful candidates for interview notified by close of business on **Thursday 26th October.** The interviews for this post will be held on **Tuesday 31st October 2017** The selection process will include a short presentation and an interview.

**SALARY**

The salary for this post is Soulbury 2-4 plus Outer London Weighting Allowance. The salary will therefore be: £37, 299 - 39, 612 FTE. Salary is paid by Direct Bank Transfer on the last working day of the month. As the post requires some travel, the cost of this is met by mileage or travel claims. Some travel can be pre-booked and paid directly by the service.

**HOURS OF WORK**

The post/s are part-time and usual hours of work are from 9a.m.–5p.m, although some flexibility is required in line with the needs of the service and where additional travel arrangements may be required. Some additional hours may be available during busy periods.

**PENSION**

Under the Social Security Act 1986 you have the right to make your own pension arrangements.  On appointment, you will automatically become a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme. You will be automatically included in that scheme unless you opt out.

**CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT**

Conditions of appointment are governed by the Regulations for Local Government

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The postholder must at all times carry out her/his job responsibilities with due regard to the Council’s Equal Opportunities Policy.

**MEDICAL REPORT**

Appointment is subject to a satisfactory medical report.

## CRIMINAL RECORD BUREAU CHECKS

This post is exempt from the provisions of Section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 and is therefore subject to a Criminal Records Check.

Applicants are required to declare any convictions, cautions or bind-over even if they would for other purposes be regarded as spent. The disclosure of a criminal record, or other information, will not debar you from employment unless we consider that it makes you unsuitable for appointment in the post you have applied for. In making this decision we will consider the nature of the offence(s), when it happened, what age you were when it was committed and its relevance to the post applied for having regard to any other relevant factors. In the event of employment any failure to disclose criminal convictions could result in dismissal or disciplinary action. Any information disclosed will remain confidential and will be considered only in relation to an application for positions to which the Order applies.

***In promoting equal opportunities, Cognus Limited welcomes applicants from all sections of the community and guarantees an interview to disabled people meeting the job requirements.***