# Job description

**Job Title:** Commissioning Officer

**Location:** Observatory House, Slough and remote by agreement

**Responsible To:** Commissioning lead

**Salary:** **Level 6** (£34,063 - £38,375 including local weighting of £1039)

If you’re looking for a challenging yet rewarding role, one where you’ll be supported every step of the way, Slough Children First could be the place for you.

Our latest focused Ofsted inspection visit was a positive demonstration of the progress we have made over the years and the improved service we offer children, young people and families in Slough. We don’t want to stop there. We know there are further improvements to be made which is why we’re looking to recruit the best people to help us achieve them.

We are now on the next stage of our improvement journey, and we are building and developing a transformation programme to assist us to ensure consistent quality practice and interventions for our children. You will be part of a small team which will implement our Improvement Plan and achieve a measurable impact on the quality of our service.

Are you passionate about making a positive and lasting difference to children and young people? If you like to think outside the box and work in an agile way, then these are the qualities that make Slough Children First an employer of choice.

If you’re looking for a new challenge and want to be part of an exciting time for children’s services in Slough then come and join us.

Slough is one of the most diverse places in the country outside of London and a great place to live or work. In fact it's the best place to live or work according to a survey by Glassdoor. Pleasant environments, above average salaries and a lower cost of living, mean an increased quality of life for employees. We're also one of the most accessible places to be, nestled on the corner of the M25, M4 and M40, and less than 20 minutes by train to Central London.

To apply for this role, visit: www.sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk/application

# Purpose

Supported by a Commissioning Assistant you will manage direct delivery of commissioned services and will be responsible for ensuring arrangements are made in a safe and effective manner.

You will work collaboratively with the Commissioning Team, Procurement and Legal colleagues to ensure all arrangements are legally compliant, support good practice and improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

This role ensures sustainable quality, safe services that are cost effective and local. Your role will include facilitating the commissioning process in the project, this includes working to identify and address issues with the goal of commissioning effective services that meet quality standards and functions as intended.

# Main Accountabilities

* This role will work Monday through Friday with the expectation to be in the office as a minimum twice weekly or as the organisation shifts. There may be need for occasional work outside of working hours but there will be no expectation to be on call.
* You manage the Commissioning Assistant (FTE), and you will be responsible for carrying out the assistant’s supervision, appraisals and staff related tasks
* Have oversight of all referrals into the service undertaking quality assurance to ensure maximum opportunity to achieve a package of support that meets assessed need
* Ensure oversight of service delivery including quality assurance of Supported accommodation and residential homes as required.
* Ensure the effective delivery of operational commissioning task that includes direct payments and packages of care.
* Provide direct support to families and manage complex situations including complaints
* Supplier relationships management across commissioned services and ensure contract oversight, supporting commissioning colleagues to develop business cases and fit for purposes procurement processes as required.
* Attend regular disability service panel, advising on issues pertinent to access and ensure timely response to requests and actions.
* Build positive working relationships with providers and stakeholders to support effective communication and information transfer
* Respond to all operational requests, managing priority and using time effectively
* Maintain activity data and feeding into corporate reporting as required.
* Manage Freedom of Information pertinent to commissioning.
* Support and promote joint working and collaboration.
* Provide insight into demand, sufficiency, opportunities and challenges.
* Support development of all arrangements through appropriate procurement
* Provide specialist support to ensure best value, to avoid breakdown of placements/services and for all notice arrangements.
* Lead on the negotiation of costs including review timescales and ensure communication with SW/PA/IRO and Finance to provide consistency

# Person specification

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| **Education, Training & Experience** | **Essential / Desirable** |
| * Have a minimum of at least 1 year experience of working within Children Services, or equivalent service sectors such as the voluntary and third sector or other relevant service sectors such as Adult social care, Health or Education.
* Have a good understanding of the commissioning agenda.
* Proven experience of managing workloads, priorities and meeting deadlines
* Proven experience of working collaboratively and in partnership
* Experience of managing the flow of confidential information, effectively recording information and using databases
* Experience of working directly with a range of stakeholders including families and managing complex conversations
* Demonstrate insight and understanding of the principles of safeguarding.
* Experience of using complex information systems
* Experienced line manager
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| **General & Specific Knowledge** | **Essential / Desirable** |
| * Excellent verbal and written communication skills
* Competent IT skills and experience of providing analytical reports
* Ability to work on one’s own initiative as well as being a strong team player.
* Manage and meet conflicting deadlines
* Commissioning fit for purpose, commercially competitive, quality and sustainable services.
* Ability to work constructively with other professionals and be able to maintain professional relationships with internal and external stakeholders
* Ability to think about creative solutions and test out the viability of options to meet identified outcomes.
* Ability to work well as a member of the team
* Adhere to SCF’s policies and procedures.
* A demonstrable appreciation and understanding of Slough children needs and value for public money
* Ability to demonstrate delivery of systems and processes that improve efficiency
* Proven experience of implementing new arrangements and the steps needed to ensure they are embedded into practice
* Have a proactive, solution focused approach to work
* Have an understanding of the challenges experienced by some children and the importance of providing quality support to maximize outcomes
* Educated to A- Level or Equivalent
* IT literate and have experience of using databases
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# Our Values

## Child-focused

Committed to outcomes for children and their families which ensure they are safe, secure and successful; putting the voice of the child at the heart of everything we do and delivering customer driven services, in collaboration with our colleagues and partners; working to improve lives and ensure effective safeguarding; offering the right support needed; working efficiently, so resources can be maximized for our children, young people and families; ensuring clear and appropriate communication.

## Honest and respectful

Being honest and respectful, as part of an inclusive culture where our communication is always professional; where everyone counts and knowledge of families and individuals, including cultural identity, along with their feedback and opinions are respected and recognised; a working environment where disrespectful and unprofessional behaviour is challenged; transparency and accountability in all decision-making.

## Improving constantly

Aspiring to achieve our vision through our everyday work, strong leadership and management; working to develop as an organisation and as individuals; a learning culture which reviews best practice, learns from mistakes and ensures customers have suitable opportunities to feed back and uses all available insight to measure progress and implement change; working flexibly to deliver the best value-for-money services.

## Looking ahead

Moving in the same direction with an ambition to provide excellent services, based on insight and smart working, while keeping the voice of the child at the heart of the organisation; benchmarking, horizon-scanning and anticipating challenges; working to identify opportunities to be cost-effective and future proof our organisation; identifying challenges and working towards solutions.

## Delivering together

Working as one organisation through solid teamwork to deliver the best services for children and young people; taking ownership and responsibility to ensure individuals, teams and the wider organisation delivers on aims; building strong relationships with all our customers to secure the best outcomes to make our children safe, secure and successful; connecting with other teams and partners to enhance services and improve efficiency.

# What our existing team love about Slough Children First

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“This is an exciting place to work. We continue to learn and grow and our accessible senior management team massively helps this process.”

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“It feels like ‘home’ - support, supervision, access to training and career progression are second to none.”

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“I continue to be excited about our improvement plans and working for an organisation where good outcomes for children are our focus.”

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“The innovative changes taking place in Slough are redefining and redesigning the services offered to children and young people.”

# Why we think you’ll love working for us

Slough Children First is an exciting place to be. We’re on a journey to improve services to vulnerable children and their families in Slough and we’re making great progress. We want to be the best and we’re looking for people with the skills, drive, energy and ambition to help us get there!

Here are some of the reasons our existing staff love working here:

* Market supplement of up to £5,600 for frontline social workers, depending on role
* Retention reward of £1,000 after 18 months for frontline social workers
* Relocation packages
* Manageable caseloads
* Clear career pathways
* Excellent training and development opportunities
* Tusker personal car lease scheme
* Access to the Blue Light card offering discounts at hundreds of high street and online stores
* New social work operating model
* Use of electric pool cars and bikes
* Staff recognition
* Flexible working
* Agile working supported by technology
* Friendly working environment and great colleagues
* Less than 20 minutes by train to Central London
* Terrific central location (close to M4, M40 and M25)

On top of all that, Slough is one of the most diverse places in the country outside of London and a great place to live or work. In fact it’s the best place to live or work according to a survey by Glassdoor. Pleasant environments, above average salaries and a lower cost of living, mean an increased quality of life for employees.

If you’re looking for a new challenge and want to be part of an exciting journey to turn children’s services around in Slough then come and join us.

# Safeguarding

Slough Children First works within the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, and all our policies and procedures can be viewed at:

https://www.proceduresonline.com/berks/slough/index.html

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies, when there are concerns about a child’s welfare. We will ensure that our concerns are discussed with parents/carers first, unless we have reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the child’s welfare.

The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 place greater significance on organisations being transparent and accountable in relation to their use of data. All organisations handling personal data need to have comprehensive and proportionate arrangements for collecting, storing, and sharing information.

The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe.

We actively support the Government’s Prevent Agenda to counter radicalism and extremism.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Sandra Davies, Head of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding.