

Kent County Council

Job Description: *Portage Practitioner*

Directorate:	Children, Young People and Education
Unit/Section:	SEN Assessment & Placement
Grade:	KSD
Responsible to:	Portage Officer and Portage County Manager

Purpose of the Job:

- Deliver Portage Groups and provide regular Portage Home Learning sessions to an agreed number of young children with significantly delayed development.
- Work collaboratively with parents and carers and other agencies to provide early education and support in accordance with the National Portage Association Guidelines and Kent's Portage Specification and local SEND arrangements.
- Work collaboratively with Specialist Teachers, Early Years Provisions, SIP Practitioners and other professionals to support the transition and inclusion of children from home based and group interventions to Early Years Provisions and/or School.
- To build effective, professional relationships with parents for them to feel confident in meeting the needs of their child.

Main duties and responsibilities:

- Provide an initial assessment of a child's strengths and needs with specific reference to the Kent Portage System and electronic recording of charts and activities. Keep electronic records of each child's strengths needs and progress made. Where appropriate facilitate joint sessions with other professionals.
- Deliver face to face or virtual Portage group sessions for specific groups of children. To informally assess the child's needs within the group and use strategies that families can try at home.
- To carry out initial visits and deliver Home Learning Sessions, weekly or fortnightly offering face to face and virtual sessions as directed by the Portage Officers. This would usually consist of 3 visits a day and three groups a week.
- Establish a relationship with families where parents and carers feel confident and work in partnership with the Portage Practitioner.

- Demonstrate an understanding of child development and use appropriate strategies and resources to devise and deliver individual Portage programmes for young children, varying these according to the child's needs.
- To organise and maintain equipment and resources within the toy and equipment store, identify when items need replacing or repairing. Clean and maintain the equipment stores and areas where equipment is kept.
- Use service recording methods to support planning with families to deliver Portage and regularly review each child's progress. Use the Portage System, Checklist and Profile to plan the aims for each child and use resources that reflect the aims selected to show the child's achievements.
- Make day-to-day judgements to prioritise visits under the direction and guidance of the Portage Officer.
- Participate and be involved in the planning and deliver other Portage events.
- Liaise with Early Years provisions, arrange, chair and take notes for nursery transition or planning meetings, where relevant, to share the child's progress and support the transition.
- Contribute to Educational Advice for JAM meetings for Statutory Assessment and EHC plans, LIFT and SENIF.
- Identify with Area Leads where children may need specialist interventions and complete the request as appropriate.
- Actively and effectively participate in Performance Management and supervision processes and maintain own professional development. Keep up to date with current Early Years Policy and practice, attending training events, meetings, conferences, etc.

The core elements of the role include:

- Developing play activities based on the child's level and interests.
- Completing assessments of the child's development.
- The completion of developmental reports for families and other professionals based on the Portage profile.
- Chairing and attending professional meetings.
- Working in partnership with families and other agencies.
- Using the small steps approach to plan learning experiences.
- Working closely with educational settings to support the child's transition and to share strategies and regular updates.
- Delivering Portage Groups and Home Learning Sessions.
- Delivering sessions face to face and virtually using MS teams.

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what their main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

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Person Specification: *Portage Practitioner*

The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

	CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a relevant professional qualification from Health, Education, or Social Care for working with young children and families at NVQ Level 3 or equivalent. • GCSE Level 5 English or equivalent. • Successfully completed the National Portage Association Portage Basic Workshop or willingness to undertake this. • To have completed the National Portage Association level 3 in Portage Practice or willingness to undertake this.
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a proven commitment and expertise in supporting young children with additional needs and their families. • Self-motivation and flexibility to be able to work independently and as part of a team.
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good interpersonal and communication skills to build and maintain effective working relationships to contribute to working partnerships. • The postholder must be able to exercise tact and discretion when handling situations and the appreciation of the confidential nature of information is essential. • Well-developed written communication skills. • Confident and competent in using ICT to record outcomes and use email, including data entry and report writing and deliver virtual sessions. • Good interpersonal and organisational skills with the ability to plan timetable, caseload, and traveling. • A Full UK Driving License – The Council is committed to making reasonable adjustments so whilst this job requires the jobholder to drive your application will still be considered if you are unable to drive due to a disability.
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show a good knowledge and understanding of child development to be able complete a baseline assessment for each child.
KENT VALUES AND CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES	Kent Values:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are brave. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge • We are curious to innovate and improve • We are compassionate, understanding and respectful to all • We are strong together by sharing knowledge • We are all responsible for the difference we make <p>Our values enable us to build a culture that is:</p> <p>Flexible/agile - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile</p> <p>Curious - constantly learning and evolving</p> <p>Compassionate and Inclusive - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all</p> <p>Working Together - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent</p> <p>Empowering - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions</p> <p>Externally Focused - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making</p>
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