



Role Profile

Role title	Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) Technical Officer
Corporate directorate	Together for Families
Service	Education
Grade	I
Reports to (role title)	Lead SEN AAC Adviser
Version	3
JE code	

Approving manager	Rachel Delourme
Date	August 2022

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Role Purpose

The Local Authority (LA) undertakes a wide range of statutory and non-statutory activity to ensure that effective education impacts positively on the outcomes for children and young people from birth to the age of twenty-five who have SEN (special educational needs) in Cornwall. Statutory responsibilities are set out in the Children and Family Act 2014 (part 3) and the SEND (special educational needs and/or disabilities) Code of Practice 0-25 2015.

The post holder will support children and young people to use high-tech Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). This is a county-wide role supporting children and young people with complex needs as well as the schools/settings they attend and their families.

The post holder will work as part of a multi-agency assessment team, working alongside colleagues in Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) to assess, recommend, provide and implement suitable high-tech communication aids dependent on individual need. The post holder will oversee a caseload of children and young people, and provide services such as the distribution, set up, maintenance and loan of equipment to individual children and young people. They will also co-ordinate the mounting of equipment to wheelchairs, where needed, and work with other relevant agencies to ensure the physical safety of the child or young person at all times. The post holder will also provide a large amount of bespoke training on the use of AAC devices to parents/carers and educational settings and monitor, long-term, the use of the AAC devices throughout the young person's educational career.

The post holder will work in a small team and in close partnership with the Lead Adviser for AAC, another AAC Technical Officer and a wide range of other professionals to improve the outcomes for children and young people who use high-tech AAC devices to communicate.

Dimensions

Annual financial accountability

The post holder is responsible for the efficient use of resources in their work and a range of individual resources e.g. laptop and assessments. They will also be responsible for contributing to the overview of resources, efficient ways to meet needs.

Management accountability

This role requires the post holder to manage and prioritise their own work to meet deadlines, be collaborative, informative and person centred in all aspects of work, and monitor and develop staff in schools, settings and services so that they also achieve this.

Accountabilities

Cornwall Council is a dynamic organisation and the particular duties and accountabilities may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the role or the level of responsibility entailed. Individual objectives will be agreed via the PDS appraisal process

- Work jointly with other colleagues through the Cornwall AAC Assessment Team to assess children and young people on their communication needs and identify suitable equipment to meet their needs
- Liaise with and co-ordinate the input of other services in the provision of appropriate wheelchair mounting systems
- Contribute to the EHCP process by attendance at EHCP review meetings and when necessary provide reports
- Recommend suitable EHCP outcomes and/or provision arrangements for students on the caseload and contribute to other statutory SEN processes as required
- Keep up-to-date with the latest AAC developments in both hardware and software and regularly assess these products in order to offer them to children and young people where required
- Work in a solution focussed way with other practitioners with children and young people at the centre, ensuring that the views of children and young people and their families are central to all work that is carried out
- Follow Special Educational Needs and Disability Support Services (SENDSS) processes in line with other services
- Contribute to the support of children using AAC in smooth effective transitions, at all transition stages, including class to class, and when preparing for adulthood
- Plan and deliver bespoke training packages to parents/ carers and support staff around AAC equipment and communication strategies
- Maintain thorough and accurate records of work carried out with educational settings, parents/carers and other services and agencies, in terms of support and equipment given and training provided
- Monitor the effectiveness of equipment and resources provided and evidence their impact
- Monitor the progress of all children and young people on the caseload in terms of AAC skills development
- Attend and contribute to reviews, case conferences and Team Around the Child meetings, as appropriate
- Carry out responsibilities with regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and within the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act.
- Undertake other duties appropriate to the grading of the post as required

Corporate Accountabilities

Information security and governance

Manage information in line with the Council's policies, procedures and guidance on subjects such as Data Protection, Freedom of Information, confidentiality, information

security and sharing, the information lifecycle and data quality, to ensure compliance and efficient and effective information governance

Safeguarding

Maintain awareness of Council policies and practices regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and/ or adults who may be at risk. Report concerns/ allegations in accordance with corporate guidance and procedures

Equality & Diversity

Work to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and report incidents as they occur. Treat everyone with dignity and respect and ensure individual's needs are met. Challenge inappropriate behaviour and language constructively, advising on alternatives so the opportunity for change can be considered

Key Objectives

- To provide assessments and provision of specialist equipment dependent on need
- To work collaboratively with educational settings, families and other settings to promote communication development and the educational progress of children and young people who use high-tech AAC
- To offer guidance and support in meeting the needs of children and young people who use AAC in their daily lives including in the classroom and the community
- To provide a robust training package so that schools and families are confident and proficient at programming the communication aid
- To monitor the loan service of specialist AAC equipment, providing technical support, replacements and the organisation of repairs
- To work closely with the children and young people's speech and language therapists in order to improve the communication outcomes for the individual.
- To work collaboratively with other SEND Support Services to promote the provision and support offered for children and young people with a SEND
- To support educational settings in improving their provision around high-tech AAC in line with the Graduated Response to SEND
- To work within the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015)

Competencies and Other Requirements

We use the following criteria below to assess your suitability for the role; please refer to the recruitment & selection column to establish at which stage the criteria are assessed. Requirements assessed at the 'Application' stage represent the minimum essential requirement for shortlisting purposes

Behaviours	Recruitment and selection
<p>Working Together You understand and focus on customer needs and work well with colleagues and partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You understand and are attentive to the needs of your customers • You listen to the views of others and seek them out • You support and show consideration for others • You work well with colleagues and partners and acknowledge the different ideas, perspectives and backgrounds of others • You are committed to the protection and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults • You share information and expertise with others • You are honest, you respect and you build relationships of trust • You share your achievements and acknowledge the achievements of others 	<p>Application and interview</p>
<p>Personal Responsibility You take responsibility for your work, your environment and your development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are trustworthy and reliable • You pay attention to your own health, safety and wellbeing and that of others • You acknowledge errors, report them as appropriate and play your part in addressing them • You appropriately challenge unhelpful behaviour • You seek feedback and review your own contribution • You are open to change and improvement • You take responsibility for your development • You are enthusiastic about and take pride in your work 	<p>Application and interview</p>
<p>Resourceful You apply expertise, solve problems and make improvements to deliver good customer outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You plan and organise your work and manage your time effectively 	<p>Application and interview</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You gather relevant information, analyse it and make timely informed decisions in the course of your work • You are flexible and adaptable • You respond constructively to change • You demonstrate financial awareness relevant to the job you do • You use your initiative and are creative in problem solving • You deliver results and manage customer expectations 	
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Knowledge, skills & experience	Recruitment and selection
Knowledge of content and application of key legislation e.g. Education Act 1996, Children and Families Act 2014, Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015)	Application
Up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation and guidance in relation to working with, and the safeguarding of, vulnerable children and young people	Application and Interview
Skills in delivering online and face-to-face training to a range of audiences	Application
Good organisational skills and ability to prioritise work within time constraints.	Interview
Able to work independently as well as functioning as part of a team	Application
Familiar with a range of current high-tech Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) resources and strategies	Application and Interview
Ability to adapt quickly to use new and developing technologies effectively	Application
Excellent written and verbal communication skills with a range of people in a range of contexts	Application

Other requirements	Recruitment and selection
Evidence of recent experience of supporting children or young people with communication difficulties	Application
High level IT skills and ability to use of a range of information and communication technology (ICT) as an integral element of work practice	Application
Ability to troubleshoot simple technical problems and offer advice and support to resolve them	Interview
Ability to travel in a time efficient way to different parts of Cornwall as required	YES
This position is subject to a criminal records disclosure check	YES

This is a politically restricted position	NO
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