

Job Profile

Job Title: Director of Relational Practice
Job Grade: Level 7 (Tier 2 – Chief Officer)
Salary Range: From £90,000 p.a up to a maximum of £120,000 p.a.
Hours: This is a permanent post (full-time hours 37 hours per week)

About Camden

Camden is place somewhere everyone can thrive, by making our borough the best place to live, work, study and visit. We're not just home to UK's fast-growing economy, we're also home to the most important conversations happening today. And we're making radical social change a reality, so that nobody gets left behind. Here's where you can help decide a better future for us all.

Camden is committed to all its children having the best start in life, enjoying an excellent school experience in an ambitious and inclusive environment, and having opportunities to lead flourishing lives. Camden has a strong track-record in delivering excellent services for children and families across Universal and Early Help services, Children's Social Care and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services. We are committed to delivering these services to address inequalities and improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children and families in our borough. This is reflected in the Missions that set out the priorities for the council – these include a focus on opportunities for young people, food poverty and sustainability, and diversity.

Equity and Excellence are at the heart of Camden's Education Strategy. Camden is proud of its family of schools and their commitment to supporting children and families throughout the borough. We continue to develop a collaborative network of schools where schools can pool resources and learn from each other, through research practice, so that we maintain the high standards which we expect for all our children.

Our services are invested in a model of practice that is rooted in a relational and systemic approach to our work with families, seeking to collaborate in partnership with the communities that we work with, and listening to the voices of children and young people. We are committed to delivering services through an anti-racist approach that advances social justice in the borough. We have now created a new role – the Director of Relational Practice – to lead this approach in Camden.

Our ambition is to build on these strong foundations and continue to evolve our approach to supporting families. Drawing on the collaborative approaches set out in our practice model, our aim is to develop a vision of Family Help that is deeply rooted in local communities and draws on the strength of local networks, partners and schools. We aim to develop a centre for relational practice that supports this approach across children's services and works with other council services and external organisations.

We are developing an academy that supports practitioners throughout their careers. This will support those in the early stages of their career, oversee our approach to apprenticeships, and mentor and develop practitioners, managers and supervisors across the full range of children's services, including youth services, SEND, Early Help and social work. Through the academy the aim is to attract and retain the very best people across the sector, embed the practice model, and support colleagues to make progress throughout their careers.

We are determined to continue to evolve, improve and develop our services to children, young people and their families. We are committed to do this in partnership with the communities that we serve. We have developed a relational approach to quality assurance that ensures the voices of children and their families are central to the way we learn and improve. This approach will also ensure that practitioners who are closest to the work with families have a key role in our quality assurance processes, influencing the way we learn from what works in practice and how we continue to evolve service delivery.

This role is a senior manager in the Children and Learning Directorate. It is responsible for leading our relational practice model, overseeing workforce development and shaping our approach to quality assurance. This role also oversees the support for the Safeguarding Children's Partnership. This is a

key post in delivering Camden's ambition for Equity and Excellence and enabling our most vulnerable children to thrive.

About the role

The purpose of this role is to provide strong and visible leadership across the Children and Learning Directorate for the practice model, workforce development, quality assurance and partnerships. The Director of Relational Practice will also play a critical role in the leadership of the Camden approach to Relational Practice – this will be a highly visible role providing influence and direction across the Council, the partnership and the wider local government sector. Camden aspires to influence and shape the national agenda in delivering a collaborative approach to working with residents. This role will raise the council's profile, provide leadership at a national level, and increase capacity to shape the response to social care reforms.

We are proud of our approach to practice across children's services in Camden. This has evolved through the development of the Camden model of practice (social work), and the Resilient Families framework (Early Help). With the creation of the Children and Learning Directorate earlier this year, we are bringing together this work to develop a single approach to practice across all our services.

This will be a relational model based upon systemic principles, and rooted in a restorative, strengths-based approach to working with families. The Director of Relational Practice will take a lead on developing, supporting and embedding this approach to practice across the Children and Learning Directorate. This role will also take on a wider leadership role to support the adoption of a relational way of working across a wider range of council services. We are also developing a Centre for Relational Practice, which will enable Camden to work with other organisations to support this approach more widely. This role will provide leadership across the sector, on a regional and national basis to deliver a sector-led improvement offer to other Local Authorities.

The people who work across the Children and Learning Directorate are our most valuable asset, and critical to improving outcomes for children and their families. We provide a strong offer of learning and support to our staff across these services, and we have developed a learning academy to support this work and provide a clear and broad offer for development. Through a unique partnership with the Tavistock and Portman Centre, we offer an accredited foundation course in systemic work for all practitioners working directly with children and families. This is enhanced through an offer of in-practice coaching and learning alongside experienced clinical practitioners. This role will oversee the statutory functions of the Principal Social Worker to develop the offer to newly-qualified social workers and set out a clear career progression pathway for all those involved in practice with children and families across the directorate, including social work, family support, SEND, and youth work. The Director of Relational Practice will lead the workforce development strategy, including the approach to attraction, recruitment, retention and progression. This role will oversee a range of statutory functions, including overseeing the monitoring and investigations relating to professional standards and conducting workforce health-checks.

We have a strong track record in delivering excellent services for children and families, but we are not complacent. There is always room to evolve and improve services, and learning from the experiences of children, parents and carers, and practitioners is vital. Camden is committed to being a learning organisation and placing the voice of the resident at the centre of what we do. We have developed a relational approach to quality assurance, where we work with children, their families and practitioners to understand the experience of delivering or receiving our services, the impact they have, and how we can improve them. This role will be responsible for overseeing the range of quality assurance activities across the directorate and overseeing action plans emanating from our learning. This includes a wide range of participation and co-production work with children and families, with the young inspectors programme and the Family Advisory Board at the heart of this work. This role will play a key role in preparing for and responding to OFSTED inspections of Children's Services.

The post-holder will be an experienced practitioner with a strong track-record of leadership across children's services. This role will require in-depth theoretical knowledge of social work and systemic family therapy, with experience of designing and delivering professional development programmes. This will include a strong and clear presentational style and a clear approach to teaching and learning. The Director of Relational Practice will take a leading role in engaging with academic partners and

overseeing the evaluation of the relational practice approach. They will develop and lead innovative evidence-based programmes. They will work with academic partners to create a 'community of practice' to enhance the Centre for Relational Practice. The post-holder should be used to working independently and leading the development of a practice model, requiring self-sufficiency and experience of autonomous decision-making. This role will represent the council in a range of regional and national forums, and ensure that the voices of residents are strongly represented.

The Director of Relational Practice role is also responsible for overseeing support across the Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership, working with the Independent Scrutineer and ensuring effective engagement from across Children's services with the activity of the partnership.

This post is a member of the Children and Learning Directorate Management Team and will play a key role in the development of services across the Directorate. As a senior leader, the post will be responsible for leading on key elements of the council's neighbourhoods approach working with services across the council and with its partners.

The delivery and improvement of good quality and relevant services to Camden residents underpins everything we do. This role contributes to this ambition as it is vital to children's learning and well-being and, as the children move to adulthood, the well-being of the community.

About you

Qualifications and Experience

You must have a degree (or equivalent) and have substantial experience in Children's Services in a local authority. You must be social work qualified and hold a clinical qualification in Systemic Family Therapy and experience in supervising clinicians.

You should have the following knowledge and skills:

- An excellent, in-depth, current knowledge of children's services legislation and practice
- The ability to provide and over-see clinical support for professionals affected by work-related trauma
- The ability to design and communicate a systemic and relational approach to practice in a clear and accessible way.
- An ability to teach key elements of systemic practice and social work.
- Experience, knowledge and ability to deliver case consultation and supervision of high-risk, high-profile safeguarding work, including exploitation and contextual safeguarding cases.
- Ability to represent the council across regional and national forums, and clearly articulate the ambition and aspiration of the Centre for Relational Practice
- Experience of working closely with politicians, members of cabinet and the Leader of the council. Ability to support member development and understanding of issues across children's social care.
- Experience of working with academic partners to develop and evaluate programmes of intervention.
- Experience of leading on children's social care improvement work, including leadership and practice development.
- A clear commitment to working to improve the quality of services to all children, particularly our most vulnerable children and those in care.
- Experience of designing, implementing and evaluating a workforce development strategy, including developing a career progression approach to retention.
- Experience of delivering presentations and workshops to support cross-regional approaches to improvement and practice development.
- A proven ability to work collaboratively with parents and carers as partners, both through individual case-work and in co-producing strategies and provision
- Experience of delivering practice and clinical supervision to social workers and systemic practitioners
- A good understanding of local safeguarding partnerships breadth of organisations across the community

- Experience of leading organisational and cultural change programmes, including effective strategies to communicate and engage with the workforce
- Excellent communication and staff management skills, including high expectations of performance
- A good awareness of financial prioritisation and practice
- Proven experience of good relationships with key stakeholders, including councillors, schools, parents/carers, the voluntary sector
- A commitment to partnership working in a complex environment

Work Environment:

This post is based at Camden Council Offices, 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG, next to Kings Cross and St Pancras International stations.

The postholder will be expected to be on site, including in schools, for many of the days but they may also work from home and communicate on Teams/Zoom for some of the time, as appropriate.

Budget Management Responsibilities:

The budget of the 4 areas within this role is as follows:

- Centre for Relational Practice
- Workforce Development
- Quality Assurance
- Safeguarding Partnership

The full budget for the Division will be in region of £1 million per annum including the staffing and non-staffing budgets and managing pathfinder and other government time-limited funding pots to progress change agendas across Children's Services.

People Management Responsibilities:

The postholder is responsible for the following teams:

- Centre for Relational Practice
- Workforce Development (Children and Learning Academy)
- Quality Assurance (across the whole Directorate and the Safeguarding partnership)

This new Division will have a workforce of up to 40 FTE over time.

Relationships:

Good relationships with all staff and partners are essential. The postholder will be working closely with a range of people, including:

- Councillors
- Schools (Headteachers and Governors)
- Parents/carers
- Chief Executive of Camden Learning
- Chair of Camden Learning
- Colleague directors and Heads of Service in Camden
- Social workers
- Health colleagues, including CAMHS
- Department for Education

Over to you

We're ready to welcome your ideas, your views, and your rebellious spirit. Help us redefine how we're supporting people, and we'll redefine what a career can be. If that sounds good to you, we'd love to talk

Is this role Politically Restricted?

This is a politically restricted post.

Diversity & Inclusion

At Camden, we value and celebrate difference and encourage diversity in all respects. Our diverse workforce ensures we represent our communities to the best of our ability and enables us to make better decisions. Because of this, we particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian and other ethnic groups, those who identify as LGBT+, neurodiverse and disabled people. Click [Diversity and Inclusion](#) for more information on our commitment.

Agile Working

At Camden we view work as an activity, not a place. We focus on performance, not presenteeism. We create trusting relationships, we embrace innovation rather than bureaucracy and we value people. Collaboration is the Camden way, silo working isn't.

At Camden we are proud to be one of Hire Me My Way's inaugural campaign supporters. Hire Me My Way is a national campaign led by Timewise, designed to increase the volume of good quality jobs that can be worked flexibly in the UK (www.HireMeMyWay.org.uk). Hire Me My Way aims to treble the number of available good quality flexible jobs to 1 million by 2020.

Asking for Adjustments

Camden is committed to making our recruitment practices barrier-free and as accessible as possible for everyone. This includes making adjustments or changes for disabled people, neurodiverse people or people with long-term health conditions. If you would like us to do anything differently during the application, interview or assessment process, including providing information in an alternative format, please contact us on 020 7974 6655, at resourcing@camden.gov.uk or post to 5 Pancras Square, London, N1C 4AG,