

JOB DESCRIPTION	
Job Title:	Paralegal (Practice Area: SEN)
Office:	Pathfinder Legal Services Limited
Directorate:	Community Care and Litigation
Reports to:	Lawyer/Principal Paralegal (Practice Area: SEN)
Grade:	B
Location:	Huntingdon, Shefford or Northampton (but able to travel to other offices as required)
Hours:	Full Time (37 hours)
OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE JOB	
To provide paralegal and legal support to a team of Lawyers who provide a range of public sector and not for profit clients with a professional and innovative legal service predominantly in respect of special educational needs (SEN), education matters generally and other areas of legal practice where necessary.	
MAIN ACCOUNTABILITIES	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assist a team of Lawyers and act as a point of contact on a variety of cases, to include but not limited to, taking instructions and giving advice, carrying out research, preparing applications, drafting documents and correspondence, commissioning and instructing expert witnesses, liaising with witnesses, attending meetings and providing advice and representation in courts or tribunals. 2. To manage a case load comprising mainly SEN Tribunal cases and to clerk school admission and exclusion appeals, ensuring awareness of safeguarding responsibilities, compliance with statutory duties and obligations and to protect the best interest of the client organisations. 3. To ensure the effective identification and awareness of risks associated with the relevant areas of legal practice. 4. Develop and provide legal input into training courses, briefing notes and legal clinic/surgeries for a range of professional clients. Where required, assist Lawyers with the provision of training to clients in specialist areas of law. 5. Provide cover and support, including in times of absence, to other Paralegals based within the wider Adult Social Care & Litigation Service. 6. To make a positive contribution to the Adult Social Care & Litigation Service and contribute to the development, training or mentoring of colleagues where required. 7. Support the Pathfinder Legal Services Leadership Team in building and maintaining effective working relationships with clients to ensure the delivery of a seamless and client focussed service. 8. Support the Pathfinder Legal Services Leadership Team by complying with all Legal Services' practice management requirements including time recording, billing, Lexcel and other accreditation schemes, and compliance with all policies and procedures. 9. Support the Pathfinder Legal Services Leadership Team in developing and maintaining effective partnerships, networks and joint working arrangements to ensure the most effective provision of Legal Services to meet the needs and aspirations of clients. 	

10. To carry out other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of the job description as required by the Director of Pathfinder Legal Services, Heads of Service or Principal Lawyers from time to time and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.
11. To buddy, train and support colleagues.

This job description reflects the key duties to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the key duties may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

PERSON SPECIFICATION			
POSITION:	Paralegal (Practice Area:SEN)	REPORTS TO:	Lawyer/Principal Lawyer (Practice Area: SEN)
SERVICE:	Community Care and Litigation	OFFICE:	Pathfinder Legal Services
GRADE:	B	LOCATION:	Huntingdon, Northampton, Shefford (but with to travel to other offices as required)

The following criteria are appropriate for this post. You must meet the essential criteria in order to be shortlisted for the post and it would be advantageous if you meet the desirable criteria.

QUALIFICATIONS	
<u>Essential</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educated to degree level or equivalent or qualified by experience 	<u>Desirable</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives GDL and/or LPC qualified (or working towards gaining qualification)
KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE	
<u>Essential</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of working in a legal practice, ideally within a litigation practice area Experience of holding case files, drafting pleadings and witness statements Knowledge of court and tribunal procedures Ability to conduct legal research, interpret legislation and summarise the key points of case law Speaking in public (experience may be by way of advocacy, delivering presentations or training or participating in meetings.) 	<u>Desirable</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of and ability to apply local government law, especially in relation to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General litigation matters Children's social care Judicial Review Education law Experience of working in a Local Authority setting

SKILLS

Essential

- Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with a diverse range of persons/organisations
- Ability to work under own initiative, and to look ahead, anticipate challenges and deal with them pro-actively
- Ability to plan and prioritise work effectively to meet own objectives and those of the team
- Ability to evaluate information in complex situations
- Ability to work under pressure, meet tight deadlines, adapt to change and to manage competing priorities
- Team player with an approachable, adaptable and positive attitude towards work with a willingness to provide cover in colleagues' absence and to pick up work outside of own specialism if necessary
- Excellent client care skills and a commitment to client focus and continuing service development
- Ability to travel to meetings at client offices and to work in other office locations on a regular basis
- Ability to work to time recording targets
- Drive, enthusiasm, versatility and self-motivation
- Computer literate with experience in using Microsoft office, legal research tools and bespoke software including case management systems

Desirable

- Flexibility with office hours – working to the demands of the job
- A commitment to Lexcel/Quality Management Standards

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & HEALTH & SAFETY

Essential

- Ability to demonstrate awareness and understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs
- Ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of, and commitment to, health & safety