

Context statement

Job title: Specialist Teacher – Cognition and Learning
Directorate/Service/Team: Children's Services, Learning & Belonging

Organisation structure

Reporting to: Principal Educational Psychologist

Context of work

The Specialist Teacher role delivers a core service which includes Dorset's Expertise Offer (Experts at Hand), a core element of Dorset's SEND Reform Programme and Best Education for All strategy. The Expertise Offer has been established to strengthen inclusive practice across Dorset's education system by providing specialist advice, coaching, training and consultation to educational settings and professionals.

The purpose of the role is to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND by building the confidence, knowledge and capability of the wider workforce. The postholder will work strategically with schools, early years settings, colleges, Inclusion Bases and multi-agency partners to ensure that expertise is shared effectively and that children and young people can access the right support at the right time.

The role reflects Dorset's commitment to developing an inclusive education system where children and young people can thrive within their local communities wherever possible. Through early intervention, collaborative working and evidence-informed practice, Specialist Teachers help educational settings respond effectively to need, reduce barriers to learning and improve attendance, participation, progress and belonging.

The postholder will contribute to the delivery of Dorset's SEND Reform Implementation Plan and support the development of inclusive provision across the county. A key aspect of the role is to transfer specialist knowledge and skills to education professionals, enabling sustainable improvements in practice and reducing reliance on specialist intervention over time.

The Specialist Teacher team is part of Dorset's Learning and Belonging Service and works collaboratively with all educational settings including schools, early years settings, colleges, Inclusion Bases, families and partner agencies to strengthen inclusive practice, develop workforce expertise and improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The service contributes directly to Dorset Council's ambition to deliver the Best Education for All and ensure that children and young people feel welcome, included, safe and able to achieve within their local educational community.

The role combines strategic support, consultation, workforce development and quality improvement activities and may contribute specialist advice to Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA), annual reviews and wider SEND processes where appropriate.



Specialist area focus – Cognition and Learning

The Specialist Teacher for Cognition and Learning provides specialist expertise relating to learning difficulties and barriers to learning, supporting children and young people whose progress may be impacted by difficulties with literacy, numeracy, language, information processing and independent learning. The role supports educational settings across all age ranges 3-25 to implement evidence-informed approaches that improve access to learning, raise attainment and ensure that children and young people receive appropriate support through a graduated approach.

Through consultation, coaching, modelling and advisory support, the Specialist Teacher may:

- advise schools and settings on evidence-informed approaches to literacy, numeracy and cognition and learning needs
- support practitioners to develop effective teaching strategies and adaptive classroom practice to meet a range of learning needs
- provide guidance on assessment, target setting, provision planning and the graduated approach for children and young people with cognition and learning needs
- support schools to identify and respond to difficulties relating to literacy, numeracy, memory, processing, attention and independent learning
- Provide specialist advice to schools to support children and young people who are experiencing significant literacy difficulties.
- advise on provision for children and young people with moderate learning difficulties and other learning needs that impact educational progress
- contribute to workforce development through training, coaching and modelling effective practice
- support educational settings to develop inclusive approaches that improve access to learning and reduce barriers to achievement
- provide advice regarding individual pupils and cohorts where learning needs are affecting engagement, progress or attainment
- develop resources, guidance and examples of effective practice across Dorset's education system

Whilst each Specialist Teacher holds a designated area of expertise, all postholders work collaboratively as part of Dorset's Expertise Offer, sharing knowledge and supporting a joined-up approach to inclusion across Dorset's education system.

About Dorset Children's Services



'Dorset Children Thrive' is our locality model to deliver Children's Services. It brings together services and support for children and families into six

integrated locality teams. The locality teams include Family help, Children's Social Care and Learning and Belonging. Through our integrated structure, colleagues work in multi-disciplinary integrated teams, specialist teachers are part of the Learning and Belonging strand.



Travel requirement

This position has a significant travel requirement. This means that there is a requirement for a vehicle (or transport deemed to be suitable by the Council) to be available on most working days in order to carry out normal duties. Employees in positions with a significant travel requirement are required to provide a replacement vehicle if their usual vehicle is not available over an extended period.

Other information

The ability to converse at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken English is essential for the post.

An enhanced DBS is required for this post.

Context statement prepared by:			
Manager	Clare Anderson	Date	17/09/2026

