

Commissioning and Sufficiency Manager

Help shape the future of children's care, regional sufficiency and collaborative commissioning across the East Midlands.

Advertised: 14th August 2026

Closing date: 27th September 2026



Welcome

The East Midlands is creating one of the country's new [Regional Care Co-operatives \(RCCs\)](#): a major public sector reform programme designed to improve outcomes for children, strengthen regional sufficiency and support collaborative improvement across children's care.

Covering all ten upper-tier local authorities across the East Midlands, the RCC will bring together regional commissioning, sufficiency planning, fostering development, market engagement, data and improvement activity through a powerful new collaborative model.

This is not simply another programme. It is a unique opportunity to help establish a new regional infrastructure for children's care: ambitious, practical, evidence-led and deeply rooted in partnership working across local government, health, youth justice, policing and the voluntary sector.

As the East Midlands RCC is established, you will play an important role in bringing partners together around this shared ambition. Working as part of the founding RCC team, you will help build the relationships, culture and foundations needed to create lasting change across the region. We are looking for people who can inspire collaboration, build trust across complex systems and keep the voices of children, young people and carers at the heart of everything they do. Most important is your belief in what this programme can achieve.

We hope this pack gives you a sense of the opportunity ahead and the difference this role can make. We look forward to hearing from you.

East Midlands Directors of Children's Services



Role Overview

Job Title	Commissioning and Sufficiency Manager
Salary & benefits	£50,000–£60,000 a year, 27 days annual leave plus bank holidays, generous pension scheme, hybrid working arrangements. Secondment arrangements may differ.
Start date	November 2026
Contract type	Fixed-term contract or secondment opportunity until 31 st March 2028, with continuation subject to funding and approval. Any secondment arrangement will be subject to agreement with the successful candidate's current employer.
Basis	Full time (37.5 hours)
Employment location	The role will be based in Leicester, with regular travel across the East Midlands.
Job category	Children's social care and commissioning, sufficiency, market shaping and improvement, programme management.
Host organisation	RCC roles will be hosted by SDSA Leicester on behalf of the East Midlands local authorities.
Key responsibilities	Support the delivery of regional commissioning and sufficiency activity across the East Midlands, working with local authorities, providers and partners to analyse markets, coordinate workstreams, support provider engagement and turn regional commissioning priorities into practical improvements for children and young people.



Regional Collaboration

The East Midlands already has a strong culture of collaboration through its Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance (RIIA), long-established regional commissioning networks, one established regional fostering hub and strong collaboration between local authority fostering services across the wider region. The RCC will work alongside the established Foster for East Midlands Councils (FFEMC) partnership and support wider collaboration between local authority fostering services across the region by providing a natural strategic framework for continuing collaboration, shared learning and alignment.

The RCC will build on this mature foundation to create a genuinely influential regional platform for change.

East Midlands RIIA

The East Midlands Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance (RIIA) has become one of the strongest examples of sustained regional collaboration nationally. Its recent Impact Evaluation demonstrated:

- strong regional trust
- mature peer support
- influential leadership networks
- innovation across workforce, SEND, commissioning and social care reform
- tangible impact on improvement capacity across the region

The RCC will work closely alongside the RIIA, benefiting from established Heads of Service networks, commissioning collaboration, peer challenge infrastructure, workforce development and a mature culture of collective problem-solving.

About SDSA

The RCC Core Team will be hosted by [SDSA](#), the East Midlands' long-established business support partner.

SDSA is a not-for-profit organisation with a strong track record of supporting education, children's services and regional collaboration since 2005. It provides programme infrastructure, commissioning support and partnership coordination across the region and already works extensively with the East Midlands Directors of Children's Services (EMDCS) and RIIA.

Hosting the RCC within SDSA provides stability, agility, established resources and systems, regional connectivity and the ability to mobilise quickly. The core office base for this post will be at the SDSA office in Leicester City Centre, with regular in-person collaboration expected, alongside flexible and hybrid working arrangements.



About the role

The RCC Commissioning and Sufficiency Manager will support the operational development and delivery of the East Midlands RCC's commissioning, sufficiency and provider-engagement work.

The role will help turn the regional ambitions into practical delivery activity by coordinating workstreams, analysing markets, supporting pilots and maintaining momentum across partners. Working across commissioning, sufficiency and provider engagement, the postholder will support the operational development of regional workstreams and help ensure that collaborative ideas become real improvements in practice.

The role offers an exciting opportunity for someone who enjoys making things happen, building relationships and working at the intersection of strategy and delivery. We are looking for an organised, positive and practical professional who can coordinate complex work, build strong relationships and help turn regional ideas into delivery.

Experience and Background

We are open to candidates from a range of professional backgrounds and recognise that exceptional leaders do not always emerge through conventional career pathways. Successful candidates are likely to be able to demonstrate significant experience within children's services, public services, commissioning, partnership environments or similarly complex systems.

What matters most is your ability to work across systems, build relationships, inspire confidence and help turn regional ambition into practical improvement for children and families.

Key Candidate Attributes

- Strong organisational and delivery capability
- Enthusiasm for practical problem-solving
- Ability to work positively across partnerships
- Interest in commissioning and sufficiency development
- Strong communication and coordination skills
- Flexible and adaptable approach
- Confidence managing multiple workstreams
- Ability to maintain momentum and focus in evolving environments
- Positive and constructive mindset



Role Description

▶ Commissioning delivery and workstreams

- Support RCC commissioning and sufficiency workstreams, pilots and delivery plans.
- Coordinate actions, milestones, risks and dependencies, keeping activity focused and on track.
- Help turn regional priorities into practical tools, processes and improvements.

▶ Market analysis and provider engagement

- Undertake market analysis, provider mapping and research to identify gaps, risks and opportunities.
- Support provider engagement, workshops and consultation across fostering, residential and specialist markets.
- Maintain accurate market intelligence and share clear findings with RCC and local authority colleagues.

▶ Operational commissioning and procurement

- Coordinate operational commissioning tasks, including specifications, options appraisals and procurement support.
- Work with procurement, legal, finance and contract colleagues to support compliant and deliverable activity.
- Help monitor outcomes, performance, value for money and learning from pilot activity.

▶ Partnerships and continuous improvement

- Build positive working relationships across the ten East Midlands local authorities, providers and partners.
- Organise meetings, prepare concise reports and ensure agreed actions are followed through.
- Support co-production and ensure children, young people, families, carers and practitioners inform the work.



Person Specification

Qualifications and professional development		Essential (E) Desirable (D)
Degree-level qualification, relevant professional qualification or equivalent experience.		E
Experience supporting commissioning, service development, projects or improvement activity in a public service or partnership setting.		E
Commissioning, procurement, project-management or commercial qualification.		D
Delivery and organisation		
Strong organisational and project-delivery skills.		E
Ability to coordinate multiple workstreams, priorities, deadlines, actions and risks while maintaining momentum and attention to detail.		E
Experience supporting pilots, service reviews, mobilisation or continuous-improvement activity.		D
Commissioning and sufficiency		
Understanding of the commissioning cycle and an interest in sufficiency, service development and improving outcomes.		E
Ability to support specifications, options appraisal, procurement and performance monitoring.		E
Experience of children's social care, fostering, residential, specialist or placement commissioning.		D
Markets, data and analysis		
Ability to analyse information, map providers and present clear findings.		E
Confident using data and market intelligence to identify gaps, trends, risks and opportunities.		E
Experience of provider mapping, demand analysis, dashboards, benchmarking or market position statements.		D
Communication and partnerships		
Strong communication, coordination and relationship-building skills.		E
Ability to work positively across organisational boundaries, organise effective engagement and follow through agreed actions.		E
Experience working with providers, health, local authorities, voluntary organisations or regional partnerships.		D
Personal approach and values		
Practical, flexible, adaptable and solutions focused.		E
Strong commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people.		E
Confident in evolving environments, constructive under pressure and committed to improving outcomes for children and young people, inclusion, transparency and responsible use of public resources.		E
Experience of co-production or engaging children, families, carers or practitioners in service development.		D
Experience of working with senior leaders, providers, health partners, national bodies or regional partnerships		D



Application process

Please apply by submitting the following three documents to jobs@sdsa.net:

- 1. CV** - including an explanation of any gaps in employment.
- 2. Supporting statement** - a maximum of two sides of A4 demonstrating how your knowledge, skills and experience meet the requirements set out in the application pack.
- 3. Application form** - a short form which captures your contact details, references and equal opportunities information. The form is available to [download here](#).

Interview process

Applicants who are shortlisted will be invited to take part in a selection process which will likely comprise of a formal interview, presentation and task. We will provide further information and guidance about the process in advance.

Interviews will be held at the SDSA Office in Leicester City Centre.

Questions

We welcome informal enquiries about the role. If you would like to discuss the opportunity in more detail or have any questions, please email jobs@sdsa.net outlining the nature of your query. We will then ensure that the most appropriate member of our team gets in touch with you.



Email applications to:
jobs@sdsa.net



Closing date for applications:
Sunday 27th September at 10pm



Successful applicants contacted:
By Friday 2nd October



Interviews held:
Week commencing 5th October



All applications will be acknowledged:
Via email, within 48 hours of receipt.

