

Kent County Council

Job Description: Head of SEN Assessment and Placement

Directorate:	Education, Learning and Skills
Grade:	KR15
Responsible to:	Director of Education Planning and Access

Purpose of the Job:

To work to the Director, Education Planning and Access, and be accountable for the statutory assessment of children and Young People's Special educational needs. Responsible and accountable for the local authority's SEN Strategy and its successful delivery including the strategic operation of the SEN Teams; ensuring the arrangement of provision for children with statements of special educational needs and the effectiveness and coherent delivery of services of the various stakeholders

Main Duties and responsibilities:

- To lead on and deliver the Directorate's strategy and policy making process for development of Special Education Needs in accordance with central Government, KCC and legislative demands, ensuring the needs of a wide-ranging client group are fully identified, having regard to the budgetary constraints of the Council.
- To oversee the successful development and implementation of the SEN pathfinder project, focusing on the pilot work for integrated education, health and care plans.
- To ensure suitable provision is arranged for children and young people with statements of special educational needs in accordance with SEN legislation and the SEN Code of Practice.
- To develop robust multi-agency assessment processes that minimize bureaucracy and increase parental confidence in the assessment process.
- Responsible for managing both SEN Assessments and the assessment process for young people (139A) currently managed by Connexions.
- To develop and revise service process, assessment criteria and protocols to conform to new legislation, national and local targets and performance indicators.
- To monitor the quality and efficiency of the service and provide evaluations and performance management reports for the Director of trends and needs identified within the County in order to measure effectiveness, assess outcomes and progress for learners and plan effectively for improvement.

- Develop effective business plans and performance management arrangements so that there can be effective reporting to Cabinet Members and Senior Managers against key plans, targets and performance indicators to ensure service objectives are achieved, Corporate and Government requirements are met and that the process of placing children into appropriate schools is not delayed unnecessarily.
- To lead and manage the team to ensure professional delivery which meets statutory requirements and Directorate policy within budget and in line with current developments and legislation.
- To ensure County-wide consistency and coherence of service delivery, in support of the highest standards of professional practice, working through and with multi-agency teams and partners to support the development of inclusive education.
- Support the Director in making critical decisions regarding the national SEN Tribunals and directing and managing the LA's response and defense of appeals.
- To effectively manage and monitor service performance against operational plan objectives, through effective methods of data collection and analysis. This includes effective liaison with national bodies to provide comparative data regarding judgments about effectiveness.
- Ensure the effective deployment of financial, technological and physical resources that effectively identify the needs of pupils and students with special educational needs providing advice to the Director Education Planning & Access.
- Responsible for the SEN budget. Monitor and report spending trends and predictions to ensure the service is able to operate within budget.
- To promote Equal Opportunities and anti-discriminatory activity.
- Respond to MPs, Members, Parents and others on behalf of the Corporate Director.
- In relation to your service represent the Corporate Director and the Council as required at meetings and relevant forums, lead partnership working across the County between schools, other statutory and voluntary agencies and services (including those in the independent sector); identifying and implementing innovative new service development opportunities; building trust and confidence in the Local Authority by helping bodies and individuals such as special, secondary and primary schools, parents and local councillors, understand legislative and policy initiatives

Corporate Responsibilities:

All senior staff will operate as one leadership and management community, connecting across services and drawing together strategy and delivery as appropriate.

All senior staff in Kent County Council will fully engage with staff to understand the detail of service delivery models and challenge the practice that exists in order to eliminate unnecessary processes and activities to minimise the resources necessary to deliver services to the people of Kent.

All senior staff are Corporate Parents to the Council's Looked After Children and must take an active part in ensuring the needs of these children in our care are met.

Customers & Partners

Engage with and build positive relationships with customers to ensure that their requirements are at the centre of the design and delivery of services in accordance with the Council's customer strategy.

Ensure that the needs of everyone in Kent are met by modelling behaviour that fosters equality of opportunity in service provision and employment.

Contribute to the development and delivery of the one Council brand, enhancing the overall reputation of Kent County Council.

Build and promote successful partnership working with private, voluntary and other public sector organisations and with service users to deliver more cost effective and valued services.

Commission effective and efficient services through a range of direct delivery, innovative partnerships and commercial arrangements which meet the three ambitions of the medium term plan "Bold Steps for Kent".

Leading Services

Ensure that the Council performs its duties and functions in fulfillment of its statutory obligations. In pursuit of this responsibility, senior managers need to ensure that they, and their relevant staff, keep abreast of the Council's changing legal obligations and mandates. Responsible for ensuring relevant compliance with the financial regulations and standing orders of the Council.

Responsible for the managerial leadership of those services and functions that are set within the direction of this post as well as for Council services corporately. Promote managerial responsibility for cross-organisational team working, and across boundaries with other agencies and partners, to improve services and solve problems in a coherent and integrated manner.

Ensure that relevant and best professional advice, guidance and information is available in an intelligible and timely fashion to the Cabinet, Scrutiny, all elected Members, as well as to other stakeholders.

Sustain and improve the overall reputation of the Council and act in the best interests of Kent through effective representation locally, regionally and/or nationally.

Leading People

Demonstrate the Council's managerial leadership values and behavioural competencies – providing positive leadership, acting with openness, honesty and integrity, and instilling a clear sense of direction, priority and pace. Leading people in an inclusive way to deliver strategic and operational objectives.

Ensure that effective arrangements are in place to secure the overall well-being and the health & safety of all employees and people delivering services for the Council.

Performance, Finance and Risk

Develop and embed a performance culture that delivers results through rigorous open challenge, personal accountability, disciplined execution and continual improvement.

Ensure that all services/functions are delivered within and to budget.

Provide managerial leadership to the improvement of corporate and service performance by ensuring that resources are targeted on the Council's priorities and meeting customer needs.

Improve the overall management of resources (financial, human and other) in serving the public of Kent. Discover new ways to reduce the cost of services to taxpayers and their overall productivity and value for money to service users through a range of approaches, including: the strategic re-design of services and their costs; the use of business and operational process improvements; the smarter use of supply (through out-sourcing, co-sourcing and in-sourcing where appropriate); the better use of demand management; and improved asset management. Ensure managers within the directorate fully use the Council's systems, become self supporting through the use of technology and reduce duplication.

Ensure that effective risk management arrangements are in place to minimise the Council's exposure to risk and uncertainty. Responsible for resilient business continuity arrangements and robust response and recovery arrangements in the event of emergencies and critical incidents locally – in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Emergency and Business Continuity Plans.

Promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures, all Statements of Required Practice for managers and the Council's Code of Conduct.

Take an active role in promoting and ensuring the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding are met for adults and children

Kent County Council

Person Specification: Head of SEN Assessment and Placement

The following outlines the Minimum criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the minimum criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

QUALIFICATIONS <i>(if essential)</i> <i>or equivalent in experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educated to degree level or equivalent• Evidence of continuing relevant professional development.
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broad experience of managing an effective LA special educational needs statutory service• Multi-agency working at a senior level, coupled with a positive approach to networking and cooperative working with other departments, services and agencies.• Significant strategic management experience and evidence of the ability to determine, direct and translate strategic planning into operational reality.• Experience of leading and motivating a team of staff.• Experience of managing large and complex budgets
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well developed self-motivation skills• Ability to work with a limited degree of direct supervision to challenging deadlines.• Ability to communicate effectively at all levels and through all media with a wide range of professionals, using high level negotiation and interpersonal skills.• Good communication skills including negotiation and influencing.• Excellent interpersonal, analytical and presentation skills and the ability to represent the Unit to Members• High degree of sensitivity and awareness of the political environment.• Good at building relationships with stakeholders.

KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deep knowledge of special educational needs• Clear understanding of how a LA successfully discharges its responsibilities for SEND• Good awareness of best practice in schools and in local authorities• Understanding of and positive commitment to, inclusive education and equal opportunities for all.• Good understanding of current educational legislation and national policy developments, generally and in relation to SEN, and a sensitivity to the current context for education• Good understanding of school improvement and priorities for raising standards and improving pupils' learning and progress
BEHAVIOURS (related to Ways 2 Success)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership approach to working with client groups and a commitment to multi-agency working.• Positive attitudes towards, and evidence of, own and team's continuing personal and professional development