

## Job Description

# Assistant Virtual School Officer

Reference:

Date: May 2026

<b>Job Family:</b>	<b>Education, SEND &amp; Skills/ Education Specialist Delivery</b>
<b>Level:</b>	2
<b>Band:</b>	5
<b>Career Track:</b>	Technical, Professional & Supervisory

## Job Purpose

To oversee and support the educational progress of a caseload of cared for children, addressing barriers such as SEND, behavioural or attendance issues. The role promotes stable learning environments and works with schools and professionals to ensure high quality Personal Education Plans are completed within statutory timescales, enabling every child to achieve their educational potential.

## Service Purpose

Northumberland Virtual School fulfils the Local Authority's duty to promote the educational outcomes of children and young people in our care, previously cared for, and care leavers, working with partners to ensure they access opportunities, high aspirations and strong educational outcomes. We provide advice, information and signposting to support the education of children with a social worker, those previously supported, and those in kinship care aged 0–18 across all settings. Our multidisciplinary team supports cared for children and care leavers aged 2–25 through high quality Personal Education Plans. As Corporate Parents, we work with partners to close attainment gaps and help children feel safe, inspired and able to reach their potential.

## Duties and Responsibilities

### Virtual School and Case Responsibility

- Contribute actively to the work of the Virtual School for Cared for Children and care leavers supporting raised aspirations and improved educational achievement.
- Manage a caseload of cared for children, maintaining detailed knowledge of individual educational needs, emotional wellbeing and changing circumstances.

### Advocacy, Wellbeing and School/Setting Stability

- Advocate on behalf of cared for children to remove barriers to learning and maximise educational opportunities.
- Promote school and setting stability for all ages, by working with care teams to reduce school moves, improve attendance and explore alternatives to suspension.
- Support the emotional wellbeing of children and young people to enable positive engagement and success in education.

- Provide direct in school support for children where required, including delivery of appropriate therapeutic interventions.
- Provide challenge when needed to professionals to improve outcomes, ensuring child voice is at the centre of planning and all decisions are in the child and young person's best interests.

### **Personal Education Plans and Funding**

- Attend and contribute to Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings, ensuring statutory requirements and timescales are met.
- Ensure children and young people contribute meaningfully to their PEPs and that their views are recorded and acted upon.
- Support Designated Teachers to use Pupil Premium Plus funding effectively to improve educational outcomes.

### **Transitions, Advice and Professional Engagement**

- Support school transitions, including academic and mid year moves, ensuring timely information sharing to support successful integration.
- Participate in relevant meetings and reviews, preparing written reports as required.
- Provide advice and guidance to schools, social workers and Designated Teachers on cared for children systems, education processes and procedures.

### **Records, Development and Compliance**

- Maintain accurate records and data using appropriate systems, ensuring reports and documentation are completed as required.
- Engage in continuous professional development and comply with all Council policies, including safeguarding, health and safety, equality, confidentiality and data protection.

## **Person Specification**

### **Professional and Technical Requirements**

#### Qualifications

- Level 2 qualifications, including Maths and English.

#### Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Knowledge of emotional regulation and therapeutic approaches (e.g. Drawing and Talking, LEGO based interventions)
- Knowledge of the education system, learning styles and expected attainment across National Curriculum Key Stages
- Understanding of the Looked After Children system, including LAC reviews, education related policies and procedures
- Knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice and attachment related difficulties
- Awareness of education support services available within the local authority and from external providers
- Minimum of two years' experience working with children and families in education or social care settings, including one to one work
- Experience supporting and promoting the education of children and young people

- Ability to work within strict confidentiality and safeguarding requirements, promoting equality and anti-discriminatory practice
- Ability to meet the physical, emotional and travel demands of the role, including regular driving, working with challenging behaviour and holding an appropriate DBS clearance

## Core Competency Requirements

**Communication:** Tailors communication to audience and context. Uses listening and questioning techniques to clarify complex issues and support team understanding.

**Collaboration:** Coordinates with colleagues and partners to deliver shared goals and improve service outcomes.

**Service Delivery:** Identifies and resolves service issues, improves processes, and ensures policy alignment. Promotes efficiency and avoids waste through practical improvements.

**Decision-Making:** Uses evidence and judgement to resolve issues and improve delivery.

**Digital & Data Literacy:** Interprets data to improve services. Applies knowledge of digital risks and ethical data use. Uses basic analytical techniques to support decision making

**Adaptability:** Adjusts approach responsively to evolving needs and priorities. Identifies opportunities for continuous improvement and supports others through change.

**Problem-Solving:** Analyses problems and applies knowledge to develop practical solutions and suggest improvements.

**Community & Customer Focus:** Engages with service users and customers to improve delivery, ensure accessibility, and reflect diverse needs.

**Leadership:** Supervises day-to-day activity and supports team development. Coordinates tasks and resources to meet the needs of the service.

## Strengths

**Analytical:** You seek and analyse information to inform your decisions, based on the best available evidence.

**Authentic:** You are self-aware and true to yourself in all situations, even when under pressure.

**Catalyst:** You are self-motivated to act towards achieving a goal. You are confident using your own initiative to take forward actions

**Confident:** You take charge of situations, people and decisions. You communicate with confidence and give direction.

**Courageous:** You are an innovator who tries new approaches. You push yourself to work outside your comfort zone.

## Desirable

- Education level 3 standard or above, with a relevant professional qualification supporting children's learning
- Experience working directly with children in educational settings, including implementing support plans with individual children and organisations
- Experience using education and social care information systems, such as ePEP and ICS or equivalent case management systems