

Job Description

Head of SEND Reform (Senior Responsible Officer for SEND)

Known as - SRO
Reference: ST113
Date: July 2026

Job Family: Strategy and Transformation / Executive Leadership
Strategy and Performance

Level: 5

Band: 14

Career Track: Executive

Job Purpose

To lead the implementation of the SEND Reform Plan, ensuring clear accountability and delivery across the system. The role supports senior leaders in developing an effective SEND system, including preparation for CQC/Ofsted Joint SEND inspections. It also champions SEND across partners and forums, promoting an inclusive approach, and oversees reporting requirements to the DfE and NHS on progress and outcomes.

Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Reform Delivery

- Lead the co-production, implementation and review of the Local Area SEND Reform Plan, ensuring delivery against agreed priorities.
- Support senior leaders to develop and strengthen the SEND system, including readiness for CQC/Ofsted inspections.
- Promote innovative, outcome-focused approaches to improve experiences for children, young people and families.
- Embed SEND priorities across all relevant 0–25 programmes using a matrix management approach.

Partnership Working and Governance

- Work with senior partners across education, health and social care to maintain effective SEND governance arrangements.
- Ensure strong partnership working and alignment across services to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Oversee joint working and funding arrangements to ensure they are effective and outcome-focused.

Co-production, Engagement and Communication

- Ensure sustainable co-production and engagement with children, young people and families, embedding their voice in strategic and operational decision-making.

Performance, Risk and Assurance

- Establish and maintain robust systems to identify, escalate and manage risks relating to service access and statutory compliance.
- Oversee the development and use of SEND data dashboards to monitor performance and inform decision-making.
- Ensure effective data sharing arrangements are in place across partners to support integrated working.
- Demonstrate impact through data, assurance processes and monitoring of outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

- Relevant professional qualification or equivalent experience
- General management qualification or equivalent demonstrable professional experience

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Experience of holding a senior role within the Local Authority with direct links to the ICB Board and Executive SEND lead
- Be able to apply a matrix approach to embed SEND across organisational and departmental structures
- Ability to maintain and develop expert knowledge of SEND across the local partnership
- Be able to promote a consistent, partnership-wide approach to SEND practice and system delivery
- Demonstrable personal and professional integrity underpinning ethical conduct
- Consistent professional behaviour that establishes credibility and trust
- Strong sense of accountability for standards, assurance and public value
- High levels of personal resilience and emotional stamina
- Capacity to sustain energy and focus in complex and demanding environments
- Motivation to contribute to high-quality public services
- Strong alignment with and commitment to the Council's corporate values and principles
- Clear corporate orientation and understanding of system-wide priorities
- Commitment to addressing barriers that restrict organisational progress and service quality
- Ability to operate effectively within politically, legally and publicly sensitive contexts
- Evidence of up-to-date management training
- Evidence of recent and ongoing Continuous Professional Development
- Professional credibility grounded in experience of education standards, including SEND

Core Competency Requirements

Communication: Shapes messaging to support service delivery and stakeholder engagement. Influences decisions and builds shared understanding in complex environments.

Collaboration: Develops strategic partnerships with public, private, voluntary, and community sectors to deliver council priorities.

Service Delivery: Oversees service delivery aligned to council priorities. Leads transformation, manages risk, and applies strategic thinking to maximise outcomes and ensure cost effectiveness.

Decision-Making: Applies strategic judgement to optimise resources and deliver meaningful outcomes.

Digital & Data Literacy: Uses data for strategic planning and innovation. Applies digital solutions to improve services and manage risk. Interprets complex datasets to inform service design and policy.

Adaptability: Anticipates future trends and prepares services for change. Embeds continuous improvement practices and supports teams to adapt and innovate.

Problem-Solving: Solves complex service delivery challenges using evidence and insight to redesign ways of working and drive innovation.

Community & Customer Focus: Aligns services with community priorities and customer expectations, ensure representation and accessibility.

Leadership: Coaches and delegates to drive performance and service delivery. Leads programmes and actively plans for succession and talent development.

Strengths

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

Change agent: You are positive and inspirational in leading and supporting others through change.

Resilient: You have inner composure, recover quickly from setbacks and learn from them.

Responsible: You take ownership for your decisions. You hold yourself accountable for what you have promised.

Strategic: You look at the big picture. You consider the wider factors and long-term implications of decisions.

Desirable

Experience of working within and across all partners in the SEND system including schools and settings, post 16 provisions, LA education, health and social care, broader health partners and parental groups.