

## Job Description

# Assistant Schools Operation & Support Adviser

**Known As: Choice Advisor**

**Reference:**

**Date: April 2026**

**Job Family: Education & Skills/ Schools Operations & Support**

**Level: 2**

**Band: Band 5**

**Career Track: Technical, Professional & Supervisory**

## Job Purpose

The role provides impartial advice, information, and support to parents and carers of children experiencing difficulties accessing education in Northumberland, helping them understand options, rights, and pathways to appropriate support.

## Service Purpose

Northumberland County Council's School Organisation and Resources team is responsible for ensuring that the county's school infrastructure is strategically planned, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of local communities. The team leads the development and implementation of the School Organisation Plan, Capital Developments, Academisation, School Admissions, School and specialist Place Planning and SEND Commissioning, Inclusion, School Funding and School Meals.

## Duties and Responsibilities

### Direct Support to Parents and Carers

- Support parents and carers who are struggling to access appropriate education or dealing with exclusion, helping them understand available options and navigate processes.
- Provide impartial guidance to parents of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) when moving through key transition phases.
- Represent parents at reviews, panels, governor hearings, or appeals, acting as an independent advocate when required.
- Provide clear feedback to parents following key meetings concerning their child, such as Inclusion Panels or Fair Access meetings.

### Partnership & Multi-Agency Working

- Work with school leaders, admissions staff, local authority teams (e.g., Inclusion), and community support groups to ensure families receive appropriate information and assistance.
- Collaborate with professionals to help secure children's statutory entitlement to education in a timely manner.
- Support emergency and new-arrival applications (including families from overseas, such as Ukraine), liaising with relevant agencies including the Home Office.

### **Admissions & Access Support**

- Assist the Admissions Team by identifying families who have not submitted school applications and support them to complete the process.
- Support fair and appropriate school placement processes, including involvement in Fair Access or managed-move procedures where relevant.

### **Policy, Guidance & Service Development**

- Contribute to the development of documents, policies, and guidance relating to access to education, such as the Fair Access Protocol.

### **Record Keeping, Safeguarding & Compliance**

- Maintain detailed and accurate case notes and communication logs for all families, children, and schools supported.
- Inform Children's Social Care of any children struggling to access education who may be at safeguarding risk.

## **Person Specification**

### **Professional and Technical Requirements**

#### Qualifications

- Recognised professional degree or equivalent qualification in Education, Social Work or Teaching (or significant relevant experience).

#### Skills, Knowledge & Experience

- Knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice and the Graduated Response.
- Knowledge of the School Admissions Code 2021.
- Understanding of Local Authority education services, Northumberland's Local Offer, and wider support available to children and families.
- Knowledge of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), safeguarding requirements and child development.
- Experience working with vulnerable young people and children with additional needs.
- Experience supporting and advising parents in educational matters.
- Experience working with children, young people and families whose behaviour can be challenging or emotionally demanding.
- Experience of safeguarding and child protection processes.
- Ability to write informed and concise reports.
- Ability to manage time effectively and organise own workload under pressure.
- Competence in using computer-based information systems.

### **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

**Adaptable:** You can adapt to variations in work or environment. Your effectiveness is not affected by change. You are flexible and versatile. You act as an advocate for change

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

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

**Challenger:** You can bring fresh perspective whatever the situation or context. You see other people's views and appreciate that there are many different angles to consider.

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

## Desirable

Experience of working within an education setting or a Children's Services Directorate.

Strong understanding of the School Admissions Code 2021.

Relevant experience supporting children, young people or families within statutory education