NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL PART A: JOB DESCRIPTION

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| **DIRECTORATE:** | Children, Young People and Education |
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| **JOB TITLE**: | Head of SEND |
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| **GRADE:** | Band 14 |
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| **JD REF:** | H219 |
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| **RESPONSIBLE TO:** | Director of Education, SEND and Skills |
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| **RESPONSIBLE FOR:** | Council Services within the portfolio. These may change to reflect need and maximise resources across the Council. |
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| **Service/ Functions:** | Leadership and management of functions which ensure the statutory functions of the council are met in relation to education, support and systems for children with special educational needs and disabilities. The service is broad and is defined to support children and their families, schools and settings with special educational needs and strategies plans and initiatives to engage, develop and promote activities which create truly inclusive learning environments that embrace difference and different levels of ability. |
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| **Employees:** | This service provides a range of specialist advice and support to Schools and other educational establishments to provide assurance about the quality of education across the County and ensure that the need of Children and learners with special needs are addressed positively. The staff complement for the service is circa 32 FTE. |
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| **Budget:** | The postholder will work with colleagues across Children’s services to make best use of all available budget. The postholder is responsible for managing the gross budget allocated to the service which amounts to circa £10m. High Need Budget £48m |
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| **Other resources** | As required to ensure that all normal and transformational activity is undertaken to deliver resident focused and value for money services in line with the Council Vision and Corporate plan. This post has particular responsibility for working with Schools to ensure they have measures in place to secure the highest quality of standards and create inclusive educational settings where difference is celebrated. |

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| **JOB PURPOSE:**  In support of the Director of Education, SEND and Skills provide strategic direction of all Education standards and initiatives which promote inclusive education and support the delivery of the Council’s key corporate and partnership priorities that fall within the remit of the post and in line with the corporate plan - a council that works for everyone, to benefit the people of Northumberland.  Lead the delivery of innovative services and initiatives that support children and young people, especially those with special needs or requiring additional support, to access the best possible learning opportunities and support colleagues in all educational environments to deliver a high quality service that meets national requirements and expectations for all pupils . This includes meeting the Councils statutory obligations in relation to SEND, implementing the Council’s strategy for SEND development which maximises the Councils role in influencing SEND provision and securing funding for related support services which are delivered through robust service level agreements. This postholder needs to understand legislative requirements and best practice in order to shape provision and provide a framework for assurance that all schools are delivering high quality education. This includes making best use of funding packages for the benefit of any child who has special educational needs, working within High Needs Budget allocations and managing school relationships and SENDCOs. The postholder has lead responsibility for understanding where there are opportunities to access additional income which will both extend and expand opportunities for different schools and groups of pupils to benefit from tailored initiatives which help them develop their talents.  As a member of the Children’s Services management team participate fully in the planning management and assurance of the functions undertaken across education services taking particular responsibility for the quality of statutory SEND provision, support for children and families and ensure these are complimentary to the broader education and skills strategies.  To undertake work with key partners across education and care sectors to ensure efforts are aligned and operating cohesively to maximise the opportunities of all children across the County and provide assurance that plans and targets are being achieved . This work needs to pay particular attention to the Council’s ambitions to address inequalities and differences so that every effort is taken to minimise children being excluded or unable to benefit from mainstream educational and training settings wherever possible.  To play a full and positive role as a member of the Council’s SENDior Management Team ensuring the delivery of effective strategic direction, leadership and resource management ( people, finance and other assets) to secure the delivery of public services across the locality.  Lead by example and foster a culture, both within the service and across the Council, which engages all staff and partners in the development and delivery of services that meet residents’ needs and expectations. This will involve being involved in cross Council initiatives to make best use of individuals’ strengths and foster collaboration across the whole organisation. |

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| Ensure, as a SENDior executive, that effective governance and assurance processes are applied in all activity as set down in the Constitution and Council policies and procedures to safeguard the Council’s financial and statutory duties and demonstrate public accountability and scrutiny of its decision-making processes.  Discharge the functions within the remit of the post having regard to the decision making framework and arrangements in the Council and schools. |

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| **KEY FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**  In support of the Director of Education, SEND and Skills to implement the SEND strategy which complements the vision for the County particularly in creating inclusive communities and reducing disadvantage within education. This will involve leading the implementation of supporting programmes, initiatives structures, processes and systems which create and maintain the statutory obligations, excellent support services for an end to end experience for children with special educational needs which helps them access opportunities and meet their aspirations and abilities.  To develop and implement alongside colleagues in Schools, colleges and other educational establishments a comprehensive approach to assessment of SEND provision that meets all national requirements including inspections but also demonstrates understanding of both a diverse population and mix of abilities in order to ensure that opportunities are provided to maximise these abilities and skills. The postholder will also ensure all these establishments have confident, capable and committed workforces that have the skills and knowledge to support these initiatives and are working collaboratively with other practitioners and partners as part of an holistic approach to matching ability to opportunities which create social benefits for individuals and communities .  Engage proactively with leaders in schools, colleges and early years settings to support effective planning so that there is synergy between support and delivery to meet DFE Code of Practice, national curriculum requirements and more localised initiatives which take account of the needs amongst this cohort of children.  Support Members of the Council, the Chief Executive, and colleagues in Children’s Services develop the vision and priorities for the County and ensure best advice is provided on the most appropriate response to internal and external pressures for change. This will involve providing specific advice relation to the functions within the Directorate and effecting the changes required from the regulatory frameworks affecting Education standards including SEND.  Manage well the interface between Elected Members and Officers within the Directorate, maintaining and developing esSENDtial Member / Officer partnerships and processes which support and promote a positive and respectful relationship between Members and Officers.  Champion a coherent multi agency approach to service delivery and provide support for colleagues in the Directorate to ensure the delivery of the Council’s priorities and provision of high-quality, cost-effective services based on community needs.  Participate and develop the Council’s commitment to actively collaborate in major local and regional partnerships to achieve, within the overall SEND strategy, maximum benefit for the Council and its communities. These partnerships will be esSENDtial to deliver Preparation for Adulthood plans, sustainable growth, reduce inequalities and provide opportunities for residents as they leave education or look to change employment opportunities.  Contribute to successful management of the Council’s reputation, ensuring that it always acts in the best interests of Northumberland and that its activities are explained to stakeholders in an open and transparent manner. |

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| **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES** |
| Act as principal adviser on assurance of SEND standards ensuring that the Council implements all national and professional standards and requirements in a timely manner while recognising the interests of local communities and individuals in delivering successful education pathways to reduce inequalities. |
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| Oversee the provision of timely and accurate advice to ensure provision of high quality professional support and advice on matters which will support the effective operation and planning of learning services across schools, colleges and other educational establishments which meet the needs of children with special educational needs. |
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| To lead work which seeks to maximise funding from external sources and ensure that a robust performance framework is in place to track all initiatives and demonstrate impact on statutory outcomes in line with the overall SEND Code of Practice and supporting plans. |
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| Act as a role model and exemplar in achieving a people-centred, collaborative, values based and inclusive organisational culture that promotes innovation and creativity, nurtures growth, and focuses on developing and maximises potential of the workforce to improve services. |
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| Ensure all statutory and regulatory functions and accountabilities are met. |
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| Oversee the most effective utilisation, performance, and deployment of resources (Human, Physical and Financial) that puts at its heart the provision of high quality, value for money services and ensure that there is sufficient capacity within the directorate to  deliver successfully against the Council’s ambitions and priorities bearing in mind statutory requirements. |
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| Actively demonstrate commitment and action to develop an inclusive, supportive, and constructive environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and diversity is valued in the workplace, in service delivery and communications. |
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| Play a full role in the implementation of major programmes and  initiatives that are central to the achievement of the Council’s objectives across and support the effective deployment of Council resources. |
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| Provide assurance that strategies and plans are in place to enable that appropriate levels of financial and governance control are in place across the postholder’s portfolio and any other activities where they are the Lead Officer. |
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| Oversee the scrutiny and advice on the plans and actions of Central Government and other external agencies to determine their impact on the development of local policies  and priorities such as they relate to skills enhancement and position the Council as a decisive and influential organisation to maximise all available assets . |
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| Ensure the promotion, development, and maintenance of good relationships with the media and public as an individual and across the Directorate and ensure effective communication and engagement strategies are applied to support delivery of services and change activities. |
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| Ensure equality, diversity and cohesion principles are embedded across all services. Provide leadership around diversity and inclusion, ensuring that the policies and services of the Council reflect the changing needs of all our communities and workforce and that  equality of opportunity is ensured and diversity celebrated. |
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| RepreSENDt and negotiate on behalf of the Council at local, regional, and national levels, promoting inter-authority working across the region and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness to change. This work will particularly relate to the need to ensure appropriate measures are in place to protect children and young people working closely with all Education establishments such as Schools, colleagues and early years facilities to secure the best possible quality of services. |
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| Where required play a role in the Council’s Corporate Emergency Planning arrangements (This includes a requirement to be available in the event of an emergency to perform the duties allocated to the post within the Emergency Plan). |
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| To undertake functions in the event of local or National elections, supporting the Returning Officer ensure the democratic nature of such activities is undertaken efficiently and in compliance with all statutory requirements. |
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| Ensure that all duties and responsibilities are be carried out in accordance with Council’s  Constitution, governance arrangements, policies, and procedures. |
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| **Special Conditions:**  This position has been identified as a politically restricted post under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Therefore, the post holder is restricted from undertaking or participating in any political activity. |

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

PART B: SENDIOR MANAGERS CORE COMPETENCIES

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| **Working with Partners** |  |
| * Work collaboratively across services and departments to deliver corporate excellence. * Work collaboratively with external partners to deliver excellent service. * Seek opportunities for partnership working at a local, regional, national level. * Clarify expectations, objectives and working arrangements of partnerships. * Contribute effectively to multi-partner projects. | |

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| **Serving our Community** |  |
| * Promote the Community Plan. * Seek and act on feedback from the community. * Influence Service and Corporate plans to reflect community needs * Develop, deliver, and improve access to services based on an awareness and understanding of the diverse community * Promote equality of opportunity in service delivery | |

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| **Working within the Political Arena** |  |
| * Understand and actively support the role of Councillors. * Understand and actively support the democratic process within Northumberland Council. * Recognise the impact of Government and legislation on Council strategy and services. * Consult, support, and keep Councillors informed. | |

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| **Delivering Excellence** |
| * Understand how corporate performance is measured. * Monitor and evaluate services in relation to objectives and performance indicators. * Establish a culture that embraces the agreed Vision and Values. * Be positive ambassadors for the organisation. * Contribute to strengthening corporate leadership capacity. * Identify opportunities where organisational performance could be improved. |

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| **Focusing on the Future** |  |
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| * Scan the external environment, look ahead, assess strategic options, and develop the Council in the medium and long term. * Lead the development and implementation of corporate policy at a strategic level. * Challenge what we do and how we do it. * Influence relevant national and regional organisations and partners. * Connect plans, policies, strategies, and services to provide consistent service delivery. * Generate innovative ideas. * Translate strategy into action. * Consider the implications of decisions across the Council and act in the overall interests of Council performance. |
| **Building Shared Vision and Values** |
| * Scan the internal environment and engage employees in compelling visions of the future. * Create an environment in which a culture embracing our Vision and Values can thrive. * Involve all stakeholders in building a vision for the future. * Have a clear picture of the direction the organisation is taking and communicate it with insight, energy, and vision. * Translate the Council’s vision into practical and achievable plans. |
| **Strengthening Corporate Leadership Capacity** |
| * Continuously develop the political leadership and managerial interface. * Operate with others as a cohesive SENDior managerial team. * Create time with staff and other managers for discussion about their development rather than firefighting. * Coach and mentor staff and other managers. * Lead, delegate and empower others at a strategic level. * Identify and develop potential SENDior managerial successors. |
| **Promoting and Facilitating Change** |
| * Critically evaluate the reasons that prompt change and take appropriate action. * Proactively steer internal change. * Proactively manage the exchange of information between the public and the organisation. * Consider the resource implications of change. * Anticipate and respond to emotional and morale issues brought about by change. * Monitor and evaluate the change process to ensure aims are met. |

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL PART C: PERSON SPECIFICATION

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| **DIRECTORATE:** | Children, Young People and Education |
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| **JOB TITLE**: | Head of SEND |
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| **GRADE:** | Band 14 |

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| **Qualifications/Professional Development** |
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| Relevant professional and general management qualification or an equivalent demonstrable portfolio of experience to evidence understanding of education standards including SEND . |
| Evidence of relevant up to date leadership and management training. |
| Evidence of recent relevant Continuous Professional Development. |
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| **Experience, Knowledge, and Skills** |
| Proven achievement of leadership success in setting standards for Special Educational Needs Services within an organisation of comparable complexity. |
| Significant experience in creating innovative solutions and initiatives which provide exciting opportunities for all children including those with special educational needs to be supported in educational settings which make the most of their abilities |
| Demonstrable ability to work collaboratively with other leaders in the Educational sector in order to create top class learning opportunities for all including facilities for children with SEND. |
| Ability to interpret complex requirements and legislation whilst delivering services with strong social impact which address different needs and abilities . This includes the need to understand how provision needs to be tailored to meet the needs of people who need highly specialised support as well those who can benefit from more mainstream activity but with targeted help and systematic approach to the DFE SEND statutory requirements. |
| Understanding of the SEND landscape and innovative practice in order to create new opportunities and secure financial support which delivers measurable benefits for individuals, communities and educational establishments. |
| Understanding of national performance frameworks, statutory frameworks and inspection requirements in order to ensure that all education services have best practice embedded so that there is a culture of ‘No surprises’ in the event of inspection, audits or other reviews. |
| Up to date knowledge and understanding of legislation affecting the service, best practice and current issues. |
| Ability to create strategies and plans which recognise the challenges facing the education sector in delivering high quality learning including workforce development activities which support the retention and attraction of staff. |
| Ability to operate SENDsitively in a political environment, developing relationships with all members gaining respect, trust, and confidence and being accountable for effective delivery within a challenging financial environment. |
| Experience of managing major change that challenges existing ways of working, and different service delivery models which provide better outcomes for citizens especially vulnerable children and adults. |
| Evidence of personally leading within an organisational culture that models and embeds the practice of co-design and co-production and collaboration with people inside and outside the organisation. |
| Evidence of success in personally leading the development of external relationships and influential partnerships that have delivered tangible benefits and created a collaborative environment. |
| Evidence of using strong option appraisal, analytical skills, and innovation to achieve organisational success in an environment of reducing financial resources. This includes a proven track record on using these skills to access external funding on a sustainable basis. |
| Ability to develop long term strategic thinking and bring new ideas, approaches, and solutions. |

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| Highly skilled communicator who communicates with clarity, conviction and enthusiasm and can demonstrate integrity, create rapport, and build trust and confidence to positively influence outcomes. |
| Ability to translate complex ideas and information into meaningful and ‘user-friendly’ information; ‘tells the story’ to bring people along and ensure all audiences understand the key messages. |
| Ability to develop strong relationships with SENDior leaders from a range of organisations especially in the education sector. |
| Personal and professional integrity and credibility that establishes respect, trust, and confidence. |
| Demonstrate personal resilience and ability to thrive in challenging circumstances. |
| Model and demonstrate organisational values and leadership behaviours, creating a shared purpose and positive permission culture that enables people to thrive through development, involvement, and well-being. |
| **Motivation** |
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| Confident leader with a vision for Northumberland with high levels of energy, stamina, and resilience. |
| Fully committed to the principles and values underpinning the Council |
| Demonstrably strong corporate orientation and a commitment to tackling issues that inhibit organisational progress to high quality service delivery. |
| Personality, behaviour, conduct and credibility that engages and commands the confidence of Council Members, SENDior managers, staff, the public, external partners, and other stakeholders. |