

Kent County Council

Job Description:

Director – Education & SEND

Date: January 2023

Directorate: Children, Young People and Education

Division: Education & SEND

Grade: KR17

Responsible to: Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education

Job Purpose:

Lead, shape and direct:

- The development and delivery of strategies aimed at improving educational outcomes for all children in Kent, including: effective school place planning and provision, inclusion and attendance for all children and young people, including those with SEND.
- The development and delivery of the Local Area offer for children with SEND, with particular focus on the range of statutory duties of the local authority.
- The Directorate's delivery of support for schools (school improvement, governor services, finance, early years etc), currently through its commissioning strategy in respect of the provision of these education services, by The Education People, to Kent County Council.
- The Directorate's strategy for and delivery of Community Learning & Skills across the county.

Accountabilities

Directors will work within the KCC Corporate Responsibilities for Senior Officers. In addition, as members of Extended Corporate Management Team, Directors and Corporate Directors will work together to make strategic decisions on the most effective use of the Council's agreed budget, resources and policies and enhance the reputation of Kent as a place as well as Kent County Council as the democratic agent of change in the region.

Work with KCC Members, colleagues and partners to deliver the best value for money services within an agreed budget.

Work in partnership with the Director - Operational Integrated Children's Services and the Director Children's Countywide Services to deliver a holistic offer of services for Kent's children and young people.

Lead on commissioning strategies and implementation in close partnership with Directorate leads across the Council to plan and secure the provision of high-quality school places across a diverse range of schools for children and young people at all ages, helping to improve parental choice and ensure that schools are inclusive

Lead the operational delivery and strategic development of services to children and young people with SEND ensuring that services match their needs, are developed in partnership with parents and young people and adapt to Kent's changing needs and demography.

Lead the development and delivery of a service that engenders a considered, quality and appropriate level of resident experience.

Lead the development of a culture across KCC, schools and other partners that works in partnership with parents and focuses relentlessly on the needs of children through consultation, engagement and co-production with families.

Lead on the work with key external partners such as the RSC and ESFA in delivering the provision of high-quality school places particularly in respect of Academies and Free Schools

Promote fair access in admissions to all educational settings, working with a range of providers and authorities to ensure that Admissions policy and practice, and the development of new school provision meet legal requirements and that every child in Kent receives their educational entitlement.

Lead the development of district-based working so that there is coordinated and integrated delivery of children and young people's services in each district, working in partnership with schools and other providers, and with other directorates in KCC.

Lead the delivery and development of the Education Psychology service, ensuring that it is fully integrated with the SEND offer, meets statutory requirements and provides a streamlined and efficient service to children and their families.

Undertake a key role in the joint strategic commissioning for disabled children and SEND services across Kent including those with learning disabilities and Autistic Spectrum Disorders, ensuring a seamless fit between in-house and commissioned provision.

Lead on all evaluation and impact work in school organisation, place planning and provision, transport and admissions.

Determine, develop and maintain systems to enable strategy and policy development, effective performance management and statistical analysis.

Ensure that policy and performance is informed by best practice in school organisation, admissions and assessment, advising schools on all aspects of policy.

Ensure that appropriate interventions are made in schools to resolve management issues and risks, liaising with The Education People to highlight areas of concern for standards and school improvement.

Shape, develop and review the Commissioning strategy for commissioned Education Services through The Education People to ensure it continues to incorporate current thinking, creates further opportunity for synergy across the Council and supports delivery of the Council's objectives and its statutory requirements, to ensure a sufficient supply of good quality school places, including children with SEN.

To ensure the commissioning strategy builds and maintains effective relationships with The Education People and other key stakeholders to ensure effective engagement in the delivery of the Council's objectives and its statutory requirements.

To work closely with the Director for Operational Children's Services and the Director of County and Strategic Services to deliver a holistic offer for children and young people in Kent.

Lead on commissioning strategies and implementation in close partnership with Directorate leads across the Council to plan and secure the provision of high-quality provision for Community Learning & Skills

Actively review all services provided by this post to identify the 'right source' for their future delivery including consideration of outsourcing, co-sourcing or in-sourcing to ensure the most effective and efficient delivery methods are employed.

This job description sets out the accountabilities specific to the role. These should be read in conjunction with the Corporate Responsibilities that apply to the Corporate Director and Director roles.

Services

Provision Planning and Operations

Capital Programme

Fair Access (including Admissions, Transport, Elective Home Education, Children Missing Education and Home Tuition)

Education Services Planning and Resources (includes Academies & Free Schools)

Community Learning & Skills

Attendance and Inclusion.

Special Educational Needs
Educational Psychology

Person Specification

Qualifications

- Evidence of continuing professional development
- Educated to a relevant degree level or equivalent.

Experience

Extensive experience and successful track record of strategic leadership and successful delivery in local government and/or other relevant large and complex organisations working within the children's services arena.

Extensive experience of working with schools, school-based organisations, related partners and regulatory/support bodies such as Ofsted and the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC)

Experience of effectively managing and delivering a range of key integrated services and change programmes for children and families within a budget

Experience and successful track record of achieving improvements in service delivery and improved outcomes for children and young people.

Experience and track record in delivering a range of services in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders, both internal and external, including within a highly political environment.

The commissioning and decommissioning services

Planning and performance monitoring across agencies in a children's service environment

Skills and Abilities

Able to operate effectively as a member of the Extended Corporate Management Team, shaping the strategic Council priorities and setting clear direction, and service commitment to the successful delivery of the Council's strategic priorities.

Able to establish strong positive relationships across the education sector at all levels, in order to provide effective leadership and direction including a relationship of both personal and professional credibility and trust with elected Members.

The ability to gain the confidence and trust of Head-teachers across Kent.

Able to establish strong positive relationships across partner and other external organisations that command professional confidence.

Able to demonstrate effective motivational strategic leadership and vision to staff at all levels including a positive attitude to change in order to maintain and develop services in a constantly changing environment.

Able to command respect, influence and negotiate at a strategic professional and political level both locally and nationally in order to ensure the best interests of the Council are met.

Able to demonstrate a high level of personal resilience, challenge and focus in order to ensure the whole Organisation delivers the right services in the right way.

Highly developed communication and presentation skills.

Able to lead, influence and implement strategic policies and decisions.

Effective management of large budgets and ability to demonstrate value for money for customers with a string focus on maximising a return on investment

Ability to analyse complex data and problem solve

Ability to plan, monitor and review all areas in the discipline

Knowledge

Expert knowledge in a relevant professional area and proven track record of using professional expertise to develop and deliver strategic objectives and expected outcomes

Knowledge of complex statutory duties and codes of practice

Knowledge and understanding of the relevant inspectorates and the roles of DFE and the RSC

Broad knowledge of the range of children's services across partner agencies and sectors
In depth understanding of the strategic challenges and operational realities of managing services for children and young people in a large and diverse authority