

Director of Education & Skills

Join us – make a difference in our communities

West Sussex as an area is rapidly changing with increasing pressures from our demographics, continuing challenges to provide our residents and communities with greater levels of choice to support improved outcomes in their lives and of course we need to do this within tighter and tighter financial constraints. We recognise therefore that our organisation, working with and alongside our partnerships, needs to fundamentally change.

During a period of significant and fundamental change, we need strong, experienced, collaborative and cohesive leadership across our organisation. This requires a strong, collaborative strategic and corporate foundation for our organisation.

This post is one of four directors that collectively lead on the core priorities of the people services department operating within a complex, multi-agency environment with a wide range of partners aiming to ensure that individual provision is in place as well as long term planning to meet changing demographic and individual needs. The directorate is particularly driven by the Council's need to extend choice and control to individuals across the full range of people related services.

About the job

The primary purpose of the role will be to develop services that ensure children are given the best start in life and are able to achieve their potential, to raise attainment and address the causes of inequalities in educational outcomes and attainment. In the context of education and skills, West Sussex is committed to enabling each individual to achieve their ambitions by supporting the development and improvement of the education and skills offer available in the county.

You will drive the implementation of the County Council's priorities for education and work, by supporting members and CLT in setting the overarching strategies for people of all ages across the county. You will be ensuring that young people are work-ready when they leave education and training, and able to achieve their ambitions by developing the knowledge and skills required by a wide range of businesses enabling young people to contribute to a vibrant and thriving economy.

You will develop our relationships with partners including schools, academies, colleges, Universities and other providers across West Sussex.

You will be responsible for school place planning and capital investment in schools ensuring that the County Council's planning for school places and



programmes for capital investment in schools are designed to achieve the best outcomes.

You will lead the design and delivery of services to deliver lifelong educational and learning outcomes for people of all ages across the county that will also achieve the county council's priorities. A key challenge will be ensuring strategy and service delivery that is sensitive to the variable and changing demographics across the county.

You will be the lead education professional providing advice to the Council and the Executive Director for People Services. The Director will be the lead link with the DfE and other national agencies.

What you'll need to succeed

You will have a proven track record of delivering and leading a complex service, with extensive experience of operating successfully within a senior leadership team, shaping and influencing innovative and high-quality practice in high performing teams. You will need to provide strategic leadership and work collaboratively to lead and embed a performance focused culture to deliver high quality outcomes. You will have a thorough understanding of the relationships and culture of organisations that impact on the wider Council.

Job details

Grade: Senior Management Group (SMG)

Directorate Group: Education and Skills

Location: County Hall Chichester

Required experience and skills

(These will be used as the shortlisting criteria)

Key Skills:

1. Excellent communication skills with the ability to influence, negotiate and establish credibility to represent the County Council and enhance its reputation and form positive relationships with external partners and elected members.
2. Ability to work proactively with fully delegated authority to use principles and seasoned judgement to deal with complex issues without referral, for example resolution of complex service issues.
3. Ability to recognise where change is needed, to embrace and create an enthusiasm for change and to work effectively with others to develop creative, innovative and customer-focused solutions.
4. Ability to maintain a customer-focused approach, building working partnerships with others to foster effective joint working, based on collaboration and cooperation to deliver "joined up" services or programmes. Demonstrable ability to collaborate across education, wellbeing, children and adults services to deliver priority outcomes.



5. Proven people management skills with the ability to inspire and provide direction and support promoting a “can do” attitude and an environment of creativity and innovation.
6. Ability to delegate responsibility and provide constructive feedback and coaching to individuals in roles where there is a high degree of discretion in decision making.

Qualifications and/or experience:

- Qualified to degree level or equivalent with a relevant management or professional qualification and membership of a relevant professional body. Evidence of continuing professional development in leadership and business management.
- Qualified Teacher Status.
- Significant experience of leadership in education and skills strategy demonstrably evidencing achievement of improved educational outcomes.
- Knowledge of current educational policy especially as it relates to curriculum, teaching, assessment, leadership and management and school improvement.
- Wide ranging knowledge through life educational and skills sectors particularly across 0-24 sectors and relevant national policy developments for improving learning, participation and employability.
- Extensive experience and successful track record of building effective partnerships with schools, academies, colleges to create and develop opportunities to improve educational outcomes.
- Strong senior management in school improvement in schools, local government and/or other relevant large and complex organisations concerned with education, learning and skills.
- Experience of working effectively with elected members supporting them to achieve their political ambitions both in strategic and operational terms.
- Broad knowledge of public sector services, the macro social and economic context within which local authorities work and the implications of this for delivery of County Council’s aims.
- Broad understanding of service delivery models, concepts and principles gained through extensive business exposure in a diverse range of organisations or services.
- Extensive experience at senior leadership level within a local authority, government department or agency or similar high-profile organisation with comparable scope, responsibilities, budget and resources.

Key responsibilities

As the professional lead for education, lead the development of strategy and plans which deliver excellent educational outcomes, learner-focused services and support the effective implementation of corporate objectives.

Provide advice to elected members and work collaboratively with officers on all aspects of education and skills and ensure that education and skills planning is integrated across key areas of the County Council.

Lead and influence right across the Council’s 0-24 strategy to increase learning opportunities, promote work-based learning and increase employability.



Job Description & Person Specification



Leadership of key school and college programmes such as school achievement and improvement, as well as strategic leadership for alternative educational provision.

Develop and drive the agenda for the Council's traded services to schools.

Ensure appropriate governance arrangements, including the management of finance and regulatory activity, for all schools and support the development of new sectors/operating models where they align to key outcomes.

Support schools, units and professional groups, and hold to account where appropriate, in order to improve educational achievement and learning outcomes for all West Sussex children and young people, including those looked after, those in receipt of free school meals, with special educational needs, disability or at risk of exclusion.

Develop services to meet the educational achievement and improvement needs of pupils, including vulnerable pupils, in all settings and educational establishments.

Work with schools, academies and colleges to identify and address the causes of inequalities in educational outcomes and attainment including geographical and demographic variation and in outcomes for vulnerable learners and children looked after.

Ensure that attendance, exclusion and children missing education functions are performed effectively.

Promote inclusion, including through development and delivery of an authority wide model for inclusion and challenge schools where pupil exclusions are unreasonable.

The role will therefore need to work closely with the Executive Director and Director of Children's Services to design and secure the most appropriate model for leadership of SEN and disability services.

Collaborate with the Executive Director People Services, to ensure that person-centred assessment and planning mean that children with additional needs achieve their full potential and progress into the adult life they want to lead. Ensure management, review and delivery of the Council's SEN Strategy securing provision to match SEN and disabled learners' needs.

Working in partnership with schools, academies, the Diocese, and early years' settings to ensure maximum engagement of the education community on raising standards and negotiate with statutory agencies where necessary.

Develop quality assurance systems with schools and other service providers (within and beyond the Council), to enable the improvement of performance standards for all children and young people in West Sussex.



Job Description & Person Specification



Lead the improvement and development of services to drive effective customer focussed outcomes, compliance with legislative and statutory requirements, and meet the needs of the public, parents and carers.

Lead on strategies to work with schools and other associated bodies regarding performance and autonomy and championing appropriate intervention with failing schools and those requiring improvement.

Promote a culture of aspiration throughout West Sussex through raising public awareness of the opportunities and pathways available and through close partnership working with education and skills stakeholders.

Building a positive reputation for Education, Learning and Skills, and WSCC, locally and nationally through effective communications and stakeholder engagement.

Work with key strategic partners to support economic development across the county.

As a member of the department's leadership team, collaborate across services within the directorate to deliver excellent services to people across the county.

Ensure that the County Council's planning for school places and programmes for capital investment in schools are designed to achieve the best outcomes for learners within the resources available and are supported by close liaison with the admissions service.

Our Values

You will lead, promote and demonstrate the values of our organisation.

- Trust and Support
- Listen and Act Upon
- Customer Centred
- Honest and Realistic
- Genuinely Valued

You will lead, promote and demonstrate the cultural ambition of our organisation:

"We have an inclusive and supportive culture, work in partnership and reward individual and team contribution."

JD Code: SMG

Date: February 2021

