

Job Description

Position Details

Position:	Head of School Improvement
Directorate:	Children, Young People and Families
Service:	Education
Position no:	BG15101
Grade:	JNC3 (Subject to job evaluation)
Hours of work:	37 hours per week
Work style:	Agile Worker
DBS required:	Enhanced
Contact:	Chief Education Officer
Date:	September 2025

Politically Restricted? ☒ **Yes*** ☐ **No**

* The position is politically restricted within the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as prescribed in the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990

About the Position

Reporting to: Chief Education Officer

Responsible for: Leading on the strategic development of the Education Leadership Team's school improvement/inclusion services and engaging all stakeholders involved in the delivery of Education's vision for improvement.

Job Purpose

1. To provide strategic leadership on all school improvement and inclusion matters.
2. To work in line with the Council's aims, objectives and priorities for education; in particular maximising learning opportunities for all learners and providing them with the best start in life through early years provision.
3. To promote improved education outcomes and inclusion for children and young people across Blaenau Gwent through strong and effective collaboration with relevant agencies.
4. To act as the lead for the Council's arrangements with the Education Achievement Service (EAS), to ensure effective support, challenge and intervention is provided to schools and settings across the local authority in line with the agreed EAS Business Plan.
5. To secure and deliver improvement in learner outcomes for the Council and our schools.
6. To deputise for the Chief Education Officer.

Principal Accountabilities

Service Responsibilities:

- 1) To strategically lead on all school improvement and inclusion matters.
- 2) To strategically lead improved education outcomes for learners at a Council, and school level with oversight of services directly delivered or externally provided, to support, challenge and, if appropriate, intervene in schools where there is cause for concern.
- 3) To monitor progress against Post Inspection Action Plans (PIAPs) and provide scrutiny-ready reports.
- 4) Local Authority lead for Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher recruitment activities.
- 5) To work within the Estyn regulatory framework to secure and deliver improved performance in schools and the Council.
- 6) To implement robust quality assurance processes for all aspects of the education service and those delegated to schools, including implementing the Team Around the School (TAS) approach for schools requiring additional support.
- 7) To report regularly to the Chief Education Officer and Corporate Director on the achievements, challenges and any emerging risks in aspects of the service within the responsibility of the post holder.
- 8) To ensure timely briefings of the Executive Member for Education on the achievements and emerging risks in the aspects of the service within the responsibility of the post holder.
- 9) To be responsible for financial planning and management of defined aspects of the education budget.
- 10) To lead and promote a culture of ambition, achievement and improvement by ensuring that effective mechanisms are in place to drive and measure performance in school improvement and inclusion functions.
- 11) To lead the school improvement and inclusion team.

Corporate Responsibilities:

1. Responsible, as a member of the Corporate Leadership Team, to contribute to the strategic leadership of the Directorate and Council, challenging, shaping and securing the achievement of key priorities and strategies.
2. Contribute to the Council's corporate planning, performance management framework through the development; implementation and monitoring of Service and Business Plans to ensure key priorities and targets are achieved.
3. Robust resource and financial planning and management, supporting the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Council's long term financial viability, while promoting a commercial approach to cost reduction and income generation, including maximising external funding sources.
4. Providing clear, strong and motivational leadership to employees and creating a high-performance culture that drives continuous improvement, efficiency and high levels of citizen satisfaction.
5. Championing a collaborative and corporate approach by providing effective leadership, direction and management for the Service Management Team and workforce.

6. Leading and managing performance against objectives through the development and implementation of effective performance management systems and performance coaching of staff.
7. Providing expert advice to Elected Members and building positive and respectful working relationships between Members and Officers.
8. Effective leadership of service transformation and change with the aims of maximising efficiency, modernising services and achieving better outcomes and opportunities for communities and service users.
9. Effective leadership and management of risk, assurance and governance.
10. Interpreting and advise on the impact of UK and Welsh Government and other external agencies on the development of local policies and the position of the Council.
11. Making a positive contribution to influence local and regional partnership and collaborative working, promoting Blaenau Gwent and ensuring the Council maximises the opportunities and benefits arising for service delivery.
12. Effectively managing relationships with multiple stakeholders to enhance the Council's performance, reputation and image externally ensuring key strategies are delivered efficiently and that Council resources are managed strategically and effectively.
13. Provide strong and visible leadership and act as a role model in developing high levels of motivation and development amongst staff, a culture of openness and the promotion of equal opportunities in all services, together with maintaining positive and progressive relations with employees and trade unions.
14. Demonstrate the Council's values and behavioural competencies, i.e. providing positive leadership, acting with openness, honesty and integrity and instilling a clear sense of direction, priority and pace.
15. To ensure that the principles of equality of opportunity are fully integrated and actively pursued within all areas of the Council's service provision and employment policies, practices and procedures.
16. To comply with the relevant sections of the Council's policy statements on Health, Safety and Welfare at Work and Safeguarding.
17. To undertake responsibilities at tactical level in the event of an emergency including during periods when the multi-agency arrangements are convened as part of the Local Resilience Forum.
18. To undertake any other duties commensurate with the role and represent Strategic Director/Director as and when appropriate.

Person Specification

Requirements	Essential (E) / Desirable (D)	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify – Stakeholder Panel (SP)
Qualifications		
Degree or equivalent in relevant discipline.	E	A
Evidence of further professional development within leadership and/or education.	E	A
Experience		
Proven successful senior leadership experience in an education field to include School / Local Education Authority / Inspectorate or Advisory Body.	E	A/I/SP
Experience of supporting successful school improvement and planning implementation.	E	A/I/SP
Knowledge and understanding of the range of policy and operational issues confronting education in Wales.	E	I/P
Knowledge and up to date understanding of legislative and statutory obligations which affect the provision and delivery of a quality service.	E	A/P
Proven experience of working effectively in co-operation with a wide range of internal and external bodies including both statutory and non-statutory organisations.	E	A/I/P/SP
Knowledge and up to date understanding of legislative and statutory obligations which affect the provision and delivery of a quality service.	E	A/I/P
Personal Attributes		
Ability to communicate ideas and issues effectively to a wide range of individuals and groups.	E	I/P
Ability to manage change and provide practical and creative solutions to the management of strategic and operational issues.	E	A/I
Good understanding and application of performance management and coaching techniques and data analysis within the context of a council environment.	E	I
The ability to influence those in leadership positions in education.	E	A/I
Understanding of the wider social legislative and economic context within which service responsibilities are to be fulfilled.	E	I
Understanding of working in a political environment and an ability to develop effective working links with elected members.	E	A/I
Ability to communicate ideas and issues effectively to a wide range of individuals and groups.	E	I
Special Working Conditions / Requirements		
Willingness to work un-social hours	E	A
Ability to travel / access to a vehicle for work purposes	E	A

Minimum Welsh Language Skill Requirements (Indicated with a tick (✓) below)	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Welsh Language Skills Level 0. Level 1-5 is desirable. Training is optional.	✓
Welsh Language Skills Level 1 Entry / Courtesy (as a minimum) are desirable and need to be learnt when appointed. Training required: "Welcome Part 1 & 2" (10 hours in total)	
Welsh Language Skills Level 1 Entry / Courtesy (as a minimum) are essential. Training required: "Welcome Part 1 & 2" and "Welcome Back Part 1 & 2" (20 hours in total).	

For further information on the above please refer to the [Welsh Language Skills Guidelines](#)

Welsh language skills requirements beyond the minimum stated above e.g. fluent speaker / proficient writer will be outlined within the person specification under qualifications and skills.

Personal Competencies

All competencies are regarded as essential, although it is recognised that some may be achieved over a period of time. All employees are expected to continually develop their competencies in line with the appropriate framework. In addition to those assessed as part of the recruitment process, competencies will be assessed during the probationary period and through the Council's performance coaching scheme.

Competencies – Leading People	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Provides inspirational leadership and is a role model to others	P/I
Takes direct responsibility and is accountable for actions	I
Respects and values the contribution and ambition of others	I
Actively promotes equality and diversity	I
Challenges unacceptable behaviour/attitudes	I
Recognises and celebrates achievements	I
Defends colleagues against inappropriate criticism	I
Demonstrates and is an example of good work-life balance	I

Competencies – Delivering the Vision	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Communicates a compelling view of the future	P/I
Ensures the vision is meaningful to all	I
Challenges the vision appropriately	I
Proactively promotes the vision to others	I

Competencies – Setting & Achieving Ambitious Targets	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Is committed to continually improving performance of self and others	I
Agrees ambitious performance targets and priorities for self and others	I
Sets high standards and keeps self and others focused on outcomes	I
Gives regular, constructive feedback on service /team/ individual performance	I
Recognises and celebrates success	I
Challenges poor performance appropriately	I
Seeks learning opportunities from results	I

Competencies – Empowering Our People	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Encourages and develops personal accountability in others	I
Works to identify training and development needs in others	I
Encourages others to think for themselves	I
Promotes risk-taking and supports appropriately	I
Utilises and respects the skills, experience, and ambition of others at all levels	I
Promotes and demonstrates personal and professional learning and development in self and others	I

Competencies – Communicating	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Creates and encourages two-way communication inside and outside the organisation	I
Uses appropriate and precise methods of communication	P/I
Has personal credibility with a variety of different groups and uses networks effectively	I
Communicates positively and respectfully	I
Actively listens and respects others' points of view	I
Checks own and others' understanding	I

Competencies – Making Informed Decisions	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Is prepared to take action and be accountable	I
Regards problem solving as an improvement opportunity	I
Involves others in decision making	I
Steps back and takes a wider view	I
Uses evidence to challenge or support point of view	I
Considers implications of proposed decisions	I
Ensures decisions link to continually improving performance	I
Has the confidence to make ambitious, difficult, or unpopular decisions	I
Is able to justify and explain decisions	I

Competencies – Working in Partnership	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Understands partnerships in the context of the “big picture”	I
Promotes and is actively involved in multi-agency partnerships to continually improve services for the citizen	I
Networks effectively internally and externally	I
Recognises, respects, and utilises the expertise of others	I
Proactively shares knowledge and information	I
Seeks out the most appropriate people to contribute to partnership working	I

Competencies – Managing the Political Interface	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Understands the political environment locally, regionally, and nationally	I
Positively respects and abides by the professional code of conduct and adheres to the principles of political restriction	I
Establishes and continually improves positive and appropriate interaction with all Councillors	I
Raises issues and constructively challenges in an appropriate and sensitive manner	I
Ensures others understand the political dimension of their work	I
Provides timely, constructive, high quality professional advice to assist the political decision making process	I

Competencies – Pushing the Boundaries	Assessment methods: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P), Test (T), Probationary Period (PP), other please specify
Regularly and constructively challenges the status quo	I
Is positive about change and identifies potential benefits to the citizen	I
Taps into the innovative and creative potential of others	I
Considers different methods/approaches	I
Encourages others to suggest new ideas	I
Supports and develops others’ ideas	I
Looks creatively inside and outside the organisation for new ideas and actively shares good practice	P/I

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