



Job Description

Education Directorate

Post Title	Head of School Improvement		
Post Number	BG15101	Grade	JNC3 Subject to Job Evaluation
Base	Agile Worker	Hours	37 hrs per week
Car User Allowance	Approved Casual	Disclosure	Enhanced
Contact	Corporate Director of Education	Updated	March 2025
Politically restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes *		

* 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.

Principal Job Purpose

Responsible to: Corporate Director of Education

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

Principal Accountabilities

- 1) To deputise for the Corporate Director of Education on school improvement and inclusion matters.
- 2) To lead on the Blaenau Gwent's Vision for Education strategy, in partnership with the Education Achievement Service, and 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.

Service Responsibilities

- 1) To deputise for the Corporate Director of Education on school improvement and inclusion matters.
- 2) To strategically lead, in collaboration with key agencies and in partnership with headteachers, improved education outcomes 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 work within the Estyn regulatory framework to secure and deliver improved performance in schools and the Council.
- 4) To implement robust quality assurance processes for all aspects of the education service and those delegated to schools.
- 5) To report regularly to the Corporate Director on the achievements, challenges and any emerging risks in aspects of the service within the responsibility of the post holder.
- 6) 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.
- 7) To be responsible for financial planning and management of defined aspects of the education budget.
- 8) 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.

Corporate Responsibilities:

- 1) Responsible, as a member of the 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 and 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 more commercial approach to cost reduction and income generation, including maximising external funding sources.
- 4) Provide clear, strong and motivational leadership to employees and create a high performance culture that drives continuous improvement, efficiency and high levels of citizen satisfaction.
- 5) Manage performance against objectives through the development and implementation of effective performance management systems and performance coaching of staff.
- 6) Provide expert advice to Elected Members and build positive and respectful working relationships between Members and Officers.

- 7) Effective leadership of service change with the aims of maximising efficiency, modernising services and achieving better outcomes and opportunities for communities and service users.
- 8) Interpret 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.
- 9) Make 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.
- 10) 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.
- 11) 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.
- 12) Demonstrate the Council's values and behavioural competencies, ie providing positive leadership, acting with openness, honesty and integrity and instilling a clear sense of direction, priority and pace.
- 13) 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.
- 14) To comply with the relevant sections of the Council's policy statements on Health, Safety and Welfare at Work and Safeguarding.
- 15) To undertake responsibilities at tactical level in the event of an emergency situation including during periods when the multi-agency arrangements are convened as part of the Local Resilience Forum.
- 16) To undertake any other duties commensurate with the role and represent the Corporate Director as and when appropriate.

Person Specification – Senior Manager

1. Qualifications & experience

Qualifications/relevant experience	Assessment Method				
	Essential / Desirable	Application Form	Interview	Other (please specify)	Probationary Period
Degree or equivalent in relevant discipline	Essential	✓			
Proven successful senior leadership experience in an Education field to include School / Local Education Authority / Inspectorate or Advisory Body.	Essential	✓	✓		
Experience of supporting successful school improvement and planning implementation	Essential	✓	✓	Presentation	
Knowledge and understanding of the range of policy and operational issues confronting education in Wales	Essential	✓	✓	Presentation	
Knowledge and up to date understanding of legislative and statutory obligations which affect the provision and delivery of a quality service	Essential	✓	✓		
Evidence of further professional development within leadership and/or education	Desirable	✓			
Other experience					
Proven experience of working effectively in co-operation with a wide range of internal and external bodies including both statutory and non-statutory organisations	Essential	✓	✓		
Knowledge and up to date understanding of legislative and statutory obligations which affect the provision and delivery of a quality service	Essential	✓	✓		
Knowledge/Skills					
Ability to communicate ideas and issues effectively to a wide range of individuals and groups	Essential	✓	✓		
Ability to manage change and provide practical and creative solutions to the management of strategic and operational issues	Essential	✓	✓		
Good understanding and application of performance management and coaching techniques and data analysis within the context of a council environment	Essential	✓	✓		
The ability to influence those in leadership positions in education	Essential	✓	✓		
Understanding of the wider social legislative and economic context within which service responsibilities are to be fulfilled	Essential		✓		
Understanding of working in a political environment and an ability to develop effective working links with elected members	Essential		✓		

2. Welsh Language Requirements (please select one of the following)	Essential / Desirable	Application Form	Interview	Other (please specify)	Probationary Period
Welsh language skills are desirable (level 0 in all Welsh Language Levels above).	Desirable	✓			

	Level 0	Level 1 Entry	Level 2 Foundation	Level 3 Intermediate	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Proficiency
Listening/Speaking	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading/Understanding	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please see "[Welsh Language Skills Guidelines](#)" on the Blaenau Gwent website for further information on the above levels.

3. Special Requirements	Essential / Desirable	Application Form	Interview	Other (please specify)	Probationary Period
Willingness to work un-social hours	Essential	✓			
Ability to travel / access to a vehicle for work purposes	Essential	✓			

4. 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 afterwards through the Authority's performance coaching scheme.

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Leading People	Provides inspirational leadership and is a role model to others		✓		✓
	Takes direct responsibility and is accountable for actions		✓		✓
	Respects and values the contribution and ambition of others		✓		✓
	Actively promotes equality and diversity		✓		✓
	Challenges unacceptable behaviour/attitudes		✓		✓
	Recognises and celebrates achievements		✓		✓
	Defends colleagues against inappropriate criticism		✓		✓
	Demonstrates and is an example of good work-life balance		✓		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Delivering the Vision	Communicates a compelling view of the future		✓		✓
	Ensures the vision is meaningful to all		✓		✓
	Challenges the vision appropriately		✓		✓
	Proactively promotes the vision to others		✓		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Setting & Achieving Ambitious Targets	Is committed to continually improving performance of self and others		✓		✓
	Agrees ambitious performance targets and priorities for self and others		✓		✓
	Sets high standards and keeps self and others focused on outcomes		✓		✓
	Gives regular, constructive feedback on service /team/ individual performance		✓		✓
	Recognises and celebrates success		✓		✓
	Challenges poor performance appropriately		✓		✓
	Seeks learning opportunities from results		✓		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Empowering Our People	Encourages and develops personal accountability in others		✓		✓
	Works to identify training and development needs in others		✓		✓
	Encourages others to think for themselves		✓		✓
	Promotes risk-taking and supports appropriately		✓		✓
	Utilises and respects the skills, experience, and ambition of others at all levels		✓		✓
	Promotes and demonstrates personal and professional learning and development in self and others		✓		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Communicating	Creates and encourages two-way communication inside and outside the organisation		✓		✓
	Uses appropriate and precise methods of communication		✓		✓
	Has personal credibility with a variety of different groups and uses networks effectively		✓		✓
	Communicates positively and respectfully		✓		✓
	Actively listens and respects others' points of view		✓		✓
	Checks own and others' understanding		✓		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Making Informed Decisions	Is prepared to take action and be accountable		✓		✓
	Regards problem solving as an improvement opportunity		✓		✓
	Involves others in decision making		✓		✓
	Steps back and takes a wider view		✓		✓
	Uses evidence to challenge or support point of view		✓		✓
	Considers implications of proposed decisions		✓		✓
	Ensures decisions link to continually improving performance		✓		✓
	Has the confidence to make ambitious, difficult, or unpopular decisions		✓		✓
	Is able to justify and explain decisions		✓		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Working in Partnership	Understands partnerships in the context of the “big picture”		✓		✓
	Promotes and is actively involved in multi-agency partnerships to continually improve services for the citizen		✓		✓
	Networks effectively internally and externally		✓		✓
	Recognises, respects, and utilises the expertise of others		✓		✓
	Proactively shares knowledge and information		✓		✓
	Seeks out the most appropriate people to contribute to partnership working		✓		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Managing the Political Interface	Understands the political environment locally, regionally, and nationally		✓		✓
	Positively respects and abides by the professional code of conduct and adheres to the principles of political restriction		✓		✓
	Establishes and continually improves positive and appropriate interaction with all Councillors		✓		✓
	Raises issues and constructively challenges in an appropriate and sensitive manner		✓		✓
	Ensures others understand the political dimension of their work		✓		✓
	Provides timely, constructive, high quality professional advice to assist the political decision making process		✓		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Pushing the Boundaries	Regularly and constructively challenges the status quo		✓		✓
	Is positive about change and identifies potential benefits to the citizen		✓		✓
	Taps into the innovative and creative potential of others		✓		✓
	Considers different methods/approaches		✓		✓
	Encourages others to suggest new ideas		✓		✓
	Supports and develops others' ideas		✓		✓
	Looks creatively inside and outside the organisation for new ideas and actively shares good practice		✓		✓