

Virtual School Headteacher– Grade D

Job purpose

Parents want their children to have the best start in life and to reach their full potential. As corporate parents, in Kirklees we have equally high aspirations for our children and young people in care.

The Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) should ensure that the highest priority is given to creating a culture of high educational aspirations and that we strive for accelerated progress and age-related attainment or better for our children and young people in care. Our young people should have access to a suitable range of high-quality education placement options and that, when commissioning services we take account their educational achievement.

The VSH and the team are required to provide information and advice for previously looked-after children by promoting their educational achievement with their parents, educators, and others.

As the strategic education lead for children with a social worker, the VSH will bring greater awareness to the disadvantage that this cohort of children can experience, promote engagement in education and help to narrow the attainment gap working closely with Children's Social Care. The VSH will advocate for, and model, a strengths-based approach to supporting children and promoting their educational outcomes.

In this role you will be responsible for providing clear leadership, direction, and management of the Virtual School, as a member of the Learning and Early Support senior leadership team, you may be called upon to deputise for the Service Director when appropriate. You will be supported by the Executive Virtual School Headteacher.

This role is based within [Children and Families](#) Find out more about [working for Kirklees](#).

Key areas of responsibility

VSH Strategic responsibilities

This job has the strategic Council responsibility for promoting the educational outcomes of children and young people in the care of the authority. Working closely with senior leaders across Children's Services and with the Virtual School Governing Body you will be responsible for ensuring that there are effective strategic approaches that will:

- narrow the attainment and progress gap between children and young people in care and their peers.
- create a culture of high aspirations among children and young people in care and those working with them.
- enable schools to be accountable for the outcomes of the children and young people in care they have on roll, through effective mechanisms of support and challenge.
- ensure that children and young people in care have access to a suitable range of education placement options and that commissioning services for them takes account of the duty to promote their educational achievement.

- ensure strategic oversight of the allocation and distribution of Pupil Premium funding including commissioning arrangements to best meet the needs of our children and young people in care.
- ensure that training for the various stakeholders and partner services, organisations, and agencies, enables them to effectively support children and young people in care.
- effectively monitor the attendance and educational progress of children and young people in the care of Kirklees, wherever they are in school, as if those children attended a single school.
- ensure that the authority's Children in Care Council regularly addresses the educational experiences raised by children and young people in care and responds effectively to such issues
- Have a clear oversight and understanding of the Virtual School data set and be ready to clearly present and report to a range of forums on a regular basis
- Provide specialist knowledge and challenge as a core strategic member of the Corporate Parenting Board

VSH Operational responsibilities

Additionally, you will be responsible for ensuring that there are effective operational approaches that will:

- maintain an up-to-date roll of the virtual school's children and young people in care with information about their school / education provider, attendance and educational progress and attainment.
- ensure schools and educational providers understand and fulfil the obligations placed on them for the children and young people in care they have on roll.
- ensure heads and designated teachers in schools know their children in care and work with professionals to improve their educational experience and increase their attainment and progress.
- ensure social workers, designated teachers and schools, carers, and independent reviewing officers (IROs) understand their role and responsibilities in initiating, developing, reviewing, and updating the child's personal education plan (PEP) and how they help meet the needs identified in that PEP.
- ensure that all children and young people in care, wherever they are placed, have up-to-date, effective, and high-quality PEPs that focus on educational outcomes and statutory compliance
- ensure the educational achievement of children and young people in care by the authority is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.
- ensure that there are arrangements in place to report regularly on the attainment of children and young people in care through the authority's corporate parenting structures.
- take account of Ofsted's current Inspection Framework for Children and Young People in Care's Services and support the preparation for that inspection.
- manage the distribution of the Pupil Premium Plus in such a way as to demonstrate its impact.

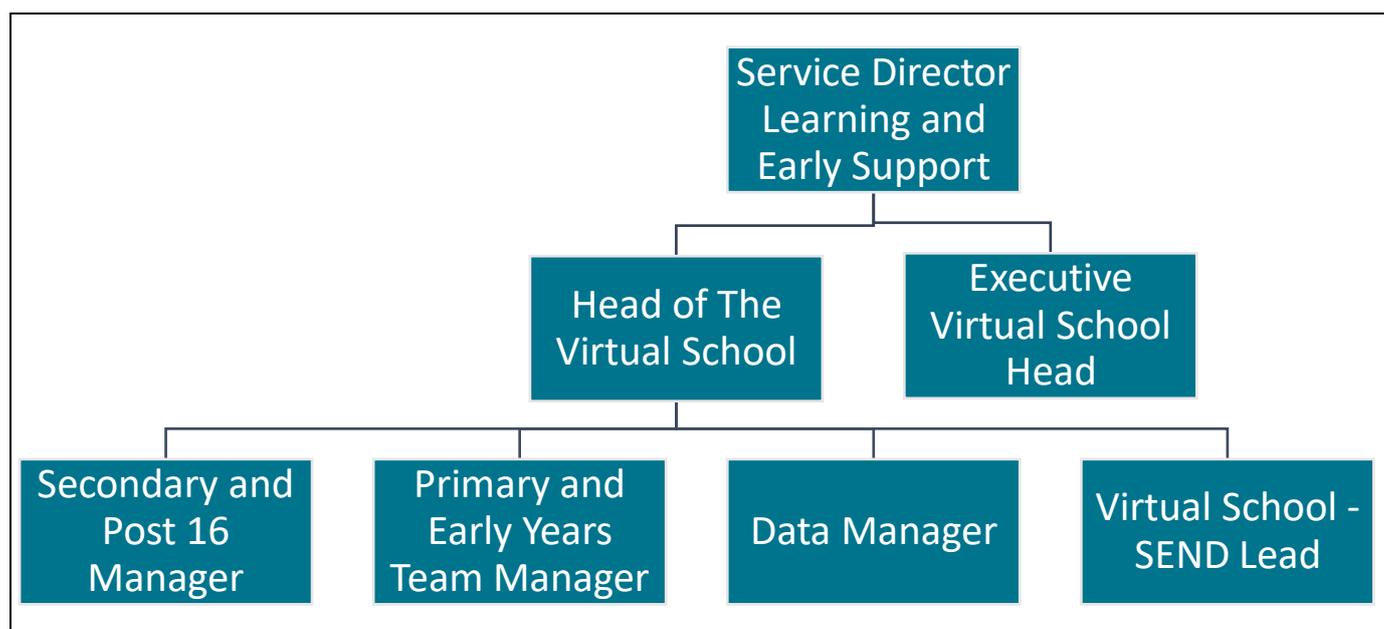
- Lead the Virtual School Team and have direct line management of the Virtual School Leadership Team.

Working with others

As VSH you must ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to work with a range of professionals who will play a role in supporting the education of children and young people in care.

- supporting carers to have high expectations in helping children and young people in care to achieve their full potential in education from pre-school to post-16 education, employment, and training.
- ensuring, through commissioners, that providers of fostering services and residential care have a robust evidence base that demonstrates they prioritise all aspects of promoting the educational achievement of children and young people in care and helping them to achieve and that when commissioning education services for a looked after child from independent providers, commissioning decisions will be based on the quality of the educational support provided.
- ensuring there is timely communication and effective co-operation with the VSH from other local authorities, particularly in relation to possible education placement changes.
- As VSH you will have primary responsibility for ensuring that there is suitable education in place for all children and young people in care of the local authority. Your views will be considered as part of decisions on placement moves, particularly where they take a child to a school outside Kirklees. Where that happens, you will be responsible for contacting the existing regional and national network of virtual school heads, in pursuit of the best school place for the child concerned.

Position of job in organisational structure



Employee Specification

Knowledge, qualifications, skills, and experience	Shortlisting criteria
Qualified Teacher and NPQH (or sufficient experience of senior school leadership to demonstrate competency across the spectrum of headship skills).	Essential
Significant and successful experience of Senior Management in a School &/or direct management of other educational provision.	Essential
Has knowledge and understanding of relevant legislation and guidance regarding Education and children and young people in care.	Essential
Has knowledge and understanding of the OFSTED framework for Inspecting Schools and Services	Essential
Problem solving and root cause identification skills	Essential
Strong analytic and decision-making abilities	Essential
Ability to influence others and move toward a common vision or goal	Essential
Experience of working closely with &/or managing multi-agency teams.	Essential
Successful experience of influencing other senior leaders, and convincing them of the value of change	Essential
Experience with large-scale organisational change.	Essential
Willing to work flexible hours, including occasional evenings and weekends	Essential
Travel is an essential part of this job and therefore it would be extremely difficult for you to do your job effectively if you did not use a car for all or most of the time. It is essential that you hold a full and valid driving licence, and it is expected that you will either use a council vehicle or your own car.	Essential
Accepts an enhanced DBS and barred list check is required. Please note that a conviction may not exclude candidates from appointment but will be considered as part of the recruitment process.	Essential

Behaviours and expectations

The right behaviours and attitudes are as important to us as the skills you bring to the job. We expect all our employees to demonstrate the following behaviours:

- Positive
- Honest
- Respectful
- Flexible
- Communicative

- Supportive

You will also promote and be a role model of the Council's expectations of a New Council Employee within the organisation. This role is at level 3. Find out more about [Council Behaviours and Expectations](#).

General information

See your responsibilities related to [Safeguarding](#).

Driving licence or able to travel independently across Kirklees, exceptions maybe made for disabled candidates.

DBS check at the appropriate level

This Job Profile is intended to provide an understanding and appreciation of the responsibilities of this particular job. It is not possible to specify every detail and we expect you to work flexibly within your skills, knowledge, experience, and grade of this job.

For Office Use Only:

Job Category	Children's Services	Grading ID	S00003
Job ID	80100660	Last Updated	April 2022
Job Focus	No	Career Progression	No

Contractual Variants

DBS Category	Children	DBS Type	Enhanced + Barred
Health Check	No	Politically Restricted	No
24/7 working	No	Public Holidays	No
Night Working	No	Alternating Pattern	No
Standby	No	Other	No
Checked by HR	D Nicolaidis		