

Northumberland County Council
JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title:	SEN Finance Officer	Directorate:	Wellbeing and Health, Children's Services, Education and Skills	Office Use
Band:	7	Workplace:	Based at County Hall, Morpeth but must be able to travel County-wide and able to follow agile working practices	JE ref: 4147 HRMS ref:
Responsible to:	Education and Skills Business Manager	Date:	May 2022	Manager Level:
Job Purpose:	To manage the High Needs Funding Dedicated Schools Grant and its distribution amongst schools, Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings and other budget holders, and manage the associated data, systems and business relationships between the Council and its providers.			
Resources	Staff	Line management responsibility for Sen Finance Assistant, including formal appraisal and supervision. Required to deputise for Education and Skills Business Manager. Provides advice and direction to multiple teams across different disciplines, eg SEN, Corporate Finance, Commissioning. Will be required to advise, train, mentor and collaborate with members of staff within the team, and the wider department.		
	Finance	Liaise with colleagues both within the Council and the wider Education network to manage the timely and accurate payment of SEN Funding (approx. £40m) To work with corporate finance colleagues in developing budget monitoring systems and process that facilitate effective spend of budgeted sums and service needs/trend analysis. Responsible for the monitoring, review and reporting of key management information in relation to SEN to ensure that funding arrangements remain appropriate.		
	Physical	To operate key corporate systems particularly finance and education systems to ensure that service needs are met. Allocated office equipment. Cross verification of data between different systems to verify basis for payments		
	Clients	Education and Skills Funding Agency, including the management of the High Need Place Change notification process. Internal clients including officers at all levels including Service Area and Senior Managers To respond to enquiries and issues from colleagues, maintained and special schools, and independent sector and non-maintained providers. Management of the Schools Forum High Needs Sub Committee, including Headteachers and Governor representatives. Extensive work with Headteachers in relation to enquiries and student information. Significant interaction with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team to ensure accuracy of information Other Local Authority areas to manage the complex area of cross border responsibility and charging.		

Duties and key result areas:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leading on the planning, allocation and payments of the overall High Needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in conjunction with the Education and Skills Business Manager, Departmental Managers, and Schools Forum 2. Monitor mechanisms used to distribute HN funding and ensure they remain appropriate and equitable while delivering VFM for the Council. 3. Manage, and deal with the precise detail of, the calculation and distribution of HN Funding to all schools and PVI settings. 4. Working in collaboration with the Corporate Finance colleagues lead on HN budget management including forecasting and reconciliation. 5. Develop regular reporting tools and reports so that key stakeholders are kept informed of trends, forecasts and pressures. 6. Work closely with colleagues responsible for place planning to ensure sound budget management and efficient use of resources on a short, medium and long term basis. <p>The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.</p>	
Work Arrangements	
Physical requirements:	None.
Transport requirements:	Visit sites throughout the County related to the work of the Directorate.
Working patterns:	Flexi hours plus a requirement for lone working and the need to work late on occasions.
Working conditions:	Post is mainly office based, but with need to attend off-site meetings.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title: SEN Finance Officer	Directorate: Children's Services	Ref: 4147
Essential	Desirable	Assess by
Knowledge and Qualifications		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NVQ Level 5 or equivalent standard of general education and/or a recognised professional qualification. ▪ Business Planning. ▪ Budget Management. ▪ Financial Management ▪ Experience of Education Funding and use of data. ▪ Detailed knowledge and understanding of how schools operate on a day-to-day basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) qualification and current membership ▪ Experience of Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) funding 	 (a) (i) (t)
Experience		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of working in an environment (public or private) where performance management is a key priority to delivering business success. ▪ Experience of working with schools and a range of public and private sector organisations. ▪ Experience of developing and managing customer relationships ▪ Experience of managing external funding grants. ▪ Experience of designing and managing business processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	 (a) (i) (t)
Skills and competencies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excellent communication skills (oral and written) including report writing and presentations. ▪ Excellent ICT skills. ▪ Excellent budget management skills. ▪ Able to establish and maintain high personal and professional credibility with School Governors, Headteachers, Members, employees, Chief Officers, Trade Unions and partners. ▪ Sound organisation skills with a systematic and flexible approach with attention to detail. ▪ Able to exchange and analyse sensitive, complex and contentious information both orally and in writing, and able to draw sound and accurate conclusions on the basis of this information. 		 (a) (i) (t) (r)

Physical, mental and emotional demands		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to develop and sustain relationships with individuals, groups and organisations from a wide range of backgrounds, including good interpersonal and people management skills. ▪ Prolonged periods of intense mental concentration with frequent interruptions from competing priorities and other stakeholders. ▪ Empathy for people working in schools. 		(a) (i) (t)
Other		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong orientation to customer delivery and desire to tackle issues in a truly corporate manner. ▪ Committed to continuous improvement. ▪ Flexible approach to service delivery. ▪ Willingness to undertake training and development in the post. 		(a) (i)

Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g. case studies/visits