

Strategic Lead for Inclusion

Job Description

Position Pay Level: Grade 8

Position Pay SCP: SCP 36

Salary: £49,868 to £55,273, inclusive of Local Weighting Allowance of £1,130 per annum

DBS requirement: Enhanced

Reports to: Principal Educational Psychologist

Responsible for: Graduated Approach Team, aged 7 upwards

Number of reports: 8 direct reports

5 Specialist Teachers
Speech and Language Therapist
Occupational Therapist
Family Liaison Officer

Financial Responsibilities: High Needs Block: £480k

Main purpose of job:

The Strategic Lead for Inclusion is responsible for shaping, leading, and delivering the local authority's **vision for inclusive education and SEND provision**. The postholder will ensure that children and young people with SEND achieve positive educational, social, and life outcomes through high-quality, equitable, and sustainable services. This role operates at both a **strategic and operational level**, requiring strong leadership of people, resources, partnerships, and performance, while contributing to wider corporate objectives and reform agendas.

The Strategic Lead for Inclusion will provide **strategic leadership and operational oversight** to ensure **inclusive, high-quality education** across mainstream, special schools, alternative provision and post-16 settings, with a strong focus on early intervention, graduated response and system-wide collaboration.

A key responsibility is oversight of the SEND reforms in the "Putting Children and Young People First" programme, including the **Experts at Hand Service**. The role provides assurance that inclusion reform is not peripheral, but central to **Slough's SEND improvement journey**, rebuilding trust and delivering meaningful outcomes for children, young people and families.

The Strategic Lead for Inclusion is a **key delivery leader** for the Council's **Priority Action and Impact Plan** following the Ofsted/CQC Local Area SEND inspection (July 2025), bridging strategy, operational delivery, and lived experience. The postholder is expected to provide **direct leadership, delivery assurance, and system influence**

against the priority areas set out in the PAIP, ensuring clear accountability, pace, and measurable impact.

Main Accountabilities:

Strategic Leadership and System Improvement

- Develop, articulate, and implement a clear strategic vision for inclusion and SEND aligned to local priorities, national policy, and statutory responsibilities.
- Lead the continuous improvement of SEND and inclusion across all education phases and settings, updating the Council's SEND and Inclusion Strategy as required.
- Translate strategy into deliverable action plans with clear performance measures, milestones, and impact evaluation.
- Use insight from data, feedback, inspection outcomes, and best practice to inform service development and decision-making.

Inclusive Practice, Attendance, and Exclusions

- Work with schools and settings to strengthen inclusive practice and embed a consistent graduated response model that supports settings to meet needs independently and sustainably.
- Support schools and settings to maximise ordinarily available provision, reducing reliance on Alternative Provision and specialist placements where appropriate.
- Support schools to improve attendance, reduce exclusions, and prevent escalation to statutory processes wherever possible.

SENDCo Network and Workforce Development

- Lead and develop the SENDCo Network to ensure high-quality professional learning, peer collaboration, and consistency of practice.
- Commission and deliver targeted training and development for SENDCos, teachers, and leaders to improve confidence and competence in inclusive practice.
- Promote talent management, succession planning, and a culture of reflective practice across the inclusion workforce.

Experts at Hand Service

- Provide strategic and operational oversight of the Experts at Hand Service, ensuring it is responsive, impactful, and aligned to need.
- Line manage and develop specialist staff including Specialist Teachers, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, and Family Liaison Officer.
- Ensure effective multi-disciplinary working that delivers integrated, child-centred support.

- Monitor demand, capacity, outcomes, and value for money, adjusting the service model where required.

Partnership Working and Co-Production

- Ensure feedback from lived experience informs service design, workforce development and strategic priorities.
- Build and sustain strong partnerships with schools, health services, social care, voluntary sector organisations, and other key stakeholders.
- Actively promote meaningful co-production with parents, carers, children, and young people including the Parent Carer Forum.
- Represent the local authority at strategic forums, partnerships, and external scrutiny where appropriate.

Leadership, Management, and Governance

- Contribute to strengthened SEND governance through active engagement with the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) and relevant sub-groups.
- Use SEND performance data, quality assurance findings, and lived-experience feedback to inform service improvement and strategic decision-making.
- Support joined-up planning at local level that complements wider system actions to reduce delays and fragmentation, including working closely with educational psychology, health partners and therapists to improve multi-agency coordination and responsiveness.
- Provide inspiring, inclusive, and values-driven leadership to staff, fostering high standards of performance, accountability, and well-being.

Financial and Resource Management

- Hold accountability for the allocated High Needs Block budget, ensuring effective financial planning, monitoring, and control.
- Champion value-for-money approaches, outcome-based commissioning, and service redesign where appropriate. Contribute to council-wide financial sustainability through innovation, efficiency, and preventative approaches.

Corporate Leadership and Change

- Contribute to corporate priorities and cross-directorate working.
- Lead and support change management initiatives that improve service effectiveness and user experience.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement, learning, and adaptability.

Compliance, Safeguarding, and Equality

- Ensure compliance with statutory duties, the council's Constitution, financial regulations, safeguarding standards, and health and safety responsibilities.

- Champion equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring non-discriminatory practice is embedded in workforce planning, policy development, and service delivery.

Person Specification:

Strategic Lead for Inclusion

Description	Essential/ Desirable	Method: Application (A) Interview (I) Test (T)
Qualifications		
Relevant degree or professional qualification in education, SEND, inclusion, educational psychology, or related field.	E	Application
Evidence of relevant and ongoing continuous professional development.	E	Application
Postgraduate qualification or professional membership related to SEND, inclusion or leadership.	D	Application
Experience		
Significant leadership experience within SEND and inclusion, including leading improvement and change.	E	Application / Interview
Experience of managing multidisciplinary teams and delivering service improvement.	E	Application / Interview
Experience of budget management and supporting value-for-money decision making.	E	Application / Interview
Experience of working within or alongside a local authority or complex multi-agency education system.	D	Application / Interview
Experience of strategy development, service redesign or post-inspection improvement.	D	Application / Interview
Skills and abilities		
Ability to provide clear strategic leadership and translate vision into deliverable plans.	Essential	Interview
Strong communication, influencing and partnership-working skills.	Essential	Interview
Ability to lead and support teams through change in a complex environment.	Essential	Interview
Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, using data and evidence to inform decisions.	Essential	Interview
Knowledge and understanding		
In-depth knowledge of SEND legislation, statutory guidance and the SEND Code of Practice.	Essential	Application / Interview

Description	Essential/ Desirable	Method: Application (A) Interview (I) Test (T)
Strong understanding of inclusive practice, early intervention and graduated approaches.	Essential	Interview
Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and multi-agency working.	Essential	Interview