

Applicant Pack

Director of Children's Services



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Welcome letter from Becky Shaw, Chief Executive

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining East Sussex as our Director of Children's Services.

East Sussex is a great place to live and work. It is a county of huge contrasts. The countryside is beautiful and largely unspoilt and our towns and villages are vibrant, but we also have areas of significant need and challenge. We have strong, local communities and work closely with them and our partners from all sectors to help all to fulfil their potential.

East Sussex has a strong reputation for good services, effective partnership working and innovation, as our recent LGA Peer Challenge demonstrates. Our robust business planning focuses our all resources on our four priority outcomes:

- driving sustainable economic prosperity;
- keeping vulnerable people safe from harm;
- helping people help themselves; and
- making the best use of resources now and in the future.

We are committed, both politically and managerially across all departments, to serving all our residents to the very best of our abilities. Making sure children and young people are able to thrive at home and at school is at the heart of that commitment. We have worked hard and well both within the Council and with our partners, local communities and the users of our services to continuously improve the quality of what we offer. We are proud of what we have achieved and are determined to build on our strong foundations, responding creatively to current financial and service challenges in a way which puts children's wellbeing at the centre of all we do.

We are looking for a leader with strong commissioning and partnership skills and an excellent understanding of local authority activity and partnerships. We want someone who can help us ensure we achieve the best possible results for our children and young people by making the most effective use of all available resources. This needs not just an excellent professional, but someone with real interest in people, ingenuity, stamina and the ability to both listen and engage with young people, the public, partners, Councillors and staff.

We are looking for an able, positive, creative and flexible leader, with an outstanding track record of delivering positive change and service improvement, to join a successful and supportive organisation. We hope that, after reading this information pack, you will want to join us at East Sussex, and we look forward to receiving an application from you.



Becky Shaw
Chief Executive

About the Role

The Advert

Here for children and families, whatever the weather.

Director of Children's Services £ competitive

With strong local communities, unspoilt countryside and vibrant coastal towns, East Sussex offers an exceptional quality of life to many. However, some of our residents face significant challenges, and rely on us and our partners to support them. Our One Council approach, prioritising the delivery of high-quality services in a tight fiscal environment, underpins everything we do.

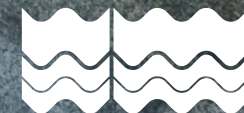
As a high-performing authority, we are proud of the work that has gone into building strong foundations for East Sussex Children's Services. We've been recognised for innovative practice, and have developed a distinctive relationship-based approach to our work with children and their families. But if we're to achieve the best possible outcomes, there's always more to do.

You'll work with schools, through school-led partnerships, to improve standards and ensure inclusive educational practice. Innovative, collaborative and inspiring, you'll be a visible and valued member of our ambitious corporate leadership team. Whether your career to date has been in education or social care, you must bring a track record of creative and flexible leadership, outstanding partnership-working ability, and solid delivery of service improvement.

If you're ready for a positive, mature and challenging environment where an ethos of continuous improvement drives lasting progress, please visit www.fairfield.co.uk/jobs/a000444 to find out more. To arrange an informal conversation with our advising consultants Martin Tucker or Sarah Longbottom, please call 0121 312 3755.

Fæerfield

East Sussex
County Council



Grade, Department, Location and Reporting

Grade:	Chief Officer – Band B
Department:	Children's Services
Location:	Lewes
Responsible to:	Chief Executive

Additional benefits

The Council offers a [comprehensive range of staff benefits](#) including:

- Minimum annual leave entitlement of 29-31 days per year depending on length of service, plus two extra-statutory days.
- Access to an online staff benefits portal, containing various offers and discounts from major retailers and service providers.
- Vehicle, bicycle, rental deposit and season ticket loan scheme.
- A cycle to work salary sacrifice scheme.
- A variety of initiatives to support staff wellbeing.
- Access to the Local Government Pension Scheme which offers an excellent range of benefits, including a career average pension when you retire. You can find out more on the [East Sussex Pension Fund](#) website.
- We also offer a tax-efficient Additional Voluntary Contribution scheme, allowing you to pay more into your pension if you choose.
- Enhanced maternity pay.
- Access to health cash plans at a corporate rate.
- Access to the Dell and Microsoft Home Use programmes, as well as the O2 open scheme.
- Access to salary deducted savings and loans via the Wave Community Bank credit union and Salary Finance, plus access to a Give as You Earn scheme.
- A range of support for remote and flexible working.
- An additional leave purchase scheme.
- Access to a car leasing scheme.
- Access to the Local Government Pension scheme, which offers an excellent range of benefits, including a career average pension when you retire. You can find out more on the [East Sussex Pension Fund](#) website.

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Director of Children's Services

Department: Children's Services

Grade: Chief Officer - Band B

Responsible to: Chief Executive

Purpose of the Role:

To lead the delivery of services within Children's Services department and be accountable for the implementation of the local and national agenda, and discharging the statutory obligations of the Director of Children's Services

To work with elected Members, the Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team (CMT) to drive forward the Council's transformation programme to make it a modern, flexible, customer focused, responsive and dynamic local authority.

To ensure that the Council operates within the required governance framework to deliver the efficient and appropriate use of public money.

Key tasks:

1. Contribute with the Chief Executive and Chief Officers, through CMT and elected Members, to the formulation of the Council's overall strategy, the securing and allocation of resources and the integrated planning, commissioning, delivery and monitoring of services.
2. To have lead accountability across the Council for the commissioning of outcomes for children and young people and where ESCC is the provider, management of children and young people's services.
3. To be an advocate for children, young people and their families as well as the wider population, businesses and communities of East Sussex.
4. Discharge the statutory obligations of the Director of Children's Services.
5. To advise the Council on its statutory and professional obligations in relation to Children's Social Care and education, ensuring that statutory requirements are met and adhered to.
6. To work closely with the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to ensure there is an integrated approach between adults, children's and young people's strategies which meets the needs of Adults' and Children's Social Care and education in East Sussex. To provide fully integrated and targeted specialist adults, children's and young people's services in collaboration with public, voluntary and private sector partners.
7. To work with schools, academy providers and other partners to drive the improvement agenda through a clear strategy of support, challenge and (where appropriate) intervention which has support from all partners.
8. To lead the development and implementation of strategies to ensure services are in place to support young people and their families with social care needs during their childhood and their transition to adulthood.
9. To work proactively with health to improve outcomes for children and young people.
10. To build strong networks and undertake a strong leadership role to influence and facilitate others to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.

11. To define the required service provision commissioning and decommissioning services in order to meet the changing needs of the people of East Sussex.
12. To ensure services provided by voluntary, independent and private sector organisations are appropriately monitored to ensure service delivery meets required standards and represents value for money.
13. To lead corporate and service related projects and programmes.
14. To drive forward the cultural, workforce, and other changes necessary to ensure services cohere around people's needs and secure improved outcomes for all.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential education and qualifications

- Degree and / or relevant professional / management qualification or equivalent.

Essential key skills, abilities, knowledge, experience, values and behaviours

- Excellent commissioning skills.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and negotiating skills.
- Broad knowledge and understanding of public sector service delivery and strategic commissioning approaches.
- Commercial / business acumen and strong awareness of changes in the external environment.
- Structured, and able to set and meet tight deadlines.
- In-depth knowledge and effective application of the national agenda relating to children and young people.
- Able to work effectively within a political environment.
- Substantial experience of commissioning and managing at a senior level in Children's Services.
- Experienced in all aspects of change management.
- Recent experience of successfully leading delivery and transformation in a large public sector organisation.
- Good understanding of local authority business and local markets.
- A commissioner and collaborator who can develop productive relationships with a varied and broad range of stakeholders and communities.
- Able to motivate and develop staff and promote team working.
- Innovative and influential.
- Consultative leadership and encouraging style.
- An effective Corporate team player.
- Ability to network and establish effective relationships and influence them to adopt required policies and standards.

- Confident manner and resilience.
- Willingness and ability to travel inside and outside of the county.

Desirable education and qualifications

- Qualified Social Worker

Desirable key skills, abilities, knowledge, experience, values and behaviours

- Local government experience



Application Process

Closing date for applications: Friday 15 December 2023

Technical Interviews: Monday 8 and Tuesday 9 January 2024 (PM) - via Teams

Young People's Panel: Wednesday 17 January 2024 - via Teams

Likely to be from mid-late afternoon to accommodate young people's school commitments

Officer and Stakeholder Panels: Monday 22 January 2024 (all day) - County Hall, Lewes

Final Member Interviews: Tuesday 23 January 2024 (all day) - County Hall, Lewes

For a confidential discussion please speak to:

Sarah Longbottom

Senior Consultant, Faerfield Limited

Tel: 0121 312 3755

Email: slongbottom@faerfield.co.uk

Martin Tucker

Managing Director, Faerfield Limited

Tel: 0121 312 3755

Email: mtucker@faerfield.co.uk

TO APPLY FOR THIS ROLE, PLEASE CLICK [HERE](#)

About the Council

East Sussex County Council has a strong reputation as a well-managed council, with positive feedback from external inspections and reviews including the recent LGA Peer Challenge. The Council employs approximately 4,400 people and approximately 5,900 people in its maintained schools.

The Council provides services used by all residents in East Sussex, including providing care and support to children, families and the elderly; maintaining the roads and providing library services; and working to boost the local economy. We have a long term track record for delivery, producing excellent results for our residents.

Despite the severe funding restrictions affecting all local authorities and the market challenges, we have maintained our position as a well-run and high-performing council. We met the challenges of the pandemic and are working hard on both the recovery and cost of living challenges whilst continuing to provide vital services to our local communities. We are democratic, open and honest in determining the best quality services we can provide, within available resources. In this context, the Director of Children's Services will play a vital role both leading children's services and as a member of the Corporate Management Team in ensuring we continue to serve residents effectively.

Organisational context

Along with all other Council services the Children's Services Department is actively involved in working as One Council delivering quality services. In our Social Care service this is achieved through an exciting innovation programme based on our relationship based approach to social work, and a range of bespoke in-house services including an integrated early help offer with health partners. Ofsted rated Children's Services as Outstanding in 2018 ILACS. Driving up educational attainment and skills is a key part of driving economic prosperity. In addition, as a Council, we are reshaping services to schools to address the changing relationship with academies, free schools and other providers while maintaining a shared focus on cost effective services and the improvement agenda. This builds on the base of good practice that we have in our Children's Social Care Services.

Partnership working is at the core of our future success. ESCC plays a leading role in regional developments through the SE7 arrangements which bring together seven of the councils serving the south east to work on shared approaches to issues important to our communities. In East Sussex we are leading on innovative work on Special Educational Needs (SEN) as a member of the regional Change Programme Partnership and we work closely with adult services through our Family Safeguarding programme.

A chart showing the general structure of the service, as well as key functions, is included overleaf.

The Children's Services Department Structure



Director of Children's Services

Kathy Marriott
Assistant Director
Early Help and Social Care

Elizabeth Funge
Assistant Director
Education

Lou Carter
Assistant Director
Communications, Planning and Performance

Chris Jackson
Head of Locality
Social Work &
Family Assessment

Celia Lamden
Head of Early Help
Service 0-9

Katie Ridgway
Head of Education
Inclusion &
Partnerships

Luke Ede
Data & Information
Manager

Douglas Sinclair
Head of Children
Safeguards &
Quality Assurance

Vicky Finnemore
Head of Specialist
Services

Nicola McGeown
Principal Social
Worker

Nathan Caine
Head of Education
SEND &
Safeguarding

Amanda Watson
Planning &
Performance
Manager

Alison Mills
Project Manager
Home to School
Transport

Sally Carnie
Head of LAC
Services Operations

Fiona Lewis
Head of LAC
Services
Provider Services

Jessica Stubbings
Head of Education
Participation &
Planning

Atiya Gourlay
Equality,
Participation &
Partnerships Manager

Lucy Morgan-Jones
Organisational
Development Manager

Jo Nash
Head of Locality
Social Work &
Family Assessment

The County of East Sussex

East Sussex is a great place to live and work. Not only is the countryside beautiful and largely unspoilt, but our coastlines, towns and villages are vibrant and inviting. We have strong, local communities and we are working closely with them to improve their quality of life.

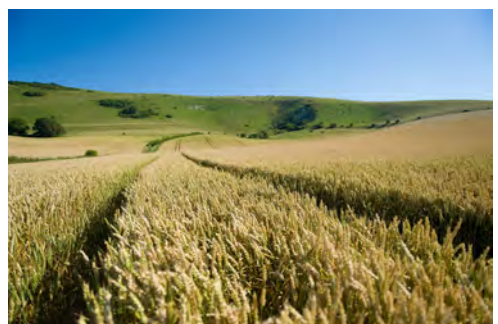
Located on the south coast of England we have a mild and, on average, sunnier climate than much of the rest of the UK, beautiful coastline and a number of coastal towns and villages including Eastbourne, Bexhill, Hastings, Seaford, Newhaven and Peacehaven.

Prior to the creation of Britain's newest national park – the South Downs National Park which became operational in 2011 – two-thirds of East Sussex was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), including the Sussex Downs, Ashdown Forest and the High Weald AONB. Inland there are many picturesque villages and towns such as Lewes, Rye and Battle. There are numerous and significant historic sites of interest to visit across the County, including the site of the 1066 Battle of Hastings.

Our economy comprises a large number of small businesses and is mainly service based consisting of public services, education, financial services and tourism. We have a higher than average proportion of residents aged over 65 and 85 and this is set to increase based on current population projections.

East Sussex and the surrounding counties (West Sussex and Kent) offer a variety of urban and rural settings in both coastal and inland locations in which to live. There are many sports, leisure and cultural activities. There are also good schools and public facilities for you and your family to use.

There is a variety of housing available in East Sussex, both to rent and buy. Despite the South East being above the national average for house prices, there are many thriving coastal towns that offer good value housing including Eastbourne, Newhaven, Seaford, Bexhill and Hastings as well as inland towns such as Uckfield, Crowborough and Hailsham. Brighton, Haywards Heath and Lewes are also popular places to live in Sussex and have good transport links to London and the South East.



Additional Information

For additional information, please follow these links:

East Sussex County Council

[Website](#)

[Key plans, strategies and policies](#)

[LGA Peer Challenge feedback report and Council response](#)

Children's services

[Ofsted Children's Social Care Services Report - July 2018](#)

Tourism

[Visit England - East Sussex](#)

[Visit South East England - East Sussex](#)

Relocating to East Sussex

[Rightmove - East Sussex](#)

[Zoopla - moving to East Sussex](#)

[ESCC School Search Page](#)

Living and Working in East Sussex

[Locate East Sussex](#)

[The South-East Local Enterprise Partnership](#)

