



Lewisham Learning

Independent Chair Candidate Information Pack

March 2019



Lewisham

The London Borough of Lewisham is in south London, England and forms part of Inner London. The principal settlement of the borough is Lewisham. The local authority is Lewisham London Borough Council and it is based in Catford. The borough shares borders with six other south London boroughs. Clockwise from the north: Greenwich, Bromley, Lambeth and Southwark.

Lewisham is a vibrant and diverse borough and one of strong contrasts. According to the 2011 census, Lewisham has a population of 275,885 and is 53% white and 47% BME, where 43% of households are owner-occupiers. A 2017 report by Trust for London and the New Policy Institute found that Lewisham has a poverty rate of 26%, close to the London-wide figure of 27%. Significant areas of Lewisham are currently undergoing exciting redevelopment and regeneration.

Education in Lewisham

- Over 90% of Lewisham Schools are rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted
- Our GCSE results are improving at a rate faster than the national average in English and Maths
- Lewisham secondary schools are currently benefitting from a £1million investment to improve outcomes for pupils
- Our Early Years outcomes are among the top five in the country and have been for the last five years.
- Key Stage 2 results in reading, writing and maths in the last year were 69% - 5% above the national average, and a 7% improvement on last year.
- Of the 732 students in England receiving all Grade 9s in their GCSE, 13 of those were from Lewisham's schools – the national average is 4.7 students per local authority.
- There has been a 45% drop in exclusions over the last two years in our secondary schools, bucking the national trend of rising exclusion rates.

Lewisham Learning: The School Improvement Partnership for Lewisham

Lewisham Learning is a schools' led partnership established by school leaders and the local authority to deliver high quality school improvement to all Lewisham schools. It is rooted in successful collaboration which has underpinned education in the borough for some time. Our schools operate as a family to support, challenge and encourage each other in their determination to do the very best for every child.

All of our schools are members of Lewisham Learning and have access to a developing membership core offer and a strong model of school improvement. Lewisham Learning works closely with the Local Authority and is supported by it. It also works closely with a range of other local organisations who are determined to give our children and young people the best possible start in life.

Our four teaching schools have formed an alliance and work in collaboration with one another to support and deliver the coordinated offer back to schools.

The Lewisham Education Commission finalised its report in April 2016. One of the Commission's key recommendations was that the local authority, headteachers and governors set up a partnership to establish a school-led system of school improvement. This partnership would enable schools to work together across the borough, to draw on each other's strengths and thus complement improvement efforts within local groups of schools.

Lewisham Learning is now operating as an overarching, cross-borough partnership to ensure the very best education for all children and young people. Lewisham Learning's aim is to ensure that by 2020:

- All Lewisham schools will be good or better
- Performance at Key Stage 4 and 5 will be at least at the London average
- Vulnerable children are served well - as measured through performance of vulnerable groups and exclusion figures
- All Lewisham schools are schools of choice
- Young people have huge pride in their school - as measured through a young people's survey
- All school staff are proud to work in an ambitious and successful system.

The role of the Independent Chair of Lewisham Learning represents a unique opportunity for a high calibre individual to support and challenge the leadership and development of our organisation in an evolving education landscape in which 90 member schools and the London Borough of Lewisham Council are both investing and providing strong educational and civic governance.

Applications are invited from high quality candidates with successful system leadership experience.

More information and details about Lewisham Learning, including our annual report for 2017/18 can be found here:

<http://schoolsservices.lewisham.gov.uk/Services/3975>

The Lewisham Learning Strategic Board

The Lewisham Learning Board represents the different members from schools and the Local Authority.

The following 8 voting positions will be elected from among Headteachers and Chairs of Governors in Lewisham Learning member schools:

- Secondary Governor
- 1 other Governor
- 2 Nursery or Primary HTs
- 1 Secondary HT
- 1 Special School / Alternative Provision HT
- 1 Headteacher, Executive Headteacher or Chief Executive from a Multi Academy Trust
- 1 Executive Headteacher from a federation

Other attendees will be the Cabinet member with councillor responsibility for Children and Young People, the Chair of Lewisham Teaching Schools Alliance Partnership and the Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services, who will also be a voting member on behalf of Lewisham Council.

The Independent Chair and the Director will attend as non-voting members of the Board.

Time Commitment

15 – 20 days per annum.

Remuneration

£500 per day.

How to Apply

Lewisham Learning has engaged the support of Veredus in this recruitment process.

To apply, please submit to Veredus:

- a comprehensive CV that addresses the key selection criteria outlined in the Job Description.
- a supporting statement of no more than two sides of A4 which addresses the criteria in the Person Specification.
- A one page covering letter setting out your reasons for applying, what you will bring to the role, your current level of remuneration, notice period and the details of two referees.

Please submit these documents to paula.kyprian@veredus.co.uk

Veredus will assess applications against the criteria in the Job Description and Person Specification and make recommendations to the Selection Panel on those candidates recommended for the short-list. Short-listed candidates will be further assessed by the Selection Panel through a combination of interview, presentation and leadership profiling exercises.

For a confidential discussion regarding the role please contact Nick Cole (07736 491804) or Ben Manojlovic (07785 454971) at Veredus.

Closing date: 12 noon on 15th April
Interviews: w/c 22nd April

Job Description

Designation: Independent Chair Lewisham Learning

Reports to: Lewisham Learning Strategic Board

Directorate: Children and Young People

Role Purpose

The key purpose of the role is to ensure that there is strong governance around the organisation and to work with the board to ensure that the vision and strategy are the right one and that the key objectives set are met. The Independent Chair will support the board to be clear on its working relationship with the Local Authority in order to ensure that all pupils in Lewisham schools have quality learning experiences and achieve the best outcomes possible to support them in the next phase of their education journey.

We also expect the chair to bring fresh ideas and an external perspective to our work, ensuring the right balance of support and challenge both to the board, the Director of Lewisham Learning and the local authority.

Internal Contacts

These will include:

- Executive Director of Children and Young People
- Assistant Director Education
- Director Lewisham Learning

External Contacts

These will include:

- Elected Members
- Schools
- Governors
- Other relevant external stakeholders

Governance

- Ensure that the governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the organization.
- Ensure that there are clear lines of accountability mapped out across the partnership for the work of Lewisham Learning.
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the Board members.
- Encourage positive change where appropriate and address and resolve any conflicts within the Board.
- Appraise the performance of the Board on an annual basis.

- Ensure that the Board is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the organization effectively, and which also reflects the wider population.
- Work within any agreed policies and terms of reference adopted by the organisation.

External Relations

- Act as an ambassador for Lewisham Learning to a range of stakeholders.
- Maintain close relationships with key members of the council, elected members, schools and their governors and relevant external stakeholders.
- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate.
- Represent the Lewisham Learning at relevant meetings and events.
- Facilitate change and address any potential conflict with external stakeholders.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

- Chair meetings of the Strategic Board effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process.
- Ensure that Board members are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the organisation and that the Board takes collective ownership of decisions.
- Foster, maintain and ensure that constructive relationships exist with and between the board members.
- Work closely with the Director Lewisham Learning to give direction to Board policy-making and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of trustees.
- Monitor that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.

Relationship with the Director Lewisham Learning and Lewisham Council Officers

- Establish and build a strong, effective and a constructive working relationship with the Director Lewisham Learning, ensuring s/he is held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives.
- Support the Director Lewisham Learning, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles.
- Ensure regular contact with the Interim Director and develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges.
- Liaise with the Director Lewisham Learning to maintain an overview of the organisation's affairs, providing support as necessary.
- Conduct an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the Director Lewisham Learning in consultation with other Board members.
- Ensure that the Director Lewisham Learning has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.

Person Specification

Note to Candidates:

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person, but are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

Skills

- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate all stakeholders and bring people together.
- Excellent written, verbal communication and presentation skills
- Good oral skills and ability to speak in public, sufficient to represent the Lewisham Learning effectively to the wider audience of schools and the Local Authority.
- Ability to communicate with a range of people at all levels.
- Skills in promoting collaboration between partners, enabling partners to constructively challenge each other in the context of non-defensive learning.
- Organisational abilities to ensure the effective operation of Lewisham Learning.
- Excellent analytical skills to provide effective scrutiny of education data.
- Ability to ensure high standards of confidentiality.
- Assertive, clear thinking and able to negotiate, challenge, have influence and authority.
- Skill in negotiations to assist in resolving conflict between stakeholders.
- Self-motivating and able to operate independently.
- Ability to work in a multi-racial/multi-cultural context, respect and value diversity.
- Ability to recognise discrimination in its many forms and to promote equal opportunities policies within the operation of the Lewisham Learning.

Knowledge

- Broad knowledge and understanding of the education sector and current issues affecting it.
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of local authority finance issues.
- Current knowledge of local authority / schools' relationships, responsibilities and accountabilities.
- Knowledge and understanding of the governance arrangements for all statutory partners.

Experience

- Experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organization.
- A strong track record of school improvement and a detailed understanding of the developing school improvement and education landscape nationally.
- A strong track record of school improvement which has made a significant difference to underperforming groups.
- Experience of governance and working with or as part of a Board.
- Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and managing stakeholders from a wide range of cultural backgrounds.
- Experience of chairing complex professional meetings at a senior level and the ability to chair in an efficient manner.
- Experience of promoting children's education outcomes demonstrable through previous or current professional or voluntary activities.
- Experience of implementing and managing effective and sustainable organisational change.

Personal Qualities

- Demonstrate a strong and visible passion and commitment to the organisation, its values, aims and strategic objectives.
- Demonstrate a commitment to the leadership of equality and diversity.
- Personal gravitas to lead a significant local organization.
- Exhibit strong inter-personal and relationship building abilities and be comfortable in an ambassadorial role.
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively.
- Strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the organization.
- Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment.
- Ability to commit time to conduct the role well, including travel and attending events out of office hours.

Equality & Diversity

- Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community
- Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post

Special Conditions

This role requires an enhanced DBS check.