



**National
Autistic
Society**

**Director of Education
and Children's
Services
Candidate Pack**

**Transforming lives and
changing attitudes**



Welcome letter from our Chief Executive

Dear Applicant

I am delighted you are interested in becoming the Director of Education and Children's Services for our charity.

I truly believe this will be a career defining role for the right person.

We are tremendously proud of our heritage, but recognise that we cannot stand still and need to move forward with energy, passion, commitment and innovation. As a result, we are looking for an experienced leader with the power to inspire, and a strong drive to transform the lives of the young people in the schools and across the education services.

This is an exciting role which will provide strategic and operational leadership to schools, educational and children's services across the charity. This is the chance to take a broad strategic view of education within autism and how an organisation like NAS can effect real change through its schools, its broader education offering and linking these with the adult services that it also provides. Your role will be to bring our seven schools together as one cohesive group - a group which makes a greater impact than the sum of its individual parts and reaches out into the communities in which they are based.

The Director of Education and Children's Services, will promote and maintain high standards of education and direct and shape the curricular and teaching processes within the education provisions; ensuring these comply with national standards and Ofsted. Leadership and management of the Education directorate team, including our 7 Principals will be vital. This individual will ensure that there is a robust infrastructure across the subsidiary of schools and work with the teams to centralise key systems and processes.

You will be the kind of person who motivates and encourages their team, celebrating our students' progress and that of the principals and education service leads you will manage. You will be an excellent mentor and a highly effective communicator. Ultimately, you will be driven with the passion to provide the best education to young people on the autism spectrum across the country.

This pack includes information on our organisation and this exciting opportunity. We believe it will be a rewarding career move for the right person and if this sounds like you, we would love to hear from you.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss any aspect of the role, please contact **Ross Laird** at Academicis on 07901 585959 or via email at rlaird@academicis.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Stevens
Chief Executive



About The National Autistic Society

We are the UK's leading autism charity. Our goal is to help transform lives, change attitudes and create a society that works for autistic people.

We were formed in 1962 by a group of parents who were passionate about ensuring a better future for their children. Today, we provide information about autism to millions of people every year, run pioneering education and social care services and influence policy, public attitudes and business practices.

Across the UK, we have more than 2,800 staff employed in a wide variety of roles, from teaching staff to family support workers; campaign officers to speech and language therapists; and helpline advisers to administrators. We have 7 schools, over 60 social care services and a network of 116 volunteer-run branches.

You'll find more information about us on our website: www.autism.org.uk

What we do

We have over 23,000 members, more than 116 branches and provide:

- information, advice, training and volunteer-delivered emotional support to millions of autistic people and families in the UK every year
- specialist residential, supported living and day services for adults
- specialist schools, Cullum Units on mainstream school sites and education outreach services for children
- employment support and social programmes for autistic adults
- information and training for health, education and other professionals working with autistic people and their families
- policy advice to all four national Governments and advice to drama and documentary-makers on how to portray autism accurately
- support to employers, businesses and public services on how to be more accessible and inclusive of autistic children and adults



Transforming lives and changing attitudes



Our vision, mission and values

All our work is guided by our vision, mission and values, which have been developed alongside autistic people and family members.

Our vision

We want to see a society that works for autistic people.

Our mission

To transform lives by providing support, information and practical advice for the 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK, as well as their three million family members and carers.

To change attitudes by improving public understanding of autism and helping businesses, local authorities and government to provide more autism-friendly spaces, deliver better services and improve laws.

Our values

- **We learn from real experience.** We've spent over 50 years working together with people on the autism spectrum. No one has more practical knowledge of autism. But we move with the times and we understand that there's always more to learn.
- **We tell it like it is.** We share what we have learned about autism, so that more people can make informed decisions and lead the best lives possible.
- **We inspire.** We celebrate progress, open up new possibilities, spur people into action and motivate change.
- **We are courageous.** We won't accept ignorance or inequality, and we'll never stop pushing for more understanding, greater support and a better world for people on the autism spectrum.

Transforming lives and changing attitudes



JOB DESCRIPTION

Director of Education and Children's Services and NAS Academies Trust

Division/Function: NAS Education & Children's Services
Reports to: Chief Executive Officer

WHY

Job summary:

- To provide direction and leadership as Director of Education and Children's Services of the NAS schools and children's services business and the NAS Academies Trust.
- To be accountable to the board of trustees through the Education Quality and Development sub-committee and the NAS Academies Trust Board.
- To promote and maintain high standards of education, welfare and care across the NAS schools.
- To bring a detailed understanding of the wider educational and children's social care policy environment, leveraging this knowledge to the advantage of the Charity and autistic people we support.
- To act as ambassador for the Charity and building strong relationships with the Department for Education, Principals, organisations and other external stakeholders.

WHAT

Principle accountabilities:

- Direct the delivery of the schools and children's services business to achieve financial and performance targets across a distributed group of independent and academy schools fulfilling all regulatory requirements.
- Lead the development for approval and implement the education and children's services strategy to ensure maximum delivery of places and achievement of outcomes for children.
- Take lead responsibility for the delivery of the integrated quality standards frameworks to promote continuous improvement, accountability, curriculum and provision quality to deliver best practice in special needs education and children's social care.
- Provide line and performance management to the Principals of NAS and NASAT schools and the Executive Team to enable effective improvement, robust self-evaluation and compliance with all regulatory and NAS expectations, and drive external relationships to autistic children's benefit.





Job Description *continued*



- Take lead responsibility for effective and safe practice, working with the NAS Lead for Safeguarding to quality assure, develop, implement and review the effectiveness of safeguarding policy and practice across the integrated education and children's services.
- Work with the Nominated Individual to promote robust quality monitoring for residential children's services to inform line and performance management of the Principals of these services.
- Provide robust, timely reporting to all stakeholders including SMG, LGBs, the DfE and Trustees to enable challenge and support of the Directorate.
- Take responsibility for the fulfilment of the schools and children's services budgets for income and expenditure, working with the Finance Director. For NASAT, work with the accounting officer to ensure full compliance with the Academy's Financial Handbook and maximising revenue.
- Ensure year on year achievement of the budgeted annual contribution rate (currently c.£3m) from the NAS independent schools.
- Identify and bring forward business plans for approval to realise opportunities for growth and/or commercial development in the interest of autistic children and in line with the Charity's mission, including through our Cullum Centre strategy.
- Act as key spokesperson and education and children's service ambassador for the charity where delegated and agreed.
- Promote effective working partnerships and user engagement through joint working with other stakeholders e.g. other NAS teams, LGBs, local authorities, professionals and wider community.
- Contribute to the effective delivery of the charity's overall strategy, as a member of the Senior Management Group.
- Prepare evaluative, timely and accurate reports in line with the schemes of delegation from the NAS board and under the requirements of NAS-AT.
- Work with the Chair of EQD/NAS AT to develop local governance through training, development and recruitment.
- Keep abreast of educational developments to inform the strategic and operational direction of children's services and to inform policy review and development.
- Promote staff well-being and development for new and current employees.

Job descriptions only reflect 80% of a role and are not an exhaustive list of duties. You are expected to carry out other activities that are within the scope of the role.



Job Description *continued*

COMPETENCIES

I am committed to making a difference

- I commit to NAS aims, objectives and values. I display a positive approach in the way I work and contribute to the wider needs of the organisation and its stakeholders either directly or indirectly.
- At work I overcome difficulties, setbacks and pressure, to get things done because I understand the impact of autism.
- I recognise and encourage commitment in others.

I cooperate with others to work safely

- I understand the health and safety risks associated with my job and work responsibly with others to reduce them.
- I have a positive attitude to safety that causes me to care about the well-being of others as well as myself.

I promote the NAS

- I represent and promote the NAS.
- I influence and raise awareness by talking positively about autism and NAS services to a wider audience.
- I build relationships and use a range of effective persuasion and negotiation styles to champion the rights and needs of people living with autism.
- I search for and obtain the resources to fulfil these needs.

I communicate effectively

- I use appropriate methods, styles and language to communicate to different audiences.
- I communicate succinctly using clear language.
- I listen and take account of others' views and needs.
- I show understanding and use logic to communicate.
- I check that others have received and understood the intended message.

I develop people's performance

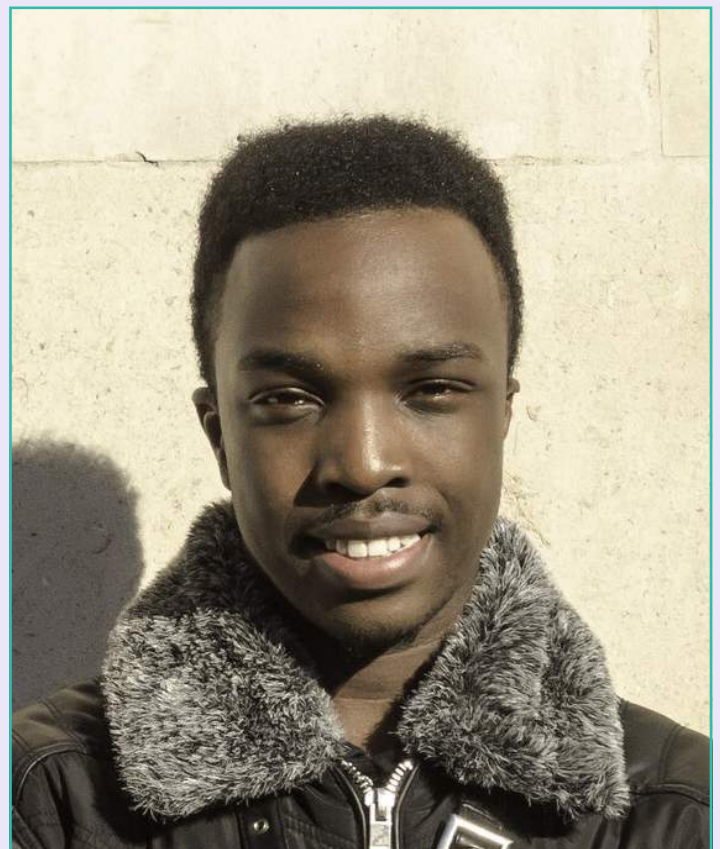
- I allocate work, agree objectives and delegate as appropriate.
- I understand and consistently apply performance management processes and evaluate outcomes.
- I am not afraid to tackle difficult issues with people/performance.
- I give clear feedback and understand when and how to tell people what they need to do.
- I maximise individuals' performance by coaching and supporting them to develop.
- I promote positive working relationships, free from prejudice and enabling people to excel.

I adapt to changing priorities

- I adopt a flexible, proactive approach to get the job done.
- I am responsive to change and recognise when tasks are urgent and/or important, taking appropriate action.
- I prioritise activities and know when to say 'no'.
- I deal positively with last minute changes and interruptions.
- I look for practical solutions and know when to find different ways to achieve an objective.

I develop new and existing activities

- I promote, develop and grow NAS services.
- I identify gaps in our activities and services, making the case for growth.
- I know when to share what works well and when something new is needed.
- I think creatively and practically about NAS activities and services.
- I seek best practice, building on others' new, alternative ideas and ways of doing things.





PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criteria which will be used in shortlisting and selecting candidates

Skills, Abilities and Personal Attributes

- An understanding and commitment to the vision and aims of the Charity
- High levels of energy and personal impact with the authority to lead and command the respect of the education team and senior stakeholders across the Charity and education sector
- A strong team player with good interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively as part of charitable organisation
- Highly entrepreneurial and ambitious with energy, charisma and a plethora of new ideas
- First-class ambassadorial skills with an ability to present the Trust in an authoritative and persuasive manner
- Ability to build strong relationships with the Department for Education, Principals, organisations and other external stakeholders
- Personally resilient and able to work under pressure in a challenging environment with first-class organizational and project management skills
- Evidence of sound financial management skills and commercial awareness

Knowledge

- Thorough understanding of Education and residential care for children and young people with SEND
- Knowledge of the funding environment including for Multi Academy Trusts and the Independent Sector
- Knowledge of current issues facing families and carers with autism
- Fully conversant with relevant statutory and legal requirements affecting provision of education services including registration and inspection regimes and training and quality frameworks in education and care
- A detailed understanding of the school improvement process and the ability to apply it in challenging circumstances
- A detailed knowledge of assessment and the use of data to monitor and raise standards
- Extensive knowledge of developments in curriculum, pedagogy and technologies and an ability to discern what is of practical value
- Capacity to make productive contributions to the national education debate
- Detailed understanding of the wider educational policy environment, leveraging this knowledge to the advantage of the Charity by advising on educational initiatives, developments and growth opportunities

Experience

- A proven record of successful senior/executive education leadership and of the implementation of key organisational strategies in education and care
- Experience of developing education and care services in a changing environment and of delivering effective innovations in curriculum and pedagogy
- Significant experience of raising standards with measurable outcomes and clear evidence of a positive personal contribution to the development of a successful school and/or local authority and/or academy trust
- Proven track record of maintaining and improving Ofsted Inspection & accreditation outcomes
- Practical and successful experience of performance evaluation and management that improved pupils' outcomes
- Proven experience of successfully securing external funding to deliver change programmes
- Proven experience in managing multi-million pound budgets and ensuring delivery of financial surplus at organisationally defined levels year on year
- Experience of leading, developing and managing a diverse team

Education and Certification

- Ideally educated to post graduate level with relevant qualification e.g. Master's Degree and/or NPQH/EL (desirable)
- Evidence of a commitment to ongoing, relevant professional development
- Relevant recent training in safeguarding children in education and children's social care

Context	Interfaces	Internal: All departments in the NAS • All services • The people we support and their families External: National, regional and local providers • Families and people with ASD • Other service provider • Commissioning Authorities
	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role will work across multiple office and school locations. Home based with an office space in NAS Vanguard School • Travel: Will involve regular national travel • Hours: 35. The demands of the role may require additional working hours
	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People - lead and manage the education directorate team and principals across all NAS & NAS Academies Trust schools and children's services • Resources - school and children's services property, estates, equipment and facilities; effectively support the education, welfare and care of CYP; and meet all regulatory requirements set out for schools • Financial (impact/budget) - financial and performance targets across the directorate fulfil all NAS(AT) policy and all other regulatory requirements. The Directorate contributes to the overall financial health of the Charity
	Safeguarding responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NAS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and adults who use our services. As such, the NAS expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We adhere to safer recruitment practice.
Position	Salary Band	Range: Negotiable (dependant on experience)



ACADEMICIS

How to apply:

If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or you wish to have an informal discussion, please contact our retained consultant at **Academicis: Ross Laird: rlaird@academicis.co.uk - 01223 907979/07901 585959.**

Please email your application to: **Ross Laird at Academicis: rlaird@academicis.co.uk**

Closing date: Monday 4th October 2021

Interview dates: W/C Monday 11th October 2021



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