

Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru

Welsh Local Government Association



CLILC • WLGA

Policy Officer – Curriculum for Wales and Welsh in Education Recruitment Information Pack



Closing Date: 9th October 2020 Mid-day

Interview Date: 21st October 2020

Message from the Chief Executive

Wales' councils are the foundations of our communities. They provide vital everyday local services, from schools, to housing, to social care, to local transport. They provide a local democratic voice to Wales' diverse communities. They are the economic bedrock of Wales' economy, employing over 10% of the Welsh workforce and spending £3.5bn on goods and services.

Our role at the Welsh Local Government Association is to promote, protect, support and develop democratic local government and represent the interests of local authorities nationally.



Dr Chris Llewelyn

The Senedd has celebrated its 20th anniversary this year and the WLGA has played a key role in helping shape public policy and supporting public service delivery during the first two decades of devolution.

Working closely with Welsh Government, the WLGA provides an interface between Welsh Ministers, the Senedd and local authorities. We also work with the UK Government and wider stakeholders in representing the interests of local government and promoting local democracy.

We are a politically-led, cross party organisation and council leaders and other senior councillors are at the heart of our policy and decision-making arrangements. We provide advice and support to our elected members and work closely with Chief Executives and senior officers across Wales' 22 local authorities. The three Fire and Rescue Authorities and the National Parks are Associate Members of the WLGA too. We regularly meet with Ministers, Assembly Members and MPs and attend Senedd and Parliamentary Committees and liaise with senior civil servants and other influential stakeholders.

We are a high-profile, influential and widely respected organisation. Our influence and reputation however belies the fact that we are a small team of just over 60 staff, based mainly in Cardiff Bay.

If you want to work in a fast-moving, exciting political environment at the heart of Welsh governance and believe you can make a difference, please get in touch.

Policy Officer – Curriculum for Wales and Welsh in Education

Salary: Grade 5 - SCP 33 – 41 (£36,922- £44,863)
Term: The position is offered on a fixed term basis until 31st March 2023 either by secondment or a fixed term contract.
Reports to: Head of Education
Based: Local Government House, Drake Walk, Cardiff (this is a Pan Wales post so regular travel to Cardiff and across Wales will be expected)

Politically Restricted: Yes

Welsh Language Essential: Yes

Commencement of the post: 4th January 2021

About the Role

Based within the Education, Lifelong Learning, Culture and Leisure Directorate in the WLGA the post holder will support the Head of Education in providing specialist policy advice and support on all aspects of the Curriculum for Wales and Welsh in Education national strategies and practice.

The role will require a good knowledge and detailed understanding of the provision of education and lifelong learning in Wales.

The post-holder will be a key-contact for the WLGA on policy areas that fall within the remit of the post, including curriculum reform, post-16 provision, qualification and assessment and performance, improvement and pedagogy.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- To keep abreast of any proposed changes or amendments in policy development, new and developing legislation and strategies at Wales, UK and international levels (including monitoring the Senedd Cymru's business) relating to the Curriculum in Wales and Welsh in Education and keep the WLGA informed accordingly.
- Liaise and work closely with the Lead WLGA Spokespersons, relevant Cabinet Members, the Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW) and other professional networks in determining local government views and positions on policy proposals.
- Contribute to the development of WLGA policies in relation to areas within the remit of the post.
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with Leaders, Cabinet Members National Committees, Senior Officers and partners including the Welsh Government, Assembly Members and /or National Assembly Committees, Teaching Bodies, Unions and Estyn.

- Represent the WLGA in presenting evidence to the National Assembly for Wales and other bodies and, also to represent the WLGA on a range of working groups and meetings of external bodies.
- Promote and protect the role of local government in the provision of education in Wales, encouraging continuous improvement and the achievement of best practice.
- Ensure the participation of regular and ad hoc meetings of the Education Cabinet Members.
- Draft advice and briefings, reports, and consultation responses, engaging and incorporating the views of local government.
- Ensure effective communication with relevant opinion-formers and stakeholders including Assembly members, political parties, partners, and the media.
- Maintain links with the Local Government association and other local government bodies across the UK to keep abreast of education-related developments elsewhere in the UK and internationally.
- Undertake any other duties deemed commensurate with this post and to ensure maximum flexibility in undertaking this role.

Person Specification

Key Skills, Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- Significant knowledge of the education agenda in Wales, the legislative context and new emerging developments and knowledge and understanding of contemporary policy in Welsh in Education.
 - Excellent communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing to a range of audiences.
 - Experience of developing education related policies.
 - Good project management skills, with the ability to manage successful delivery of team objectives.
 - Ability to establish effective working relationships, both internally and externally and good partnership working skills.
 - Self-motivated, able to manage own workload with an ability to balance conflicting demands in a highly pressured environment to meet deadlines.
 - Commitment to the effective and efficient operation of local government, local democracy, local education services in Wales and promoting diversity and equality of opportunity.
 - Educated to degree level or equivalent professional qualification with a commitment to continual personal and professional development.
 - Commitment to high standards of practice, personal integrity and professionalism that will gain the trust of elected members and senior officers.
 - Excellent IT skills.
 - Willingness and ability to travel across Wales and other parts of the UK, as necessary.
 - Prepared to work flexibly including evenings and weekends, as necessary.
 - The ability to communicate in Welsh is essential.
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Information about the Curriculum and Assessment Bill (Bill)

The Curriculum and Assessment Bill (Bill) was introduced into the Senedd on July 6th, 2020. The Bill will create new curriculum requirements for all learners aged 3 to 16 in maintained or funded non-maintained nursery education. It will replace the current national curriculum and basic curriculum.

The legislation will place duties on and provide powers for headteachers and governing bodies of maintained schools, providers of funded non-maintained education, persons who arrange EOTAS, the person in charge of a PRU, local authorities and the Welsh Ministers.

A number of components of the new curriculum framework will be mandatory and will have to be complied with – these are the **curriculum requirements**. Beyond the curriculum requirements, schools will have discretion as to how they design their curriculum.

The new curriculum will be taught in all schools and funded non-maintained settings up to Year 7 from September 2022. It will then roll out year by year until it includes Year 11 by 2026.

There will also be changes to improve how children and young people in education are assessed, support children and young people with additional learning needs and teacher and practitioner training and accountability. These improvements will complement the new curriculum.

About the WLGA

The Welsh Local Government Association represents the interests of local government and promotes local democracy in Wales.

Our aim is to **promote, protect, support and develop democratic local government** and the interests of local authorities in Wales.

We are a politically led, cross party organisation that seeks to give local government a strong voice at a national level. The WLGA is a membership organisation that represents all 22 local authorities in Wales, the 3 fire and rescue authorities and the 3 national park authorities as associate members.

We believe that services are best provided within a democratic framework of local accountability and that the people who use public services should have as much of a say in the way they are organised, managed and funded as possible. Local government is seen as being the tier of government closest to service users and best able to respond to their needs. We support the role of the Welsh Government in setting the strategy for public services nationally but believe that it is down to local government to interpret strategy to deliver services based on local circumstances and local priorities.

Much of our work is focused on the Senedd (formerly the National Assembly for Wales), the Welsh Government and other national stakeholders and partners. We also liaise with the Wales Office and UK Government and work closely with the LGA in London in seeking to influence non-devolved policies and legislation and, in particular, the recovery from COVID 19 and responding to developments around Brexit.

Our work involves engagement with Ministers, Members of the Senedd, and other national and governmental organisations. We promote the important role of local government to Members of the Senedd and seek to enhance and protect councils' reputation and secure positive change to legislation. The WLGA's lobbying work is therefore extensive.

Our Values

In working towards its primary purposes, we seek to be:

- **Ambitious** in our expectations and in our vision for local democracy and local services;
- **Accountable** to our members and member authorities;
- **Proactive** in our defence and promotion of local democracy, our policy development and our engagement with members;
- **Receptive** through listening to and considering the range of views of our membership, partners and stakeholders;
- **Responsive** through our services and support to our members and member authorities;
- **Collaborative** in our approach to governance and partnership working with Welsh Government and other stakeholders.

We also work towards upholding and promoting equality, diversity and human rights; including promoting diversity in democracy and supporting councillors in their role as democratically elected local representatives.

We are committed to equality and fairness and although we are not a statutory body, we operate in the spirit of legislation such as the Equalities Act, Freedom of Information Act and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

Our Aims and Priorities

Our priorities are underpinned by our core aims to secure:

- **Reform, continuous improvement and a commitment to partnership** - we believe in local government reform and seeking continuous improvement as a process for delivering better outcomes and services for the people of Wales, and in ensuring that resources are used as effectively and as efficiently as possible;
- **Fair and flexible funding** – councils need greater fiscal autonomy and flexibility to respond to local needs and priorities. Specific grants should be transferred into the settlement, after an agreed period of time, and the Welsh Government should fully cost and fund any new national initiatives and/or legislation and should commit to multiyear financial settlements, so councils can plan more effectively;
- **Commitment to the principle of Subsidiarity** – the Welsh Government and the Senedd should commit to the European Charter of Local Self Government and the principle of subsidiarity, where the presumption is that power is transferred to the level of government closest to the people. The Welsh Government has a clear national strategic role, but councils want to see momentum behind the devolution of powers beyond Cardiff Bay to local government and to local communities.

We will also:

- **Promote the role and prominence of councillors and council leaders**, emphasising their equal democratic mandate with national politicians.
 - **Ensure maximum local discretion in legislation or statutory guidance** where councils and regions have flexibility in determining regional priorities, services and governance arrangements.
 - **Promote sector-led improvement**, with an emphasis around digital and innovation, supporting authorities in sharing best practice, developing workforce skills and developing a new corporate peer review programme.
 - **Encourage a vibrant local democracy, promoting greater diversity** and enhanced democratic engagement and supporting councillors' development and training.
 - **Support authorities to effectively manage their workforce** through our role as the Employers' Organisation.
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Benefits: Working at the WLGA

The WLGA is an exciting place to work.

Based in Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff Bay, our offices are accessible and conveniently located amongst Cardiff Bay's old canal network, within walking distance of Cardiff Bay and Cardiff City Centre; Cardiff is one of the most diverse, thriving and vibrant cities in the UK.

We seek to offer staff a friendly, supportive and flexible working environment and staff are entitled to a range of benefits including:

- Incremental pay rises and contributory local government pension scheme
- 26 days annual leave, rising to 29 after 3 years then rising to 32 after 5 years of service, plus 8 days bank holiday
- Agile working policy which encompasses Flexitime, flexible working including options to work from home.
- Cycle to work scheme, travel loan facilities and free staff car park
- A range of supportive policies, including career breaks, job share, leave purchase scheme and other leave arrangements.
- Generous maternity, adoption, paternity and shared parental leave
- Centrally located office in the heart of one of the UK's most vibrant cities

Terms of Employment

Association employees are employed on the conditions of service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, amended by local agreements. The principal provisions are outlined below:

Salary:

Salary is payable calendar monthly by bank credit on or about the 15th of each month.

Hours of Work:

The working week is 36 hours. Office opening hours are 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday although the demands of the post may necessitate a variable working pattern.

Flexible Working Time:

The Association offers a flexi time policy to all grades up to Head of Policy Level.

Travel and Subsistence:

It is a condition of appointment that staff will be prepared to work on occasion anywhere within Wales, the rest of the United Kingdom or Europe. Travelling and subsistence expenses will be payable, in accordance with the Association's scheme, when staff work away from their fixed centre.

Annual Leave:

The annual leave entitlement for a full year (the leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March in the following year) will initially be 26 days, in addition to statutory holidays. Existing local government employers may attract additional leave based on continuous local government service

Pension:

The successful candidate will automatically be admitted to the Local Government Pension Scheme. This is a contributory scheme which has defined benefits for employees.

<https://mpfmembers.org.uk/content/members-currently-contributing-lgps>

Period of Notice:

The period of notice which staff are required to give is one calendar month, commencing on any day in the month. Staff will also be entitled to receive one calendar months' notice, or the current statutory notice period, whichever is greater.

Terms of Secondment (if applicable)

The successful candidate will remain an employee of their current employer which, will continue to pay their salary and the Association will reimburse the salary to the employer. In addition, their terms and conditions of employment will remain unchanged. The Association will reimburse business travel and expenses incurred on secondment. Interested applicants will need to be aware of their organisation's secondment policy and obtain prior approval of their employer.

WLGA Politically Restricted Posts:

The WLGA will not appoint as an employee or worker in any capacity, any Councillor who is currently a Member (including co-opted member) of a local Authority or any other member body of the WLGA e.g. National Park Authority or who had been a Member in the previous 12 months (s.116 Local Government Act (LGA) 1972).

The following posts are considered to be politically restricted (in line with those local authority roles as specified in Section 2(1) of the 1989 Act¹:

- All members of Senior Management Team
- All officers paid above Spinal Point 30
- Other officers giving advice to local authorities on a regular basis
- Any officers with a role which involves speaking on behalf of the WLGA to the media.

The Association is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

¹ Part I of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Politically Restricted Posts) (Wales) Regulations 2008

Apply Now!

For an initial discussion about the role and the organisation, please contact Sharon Davies, Head of Education on 07425125403.

To apply, please send a covering letter with a completed application form by the closing date of 9th October 2020 midday to:

HR Manager
Welsh Local Government Association
Local Government House
Drake Walk
Cardiff, CF10 4LG
e-mail recruitment@wlga.gov.uk

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview on 21st October 2020 via Microsoft Teams. Shortlisted applicants may be requested to undertake a task before attending for interview, as well as pre-interview tasks on the day, followed by an interview with a selection panel.