**Public Affairs and Policy Manager – Job Description**

**To apply, please email your CV with a one-page covering letter to** [**recruitment@isc.co.uk**](mailto:recruitment@isc.co.uk)**. Applications without a covering letter will not be considered.**

**Background**

The Independent Schools Council (ISC) is a trade body which represents the independent schools’ sector in the UK. It comprises seven stakeholder associations who represent over 1,400 independent schools, educating more than half a million children. ISC schools are diverse, spanning day and boarding, single sex, SEND and faith provision. The great majority of children in UK independent schools are in ISC schools. ISC is strictly independent of all political parties and acts to support member schools in the interests of all children. Further details are available at [www.isc.co.uk](http://www.isc.co.uk)

Debates over the taxation of independent schools has meant the sector having a high political profile. With a new government, it is important the sector continues to build relationships with Ministers, civil servants and politicians of all parties to highlight the positive work of our schools in supporting pupils across the independent and state sectors and addressing the challenges facing education.

The role will be a permanent, full-time contract operating out of our London offices near St James’s Park underground station. Staff are able to work from home for part of the week.

**Main purpose of job**

Reporting to the Head of Policy, the successful candidate will deliver our public affairs workplan and support the development of policy positions. In particular, they will be responsible for building political relationships at national level while supporting schools to build local relationships with their MPs.

**Person specification**

* At least three years relevant political or public affairs experience.
* Ability to deliver public affairs work independently, working under the strategic supervision of the Head of Policy.
* Compelling, credible and confident communicator, able to:
* Write persuasively and with clarity
* Represent ISC in meetings with MPs, peers, civils servants and externals stakeholders at senior level
* Excellent working knowledge of Parliamentary and Whitehall processes.
* Ability to provide political counsel to senior ISC staff and member associations.
* Ability to build and develop a portfolio of external contacts and advocates.
* Can analyse policy documents and highlight issues of concern for member schools.
* Experience of responding to government consultations and select committee calls for evidence.
* Used to dealing with complex and changing issues in a challenging environment and able to respond flexibly and quickly as priorities change.
* Excellent planning and project management skills, with ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.
* Knowledge of education policy would be an advantage.

**Personal attributes**

* Highly literate and well versed in current affairs with excellent attention to detail.
* Motivated and proactive. Able to build productive internal and external relationships through professionalism, earning trust through the quality of work.
* Able to work well under pressure and prioritise effectively.
* Track record of seeing projects through to completion
* Able to communicate with confidence and clarity.

**Specific responsibilities**

To deliver ISC’s public affairs and policy activity including, but not restricted to, the tasks below:

* A priority is to develop good working relationships and links with association staff in the interests of maximising impact by working together.
* Develop and implement the public affairs and Parliamentary strategy for ISC.
* Implement political contact programme with Parliamentarians and external stakeholders; including attendance at party conferences.
* Advise and support school heads when engaging with local MPs and councillors; produce engagement toolkits.
* Advise the Chief Executive, senior staff and member associations and schools on effective public affairs approaches.
* Become a trusted source of political advice to member associations and schools, present at member meetings and conferences.
* Monitor Parliamentary activity – identifying issues, people to contact and writing weekly political update.
* Write briefings ahead of Parliamentary debates and engage with those taking part.
* Draft submissions to government consultations and select committee inquiries, working with members associations and schools to develop relevant policy positions.
* Work with the ISC media and communications team to ensure messaging is aligned, supporting the public affairs strategy and campaigns.

**Additional information**

**Salary:** £40k per annum

**Other Benefits:** 25 days holiday per annum (plus bank holidays) rising to 30 days after one year’s service (and at the commencement of the next holiday year); in addition to the annual allowance the office is closed between Christmas Day and New Year’s Day; 10% employer pension contribution; hybrid working with a minimum of two days per week in the office.

ISC is an Equal Opportunity Employer and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified people.