

Candidate Pack



**Group Head of PR,
Policy & External
Affairs**

About Us

We are dedicated to transforming lives through the power of learning and creating opportunities for all.

With a unique structure that encompasses London South East Colleges, London South East Academies Trust and the Elevare Education Foundation, we deliver high-quality education and training across the region, supporting learners from childhood through to adulthood.

As a civic education group, we are an anchor institution, deeply rooted in our communities. We are committed to generating social value and supporting social mobility for all.

Personal development and progression are at the heart of our mission. We ensure that every learner, regardless of background or educational stage, develops the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to succeed and achieve their potential.



Our Group

Our 2024-2030 Group Strategy focuses on three key themes:

People First

Our staff are our greatest strength. We prioritise supporting, developing and empowering our people so they can thrive and deliver the best outcomes for learners and communities.

Performance and Practice

We are committed to continuously improving what we do. By strengthening our practice, embracing innovation and focusing on excellence, we aim to deliver the highest standards in education.

Prosperity and Place

We believe education plays a vital role in building stronger communities. Our work supports social mobility, enabling individuals and the places they live to flourish. As a social enterprise, we are continuously evolving to meet the needs of the communities we serve. Our focus is on delivering excellence in education while creating meaningful social impact.

Key Links:

[To view our full strategy click here.](#)

[To view our 2025 Annual Review click here.](#)

[To view our Group organisational chart click here.](#)

[To view our Foundations latest key publication, 3000 Voices: Growing up in South East London click here.](#)

A Welcome from Our CEO

Thank you for your interest in joining Elevare Civic Education Group. We are a civic organisation with deep roots in our communities, united by a clear mission: to transform lives through the power of learning and to make a positive difference to the lived experience of our students, staff, stakeholders and communities.

This is a significant moment for our Group, comprising London South East College, London South East Academies Trust and Elevare Education Foundation, as we continue to strengthen our public voice and our influence across the education, skills and place-based reform landscape, locally, regionally and nationally. This role, the Group Head of PR, Policy & External Affairs remains central to that ambition.

Working within the Chief Executive's office you will be supporting the Executive and Senior Leaders across the Group, helping to shape and amplify Elevare's civic narrative and reputation. You will lead integrated policy, public affairs and communications strategies, supporting our senior leaders to engage credibly with government, regulators and civic partners, while ensuring our external communications are clear, consistent, values-led and impactful.

You will also play a key role in protecting and enhancing the Group's reputation through effective issues management and crisis communications, and in strengthening how we tell our story and journey, through thought leadership, media relations, stakeholder engagement and high-quality written communications.

A passion and interest for education policy and making a difference through strategies and campaigns is critical for this role. We are looking for someone who cares deeply about the education sector, understands the public benefit and who can position us reputationally and strategically as system and thought leaders, building on our existing evidence base and research.

What matters most to us is how we lead and how we behave. Our culture is grounded in the STARS values: Stand Out, Teamwork, Accountable, Respectful. We value people who are ambitious and curious, who are calm under pressure, who bring strong ethical judgement, and who can work at pace while staying true to our purpose and our communities.

If you are motivated by public impact and you have the authenticity, candour and skills to lead policy and communications at a senior level, working across a large and dynamic civic education group, I would warmly encourage you to apply.

Thank you again for your interest in Elevare Civic Education Group.

With warmest regards,

Dr Sam Parrett CBE DL
Group Principal and CEO

JOB DESCRIPTION

Group Head of PR, Policy & External Affairs

Responsible to:	Group Chief of Staff & Group Chief Governance Officer
Department:	Group CEO Office
Hours:	1.0 FTE
Grade:	SP 45-47
Salary:	Up to £60k
Location:	Orpington, working across the Group sites

Primary Job Purpose:

The postholder will play a pivotal leadership role in shaping and amplifying Elevare's civic voice, public influence and reputation across the education, skills and place-based reform landscape.

The postholder will lead the development and delivery of integrated policy, public affairs and communications strategies, positioning Elevare as a trusted thought and system leader locally, regionally and nationally.

The role combines strategic policy leadership, external affairs, reputation and risk management, and high-impact communications and stakeholder engagement, ensuring Elevare's work influences debate, informs decision-making and contributes positively to education and civic outcomes.

This role will be responsible for managing and executing comprehensive public relations strategies, supporting the achievement of the Group Strategy and organisational objectives. Central to this role is supporting senior leaders in managing risk through proactive and positive press relations, social media and writing and curating articles for publications, consultations, anthologies and collections

The postholder will provide support on corporate and internal communications where needed. This will include crisis communications, reputation and risk management, thought leadership, assisting with stakeholder communications, media relations, and award submissions, bids and grant applications.

The postholder will provide project management support for key strategic projects.

About Elevare Civic Education Group

For more than a decade we have cultivated our organisational identity and built deep roots in our communities. We have developed a strong reputation, first as a social enterprise and now as a civic organisation.

Elevare Civic Education Group's civic mission is to transform lives through the power of learning and through this to understand, care deeply and make a positive impact on the lived experience of our students, staff, stakeholders and communities.

The values and culture already well established across the Group draws on the STARS framework, that define expected behaviours within our organisations and uses them as the foundation for a shared model of leadership and professional identity across the Group, as well as express a belief in collaboration, accountability, respect and ambition.

Our Values

Stand Out:

We will stand out. We are a good education group with outstanding features. Keen to innovate, we create social value and push the boundaries to achieve more.

Teamwork:

We are a team. Together we get the job done. Together we achieve our goals. It's everyone's job to step in and help.

Accountable: We own our actions. We take responsibility. We are accountable for the decisions we make and how these affect others. We own this.

Respectful: We respect everyone - full stop. Diversity is valued and we maximise this as a talent and strength.

Significant Contacts and Relationships:

Group CEO

Executive Leadership

Senior Leaders and Managers across the College, Trust and Foundation

Government, regulators and civic bodies

Media, policy and sector stakeholders

Corporate Membership Groups (e.g. Association of Colleges, Confederation of School Trusts and Queen Street Group)

Group Director Strategy Research & Impact

Group Director Marketing and Communications

Group Research & Policy Team

Key Responsibilities:

1. Policy Leadership and Public Influence

- Lead the development of Elevare's policy and influencing strategy, aligned to the Group Strategy and civic mission.
- Identify, analyse and respond to emerging policy, regulatory and sector issues, translating insight into clear positions, briefings and recommendations.
- Oversee the production of policy papers, position statements, consultation responses and evidence submissions.
- Build Elevare's reputation as a credible, authoritative voice in education, skills, civic leadership and system reform.

2. Thought Leadership, Narrative and Corporate Positioning

- Shape and steward Elevare's core narrative, messaging and voice across policy, communications and public platforms.
- Work with the Group CEO and Group Chief of Staff & Group Chief Governance Officer to develop and articulate the organisation's thought leadership strategy, positioning leaders and staff as sector experts across a range of specialist areas
- Work with Executive and Senior Leadership Team to position them as thought leaders, including speechwriting, opinion pieces, media commentary and podcasts.
- Identify emerging issues of significance in terms of the Group reputation and the impact on its key audiences and partners, keeping up to date with sector developments and translate key outputs for media use
- Respond to ad hoc media and profiling opportunities as they arise, working with the Group Research & Policy Team to create thought leadership content to enhance the reputation of the Group Organisations, campaigns and policy influencing opportunities
- Create and maintain consistent messaging that aligns with the organisation's vision, mission, and values (new Group Strategy)
- Collaborate with all internal teams to ensure cohesive corporate positioning across all communication channels
- Draft a range of communications on behalf of the CEO, Chair and other senior leaders/stakeholders including speeches, letters, quotes, consultation submissions and articles
- Support the content development (and as required) production all corporate publications across the organisation including Trust prospectuses, Annual Review and other key products.
- Translate complex policy and system issues into accessible, compelling content for diverse audiences.

3. External Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop and maintain effective relationships with government departments, arm's-length bodies, regulators, local authorities, civic leaders, think tanks and sector networks, including our membership organisations (AoC, CST and QSG).
- Represent Elevare in high-level forums, partnerships and external events, advancing the Group's objectives and influence.
- Support senior leaders and Board Members in refining engagement strategies with key external stakeholders.
- Work with the Executive Leadership Team to develop and execute stakeholder communication strategies across parents, students staff, LAs, other public services, Colleges, MATs and schools.
- Ensure transparency and alignment in all Group stakeholder communications
- Support with and quality assure written communications for all external (and internal where appropriate) audiences – ensuring style, tone of voice and messaging is all on brand and aligns with the wider Group – including letters, web content, strategies, etc.
- Provide support to the Group Marketing and Communications team as required on the delivery of the Group Communications and Marketing Strategy.
- Support the Group Director of Marketing and Communications in the development of communications strategies and plans for each organisation.
- Provide support in quality assuring all external communications across the Group's entities, including press releases, website content, newsletters, social media content, letters, brochures/prospectuses, emails
- Ensure consistency and alignment in external (and internal) messaging, reinforcing the Group's high-quality brand and reputation.

4. Crisis Communications, Reputation and Risk

- Develop and implement crisis communication plans to protect and enhance the organisation's reputation.
- Lead Elevare's external communications and reputation management, ensuring clarity, credibility and consistency.
- Act as senior adviser on issues management, reputational risk and crisis communications, including out-of-hours support where required and as a member of the Business Continuity Team.
- Ensure timely, accurate and values-led communication during sensitive or high-profile issues.
- Act as one of the key points of contact during crises, supporting the Group to provide timely and accurate communication to all stakeholders.
- Monitor and manage potential risks to the organisation's reputation, providing strategic communications advice to senior leadership members.

- Provide out of hours support during evenings, weekends and holidays for strategic PR advice.

5. Media and External Communications

- Lead strategic media relations, building strong relationships with local, regional and national media.
- Oversee reactive and proactive media engagement, including statements, briefings and interviews.
- Ensure media activity aligns with policy objectives, organisational values and reputational priorities.
- Proactively pitch stories and secure media coverage to enhance the visibility and reputation of the Group and Group Organisations and Executive and Senior Leaders.
- Lead on all reactive media enquiries for all parts of the Group, producing on demand statements and strategies – including all out of hours enquiries (escalating to Executive and Senior Leaders where required)
- Develop the Group’s crisis communications plan in relation to all media handling – leading on any issues that arise and ensuring key leaders across the Group (Trust and College) are media trained and maintain oversight of College, Trust and Foundation media channels to ensure appropriate and corporate content.

6. Governance, Measurement and Assurance

- Provide evidence of assurance on policy positioning, reputational risk and communications effectiveness to the Group CEO and Executive Leadership Team.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of policy influence, media coverage and stakeholder engagement, using insight to refine strategy.
- Ensure all activity reflects Elevare’s principles of inclusive, ethical and accountable civic leadership.
- Develop and implement comprehensive PR strategies to support the Group and Group Organisations goals and objectives.

7. Awards and Events:

- Seek out opportunities to recognise and celebrate the position of the Group nationally, regionally and locally through awards, prizes and other means of corporate recognition.
- Prepare compelling award submissions, showcasing the company’s achievements and innovation.

Leadership and Management Approach, Behaviours and Values

All organisations within the Elevare Civic Education Group are committed to advancing the shared ambitions of the Group. Senior Leaders are unrelenting in their commitment to excellence for the benefit of pupils, staff, partners, and stakeholders.

This requires Senior Leaders and Managers who are:

- Collaborative, partnership-focused leadership
- Strong ethical judgement and integrity and an evidenced commitment to integrity, honesty, and openness in working practices
- Strategic curiosity and evidence-informed decision making
- Pace, adaptability and resilience in a dynamic policy environment
- Commitment to inclusion, social value and public benefit
- Unwavering in their commitment to quality and standards.
- Courageous and not afraid to innovate and take risks.
- Firmly committed to diversity, inclusion and creating new opportunities for everyone.
- Strong ethical leadership, values and behaviours.
- Commitment to personal development and the CPD of staff.

General

The duties and responsibilities may vary from time to time without changing the level of responsibility. The College, Trust and Foundation are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

General

The particular duties and responsibilities may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. All College employees are required to undertake the following general duties:

- Carrying out such other duties as may be reasonably requested by the line manager, or any more senior manager
- Compliance with health and safety policies and procedures and risk assessments
- Sharing in the College's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Awareness of the College's Equality and Diversity policies and targets, and actively promoting equality of opportunity
- Ensuring adherence with Risk Management Policy.
- To assist at College enrolment/promotional events/induction/open evenings as required (which will entail occasional attendance for which time off in lieu will be agreed)

Our STARS framework:

- **Standout** - we will stand out. We are a good education group with outstanding features. Keen to innovate, we create social value and push the boundaries to achieve more.
- **Teamwork** - we are a team. Together, we get the job done. Together we achieve our goals. It's everyone's job to step in and help.
- **Accountable** - we own our actions. We take responsibility. We are accountable for the decisions we make and how these affect others. We own this.
- **Respectful** - we respect everyone- full stop. Diversity is valued, and we maximise this as a talent and strength.
- **Striving** - every day we strive to be better. To achieve more. To continuously improve in all that we do. Individually, and as a group.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Group Director PR, Policy & External Affairs

You will have:

- Experience of strong strategic stakeholder engagement and influencing.
- Proven experience in media relations, writing and content creation
- Crisis communications experience is essential.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to build relationships with key stakeholders.
- Ability to work under pressure and manage multiple projects simultaneously.
- Knowledge of digital marketing and social media strategies
- Excellent coordination and organisational skills with a proven ability to juggle multiple and competing priorities
- Proven skills in strategic thinking and planning and complex problem solving on key issues
- Experience of navigating and horizon scanning education policy and initiative and translating these into opportunities for our Group Organisations.
- Demonstrable ability to use policy, research, data and insight to inform decision making, product development and/or process improvement.

Qualifications:	Essential	Desirable
Bachelor's degree in communications, Public Relations, Journalism, Marketing, or a related field.	✓	
A degree or equivalent professional qualification		✓
Knowledge and experience:	Essential	Desirable
Minimum of 10 years of experience in public relations, external communications, or a similar role.	✓	
Experience of working in the education and understanding of the wider social agenda		✓
Experience of producing accurate and timely management information		✓
Experience of writing and delivering successful thought leadership articles and policy pieces.	✓	
Experience of working with multi-agencies and media outlets	✓	
Experience of crisis communications across all levels of an organisation.	✓	
Skills and competencies:	Essential	Desirable
Ambition, drive and enthusiasm to lead and embed a culture of effective communications and influencing skills across the organisations	✓	
Outstanding written communication skills, able to write detailed and compelling responses for strategic, policy influencing and PR .	✓	
Ability to establish outstanding internal and external working relationships with all levels	✓	
Ability to work under pressure to tight deadlines with a high level of accuracy and minimum supervision	✓	
Excellent written and oral communication and IT skills (MS Office, Internet)	✓	
Ability to identify and solve problems, use initiative, organise and prioritise.	✓	
Responsive to change and able to work effectively in a changing environment	✓	

Other qualities:	Essential	Desirable
Ability to work as part of a team and make efficient links with other teams and individuals	✓	
Ability to communicate with a wide range of individuals including senior stakeholders, employers and external organisations.	✓	
Application of emotional and cultural intelligence, diplomacy and political skills as appropriate.	✓	
A collaborative and supporting personal style, helping to motivate and enthuse colleagues in meeting high standards and delivering client-focused outcomes.	✓	
Ability and willingness to provide constructive challenge.	✓	
A passion for education and its pivotal societal role and a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.	✓	
Curiosity – always looking to find answers to the key issues affecting the sector.	✓	

How to Apply

To see all our roles and to apply now visit
careers.lsec.ac.uk or careers.lseat.org.uk

