



Job Description **Head of Department – English & Literacy**

Reports to: Head of Curriculum

Direct reports: Departmental Teachers

Location: West Heath School – Sevenoaks TN13 1SR

Hours: 37.5 hours per week/ 39 weeks per year

The School:

West Heath School is a challenging place to work, but our dedicated staff rebuild lives through education. Teaching respect, encouraging responsibility, building relationships and developing resilience in our students is an integral part of the role. Our committed, dynamic and resourceful staff find the work rewarding.

We are a therapeutic community we are on an exciting journey to be registered as a therapeutic community and welcome staff who follow this ethos.

Main Purpose of the Role:

The Head of Department will inspire and lead a department to teach students in line with the School's mission statement, 'Rebuilding Lives through Education'. They will encourage teachers in the department to both improve students' academic outcomes and to promote students' wellbeing by understanding and improving their social, emotional and mental health needs. All Heads of Department will be responsible for creating a varied, engaging curriculum that can adapt to the individual needs of the students and promote the values of the 4Rs- Respect, Relationships, Resilience and Responsibility. A Head of Department at West Heath School will be committed to a positive, fair and transparent leadership style; they will be imaginative and adaptable and strive for all students to enjoy their lessons and develop skills that they can use both in and outside of the classroom.

Every member of staff plays a significant part in the students' ability to achieve their full potential and positive outcomes whilst at West Heath School. To do this we need to work collaboratively and always as a team, which is essential to the students' success and achievement.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

The Post holder's duties will include but not be limited to:

Safeguarding:

- To undertake relevant training linked to the post and update as required.
- To ensure that all teachers are aware of safeguarding practices and policies and understand escalation processes.
- To ensure that safeguarding and whistleblowing is an agenda item in all meetings to create an open, transparent and safe culture.

- To monitor and evaluate how safeguarding is promoted across the department curriculum, both in schemes of work, book scrutinies and learning walks.
- To undertake physical intervention 'Team Teach' training and use skills as and when required.
- To ensure that all teachers see themselves as teachers of safeguarding and that lessons and resources allow for opportunities for students and teachers to discuss safeguarding issues.
- Promote best practice safeguarding in all interactions with students.

Leadership and Management

- Member of Middle Leadership Team.
- To inspire and lead a department to teach and educate students according to guidelines set out in Teachers' Standards, and West Heath School policies.
- To lead a supportive, self-reflective department that encourages teachers to constantly review and evaluate their teaching and learning strategies, methodologies and programmes in line with the 'West Heath Teaching and Learning Policy'.
- To evaluate and report on the teaching and learning in the department, reviewing patterns and trends in student achievement, and putting in pre-emptive steps and interventions to ensure that all students achieve to the best of their ability.
- To ensure that all teachers are able to use the West Heath School systems and processes accurately and effectively, ensuring that appropriate training is in place for anyone who requires it. This includes monitoring that the department are consistently utilising and promoting the West Heath Lesson format and promoting the trauma-informed approach to the curriculum.
- To ensure that all teachers in the department receive high standards of professional practice and quality of teaching and learning of the subject/s through effective dialogue, participating in CPD, department and/ or twilight meetings.
- To support teachers with behaviour management and monitor that all teachers in your department create a positive learning culture and adhere to a 'Promoting Positive Behaviour' approach. This includes using Restorative Approaches such as participating in Restorative Meetings with students and ensuring staff's attendance to break time detentions when necessary, and using the language of universal positive regard with staff and students.
- To foster a sense of professionalism within the department; run and minute regular Department Meetings following an agreed agenda, giving specific feedback on departmental strengths and areas that require improvement; having challenging conversations with staff in your team when needed to ensure that all West Heath policies are adhered to and that staff are punctual, organised and supported to meet all deadlines; to lead the appraisal of direct reports within the XX Department ensure that Return to Work meetings are completed for staff and that absence processes are followed to support staff with their wellbeing.
- To lead all departmental quality assurance processes such as teaching observations, book scrutinies and learning walks as part of a supportive process of ongoing professional development and supporting and mentoring junior members of the XX Department.
- To ensure effective management of an allocated budget, including, but not limited to, effective utilisation of physical resources to the benefit of students.
- To support SMT, and the wider school community, with initiatives and whole school projects, including initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

- To support SMT with external inspections, including Ofsted, by producing accurate achievement data and contributing to the SEF.

Student Management

- To create a bespoke curriculum that offers its students a variety of academic pathways such as BTEC, GCSE, NCFE and Functional Skills, the Head of Department should strive to constantly review, update and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of each cohort and understand how to weave different assessment criteria into SOWs and mid and long-term planning.
- To plan, prepare and deliver lessons as per timetable, understanding that at times flexibility will be required, including covering and providing cover for lessons in your department, and that Personal Development subjects such as PSHCE and Life Skills are an integral part of the curriculum for all teachers.
- To be responsible for department planning resources such as mid and long term plans and SOWs and ensure that student voice and interest is an integral part of teacher's planning.
- To run and create a timetable of lunch and after-school clubs to raise the profile of your subject and increase student engagement and enjoyment.
- To regularly seek student feedback to monitor and evaluate the general progress and wellbeing of students and adapt lessons based on the feedback.
- To reward and celebrate student achievement through the participation of all Heads of Department in the termly Celebration Assembly.
- To understand that all teaching staff are expected to undertake a tutor role and that this is a fundamental part of the teaching role at West Heath School. It is important that all Heads of Department support and work within the pastoral structures of the school, including liaising and working with the Heads of School when monitoring students' academic progress and their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- To monitor and evaluate that all teachers in the department differentiate and adapt their lessons according to students' individual needs, feedback and interests, supporting them to achieve to their full academic potential. This includes ensuring that all teachers appropriately stretch and challenge all students and that appropriate support is provided for all 'More-Able' students.
- To ensure that all teachers provide guidance and advice to students on educational and social matters and on their further education and future careers; providing information on sources of more expert advice.
- To ensure that all teachers are assessing, recording and reporting on the development, progress, attainment and behaviour of the students and that data drops, reports and academic assessments are completed in a timely and efficient manner.
- To promote the concept of growth mindset both with your team and to encourage teachers to understand that all students and adults are capable of change.

Health and Safety:

- To report any health and safety concerns in line with West Heath School policy.
- To undertake annual risk assessments and reviews for your area and associated teaching activities, collaborating with the school's Health and Safety Officer.
- To read through students' risk assessments and ensure they are accurate, relevant and up-to-date.

- To work safely and hygienically at all times within Health and Safety Guidelines and Policies.
- To ensure that the department's classrooms/ learning environments are fit for purpose and appropriate to the needs of the students.

Partnership Working:

- To sustain and develop positive working partnerships with all areas of the School.
- To support the development of the school, strengthening partnerships, promoting community cohesion and establishing a range of inclusive links with partners.
- To identify opportunities for student engagement and enrichment in community activities.
- To celebrate and share success with students, colleagues and parents/carers.
- To communicate, consult and co-operate with other Head of Departments, Heads of School, SMT, parents and carers to ensure the best interests of students.
- To support all parent/ carer evenings and to ensure that all parents/ carers are provided with clear steps and resources, both on Satchel One and in the form of reading lists, supplementary work and links to websites, to ensure that they can support their child to make progress at home.

Equality and Diversity:

- To ensure equality in the workplace regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or religious belief.
- To support all staff and students to express their individuality and uniqueness in all areas of life.
- To support staff and students to be respectful of each other.
- To promote equality and reduce discrimination of the protected characteristics within the school on both a student and staff level.
- To promote British values.

General:

- To act as an ambassador for West Heath School representing the school where necessary at events and meetings.
- To undertake ongoing, professional development and any relevant training as identified.
- To uphold the values and ethos of the school.
- Ensure that professional standards are always met.
- To undertake such duties and responsibilities reasonably consistent with the role as may be required from time to time by the line manager and/ or SMT
- To follow West Heath School Policy and Procedures, paying particular attention to Safeguarding, Confidentiality & Health and Safety.
- To ensure that deadlines are met and adhered to, including marking lesson attendance, completing reports, attending briefings and meetings in a punctual matter and ensuring that all legal documents such as student dashboards and risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated and to monitor that all teachers in your department uphold this ethos.
- To attend regular supervision sessions with Line Manager.

- To attend daily staff briefing and weekly after school meetings as required, engaging and providing support and input as relevant.
- To be a reflective practitioner and participate in regular professional supervisions & observations as part of a supportive process of ongoing professional development.

PERSON SPECIFICATION: Head of English and Literacy

The successful candidate will be strong, forward thinking and inspirational. They will demonstrate commitment to the school's values and ethos, and have the robustness, unwavering enthusiasm and tenacity to meet the needs of this demanding post.

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Teacher Status / Relevant Degree • Level 2 Maths and English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of commitment to further professional development • An awareness of the forthcoming changes to the curriculum across all key stages • GCSE/ A-Level in relevant subject.
Knowledge and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent subject knowledge • Use of assessment to promote student learning • Awareness of current developments in the teaching of the relevant subject area (s) • Line management of staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Education/ Therapy models.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective classroom practitioner • Excellent communicator with strong interpersonal skills and organisation skills • Ability to enthuse students of all abilities • High quality communication skills – written and spoken. • Awareness of strategies to develop creativity and innovation in the curriculum • Confident use of IT 	
Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to stay calm under pressure • Ability to create a positive learning environment and use appropriate strategies to manage the classroom • Ability to form good professional relationships with students, parents, carers and colleagues 	
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient, flexible and open to change • Vision, warmth, energy and enthusiasm • Integrity • Willing to contribute to all aspects of school life • Ability to work in a way which reflects the Schools values/ ethos • Working practice which encompasses equal opportunities • Willingness to address challenging issues with clarity of purpose and diplomacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective leader

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work under pressure and deal effectively with emerging situations 	
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people in line with the Schools Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and the Staff Code of Conduct / Behaviour Policy • Personal development - a strong interest in and commitment to continuous personal learning and development • Enhanced DBS • Commitment to Safeguarding 	

Note: This Job Description sets out the duties of the post at the time when it was drawn up. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify reconsideration of the salary for the post.

West Heath School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.