Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral and Inclusion

Overview

Job Purpose

The role demands a high level of strategic and operational expertise to lead and integrate pastoral care, behaviour, safeguarding, and inclusion within a single senior leadership position. There is an element of teaching for KS2 within the role.

The successful candidate will hold strategic responsibility for the wellbeing, safety, behaviour, and inclusion of all pupils, with particular oversight of the school's most vulnerable cohorts. This places them at the heart of driving a positive school culture, ensuring high standards, and maintaining full compliance across pastoral and inclusion domains.

Main Duties

This job description indicates the range of duties involved is not intended to be all-inclusive and requires the post-holder to be flexible and show initiative. The post holder may perform other related duties as required to meet the ongoing needs of the school.

Designated Safeguarding (DSL) and Child Protection Duties

- Taking lead responsibility for all safeguarding and child protection matters arising at the school, acting as the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Maintaining a culture of actively prioritising the safeguarding of children
- Reviewing and updating the school's Safeguarding Policy, ensuring timely updates in light of changes to regulations or guidance
- Ensuring that staff are suitably trained to carry out their Safeguarding duties, including through the INSET programme and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Referring cases of suspected abuse/neglect to local authority children's social care, and other relevant bodies (e.g., police, LADO, DBS)
- Acting as the point of contact for Operation Encompass notifications
- Ensuring appropriate information is passed on when a child leaves the school
- Evaluating data gathered from CPOMS (or other sources) to help inform interventions and strategy
- Monitoring and liaising with professionals regarding attendance, wellbeing and safeguarding
- Overseeing effective Filtering and Monitoring of online activity

Behaviour and Pastoral Support Duties

- Working directly with teachers to identify patterns in behaviour of all children and developing supporting strategies
- Providing guidance and support to staff in implementing behavioural support and intervention strategies for children with SEND
- Acting as a key link between pastoral and behaviour teams and the SENCo/SLT, ensuring that the SENCo is informed of all SEN sanctions (e.g., Risk Management Plans and suspensions)
- Leading on all risk management plans for children at risk
- Evaluating and mitigating risk associated with identified children, particularly those at risk of permanent exclusion
- Being a key adult and providing support for SEN children who require Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) help
- Ensuring the implementation of adaptations outlined in strategy sheets is undertaken in classrooms through learning walks and student observations

- Providing support and guidance to teaching staff in implementing strategies for children with SEND in the classroom

Other

Whole-School Strategic Leadership & Improvement
- Contributing to the School Development Plan (SDP) and whole-school strategic priorities
- Leading or co-leading whole-school initiatives, e.g., attendance strategy, equality objectives inclusion development
- Producing strategic action plans, monitoring progress, and reporting impact to the Headteacher and Governors
- Supporting the Headteacher in ensuring statutory compliance across all inclusion, safeguarding, and pastoral domains

Supporting Inspections (ISI, Local Authority, Safeguarding Audits)
- Acting as a key leader during ISI inspections, presenting evidence and leading relevant strands (e.g., behaviour & attitudes, personal development, safeguarding, inclusion)
- Ensuring the school is always inspection-ready, with robust documentation, data, and evidence
- Leading on Local Authority safeguarding audits, and external moderation processes
- Coordinating follow-up action plans after inspections or external reviews

Data, Monitoring, and Reporting
- Overseeing the collection and analysis of pastoral, behaviour and safeguarding data including trends and emerging needs
- Reporting data to Governors, especially the safeguarding/inclusion link governor
- Using data to inform policy, interventions, and resource deployment

Leadership of Staff and Line Management
- Line-managing staff such as the pastoral team, behaviour mentors, inclusion staff, support assistants, and other designated roles
- Leading performance management/appraisals and ensuring high-quality practice across pastoral and inclusion teams
- Supporting staff wellbeing and modelling professional conduct
- Coordinating and delivering whole-school CPD on areas such as behaviour, safeguarding, mental health, trauma-informed practice, and inclusive pedagogy

Policy Development & Quality Assurance
- Leading and regularly reviewing policies such as:
- Behaviour
- Attendance
- Anti-bullying
- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Equality & Accessibility Plans
- Conducting learning walks, behaviour sweeps, pastoral audits, and quality assurance of classroom practice relating to inclusion.

Attendance & Pupil Welfare
- Overseeing pupil attendance and punctuality, working closely with the attendance officer
- Leading strategies to improve attendance for vulnerable groups (SEND, disadvantaged, persistent absentees)
- Supporting families and external agencies around welfare, home–school relationships, and engagement

Stakeholder Engagement & External Partnerships
- Working closely with external agencies (e.g., CAMHS, social care, Early Help teams, educational Psychologists)
- Engaging with parents and carers, especially during crises, complaints, restorative meetings, and external interventions
- Representing the school at multi-agency meetings and panels (TAC/TAF, CIN/CP safeguarding conferences)

Crisis and Incident Management
- Taking a lead role in managing critical incidents, safeguarding concerns, behaviour crises, and emergencies.
- Ensuring appropriate communication with staff, pupils, parents, and external agencies.
- Supporting the Headteacher in ensuring safe school operations.
- Championing a positive inclusive culture, modelling professionalism, empathy, and high expectations.
- Supporting assemblies, school events, open evenings, and parental engagement sessions.
- Promoting the school's values and ensuring they are lived across behaviour and pastoral systems.

Operational Duties
- Contributing to daily leadership presence, including duties, walkabouts, and visibility across the school.
- Supporting the organisation of the school day: duties, cover, routines, transitions, safeguarding presence at key times.
- Deputising for the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher when required.
- The post-holder will undertake any additional tasks reasonably required by the Headteacher as part of their senior leadership responsibilities
- The post-holder must contribute to the school's wider life, supporting events, meetings, and activities as part of their professional role.

This job description may be reviewed and amended to meet the evolving needs of the school.

Person Specification	
Qualifications	
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or equivalent	Essential
Degree-level qualification relevant to teaching	Essential
Evidence of continuous professional development in safeguarding, behaviour, inclusion, or pastoral leadership.	Essential
Current or recent Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training	Desirable
Training in SEND leadership or SENCo responsibilities (e.g., SEND Code of Practice, SEND systems and statutory processes)	Desirable/Advantageous
NPQ in Senior Leadership (NPQSL)	Desirable
Experience	

- Successful experience in a middle or senior leadership role within a school
- Demonstrated impact in leading pastoral, safeguarding, behaviour, or inclusion/SEND work
- Experience acting as Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL, or leading on significant safeguarding cases
- Experience teaching KS2 lessons
- Proven track record of improving behaviour, attendance, pastoral systems, or inclusion outcomes

- Experience coordinating or writing EHCP applications, supporting annual reviews, and liaising with external agencies
- Experience leading and managing teams, including performance management and professional development
- Demonstrated ability to handle complex, high-risk, and sensitive cases, including multi-agency working
- Experience delivering whole-school CPD, coaching staff, or developing policy
- Experience working with children and young people with a wide range of needs
- Experience supporting schools during ISI inspections or external audits
- Experience analysing data to inform action planning and drive improvement

Knowledge

- Thorough understanding of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and wider safeguarding legislation
- Strong practical and theoretical knowledge of behaviour management, restorative practice, and trauma-informed approaches
- Up-to-date understanding of children's mental health, adverse childhood experiences (ACE), SEMH needs, and early help processes
- Knowledge of attendance legislation, risk assessment processes, and behaviour sanctions
- Understanding of school improvement processes, self-evaluation frameworks, and quality assurance
- Familiarity with safeguarding systems (e.g., CPOMS) and behaviour/pastoral tracking tools
- Strong knowledge of multi-agency protocols and how to work effectively with social care, health, police, CAMHS, Early Help, and educational psychologists
- Awareness of equalities legislation, accessibility requirements, and duties under the Equality Act 2010
- Knowledge of effective staff development, coaching approaches, and adult learning principles

Skills and Personal Attributes

Leadership & Strategic Skills
- Strong strategic thinking and the ability to drive whole-school improvement
- Proven leadership of teams with the ability to motivate, challenge and support staff
- Ability to manage change effectively and embed whole-school systems
- Skilled at analysing data to inform strategic decision-making
- Excellent organisational and project-management skills
- Confidence in leading whole-school CPD

Pastoral, Behaviour & Safeguarding Expertise
- Deep understanding of safeguarding legislation and proven experience as DSL or DDSL
- Expertise in behaviour management and trauma-informed, restorative practice
- Knowledge of SEND code of practice and inclusive pedagogy
- Ability to manage complex cases with sensitivity, professionalism, and authority

Communication & Interpersonal Skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication, including report writing and presenting to governors or inspectors
- Ability to build strong, trusting relationships with pupils, families, and staff
- Skilled in managing difficult conversations and supporting staff through challenging situations
- Calm, authoritative presence in high-pressure situations

Analytical & Problem-Solving Skills
- Ability to identify patterns and root causes in behaviour, attendance, or safeguarding data
- Sound judgement and decision-making, especially in urgent or sensitive situations
- Capacity to plan appropriate interventions and evaluate their impact

Personal Attributes
- High levels of emotional intelligence, empathy, and professional integrity

- Resilience and the ability to remain calm, composed, and solution-focused
- Commitment to inclusion, equality, and safeguarding every child
- Reflective, adaptable, and open to learning
- Able to model the school's values and maintain high expectations for pupils and staff
- Discretion, confidentiality, and professionalism at all times.

Professional Conduct
- Commitment to continuing professional development and staying up to date with legislation
- Willingness to be highly visible across the school and lead by example
- Capacity to handle a demanding workload and prioritise effectively

All positions are subject to safeguarding checks including an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), shortlisted candidates will be subject to an online check.