

Job Title	Deputy Headteacher Willow Park School
Responsible to	Headteacher
Responsible for	Senior teaching and other staff as agreed with the Headteacher
Key Internal Contacts	SLT, education, inclusion, clinical and business teams; regional and central colleagues
Key External Contacts	Parents and carers; placing authorities; external agencies and providers; regulatory bodies

Line management: Senior teaching and other staff as agreed with the Headteacher. Whole school portfolios, delegated authority and teaching allocation will be recorded and reviewed annually through performance management.

JOB PURPOSE

Support the Headteacher in leading a safe, inclusive school where personalised education and coordinated clinical support improve pupils' learning, wellbeing and life chances. Promote Belong, Commit, Achieve and deliver improvement through the school's five strategic pillars: Life Skills, Trauma-Informed Practice, Clinical Support, Outcomes and Literacy.

KEY TASK AREAS & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Strategic leadership and accountability

- Deputise for the Headteacher in their absence within agreed authority; provide constructive professional challenge and contribute to effective SLT decisions.
- Help develop, implement and evaluate the school improvement plan, self-evaluation, policies and staff handbook; take responsibility for delegated priorities and report their impact.
- Maintain inspection readiness within the delegated portfolio, monitor compliance with relevant school standards and company policies, and provide accurate evidence to the Headteacher, governance and inspectors.
- Use pupil, family and staff feedback to inform improvement, recognising the diversity and experience of the school community.

2. Quality of education, assessment and SEND

- Provide strategic oversight of curriculum quality and coherence with the teaching and learning leader; ensure an ambitious, flexible offer matched to pupils' starting points, interests and needs.
- Lead the whole school assessment, recording, target setting and reporting framework; track individual and group progress from entry to exit and evaluate learning and wider outcomes.
- Coordinate quality assurance of teaching and learning, identify underperformance and ensure support, corrective action and review lead to improvement.
- Work with the SENCO and clinical team to align educational planning with EHCP provision and outcomes; support Annual Reviews and evaluate the effectiveness of individual plans.
- Model effective teaching, inclusive practice and purposeful use of technology; undertake teaching duties within the agreed allocation.

3. Safeguarding, behaviour and pupil wellbeing

- Act as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, maintaining the required training and supporting referrals, secure records, multi-agency working and safeguarding cover within the agreed arrangements.

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- Work with inclusion and clinical leaders to oversee positive behaviour support, ensuring Behaviour Support Plans and associated risk assessments are reviewed, understood and applied consistently.
- Promote trauma-informed, relational practice, pupil voice and equality; coordinate appropriate support for pupils' emotional, communication and sensory needs.
- Contribute to referral assessment, admissions and transitions with the Headteacher and relevant teams, ensuring decisions reflect individual needs and the school's capacity to meet them.
- Coordinate responses to serious incidents as delegated, ensuring prompt reporting, accurate documentation, review and follow-up in line with school and company procedures.

4. Staff leadership and development

- Line manage agreed staff, set clear expectations and provide regular supervision, appraisal, coaching and feedback; recognise achievement and address concerns promptly.
- Support recruitment, induction and professional development, evaluating how training improves practice and pupil outcomes.
- Undertake delegated probation, absence and return to work reviews, and contribute to capability, disciplinary and grievance processes with appropriate HR support.
- Delegate work fairly, promote professional conduct and company values, and manage personal and team workloads sustainably.

5. Operations, resources and partnerships

- Work with the Headteacher, Business Manager and facilities colleagues to deploy staff and resources effectively, manage delegated budgets and evaluate value for money.
- Oversee agreed operational and health and safety responsibilities, report hazards and premises concerns promptly, and contribute to risk management and emergency planning.
- Build effective partnerships with families, placing authorities, external agencies and the clinical team to support consistent provision, participation and successful transitions.
- Support school promotion and community engagement with relevant colleagues, sharing accurate information about provision, achievements and capacity.

Professional expectations and review

Maintain confidentiality, accurate records and continuing professional development. Apply safeguarding, SEND, equality, health and safety and other relevant requirements and school policies throughout the role. Undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the seniority, competence and capacity of the post. Review this description annually with the Headteacher; amendments will follow consultation with the post holder.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential criteria are required for appointment. Desirable criteria strengthen suitability. Evidence will be assessed through the application, interview, selection activities and references, with qualifications verified.

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Degree and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).	✓	
Relevant postgraduate or leadership qualification.		✓
Specialist teaching		
Successful teaching experience with pupils with SEMH needs and/or autism, including complex needs; ability to adapt teaching to individual starting points.	✓	
Experience across more than one key stage or specialist provision.		✓
Leadership and improvement		
Experience of leading staff and a school improvement priority, with evidence of impact on practice and pupil outcomes.	✓	
Experience as a Deputy Headteacher or in a comparable senior leadership role.		✓
Curriculum and teaching		
Ability to evaluate curriculum and teaching quality and lead effective support and improvement.	✓	
Experience developing a personalised curriculum, including literacy and life skills.		✓
Assessment and outcomes		
Experience of leading or coordinating assessment, target setting, progress tracking and reporting; ability to interpret data and evaluate outcomes.	✓	
Experience strengthening whole school assessment systems.		✓
SEND and individual provision		
Working knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice, EHCP provision and Annual Reviews; experience coordinating support with families and professionals.	✓	
Experience coordinating Annual Reviews or holding a SENCO qualification.		✓
Safeguarding		
Secure safeguarding knowledge and sound judgement; ability to fulfil the Deputy DSL role and undertake required training.	✓	
Current DSL training and experience as a DSL or Deputy DSL.		✓
Behaviour and clinical working		
Experience of positive behaviour support, individual support plans and risk assessment; understanding of trauma-informed practice and multidisciplinary working.	✓	
Experience evaluating behaviour support alongside a clinical team.		✓
People management		
Experience of line management, staff development and performance review; ability to motivate, delegate, challenge and manage workload fairly.	✓	
Experience of probation, absence or formal HR processes.		✓
Compliance and inspection		
Understanding of relevant school standards and inspection requirements; experience contributing to self-evaluation, compliance or inspection preparation.	✓	
Experience of ISI inspection preparation or inspection in an independent special school.		✓
Resources and operations		
Ability to plan staff and resource deployment, manage delegated budgets and contribute to health and safety and incident management.	✓	
Experience of budget monitoring or leading an operational project.		✓

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Communication and judgement		
Clear written and verbal communication; effective organisation and IT skills; sound decisions under pressure; ability to work independently and collaboratively.	✓	
Experience presenting school performance to governance or external partners.		✓
Values and partnerships		
Commitment to Belong, Commit, Achieve, company values, equality, pupil wellbeing and professional development; ability to build constructive family and agency relationships.	✓	
Experience supporting admissions, transitions or community engagement.		✓