



Job Description and Person Specification - Head of English & Literacy

Job Title	Head of English & Literacy
Grade	MPS/UPS + SEN 1 Allowance (£2,787) + TLR2a (£3,527)
Location of Work	The Kassia Academy
Responsible to	Deputy Headteacher (Teaching and Learning)

Scope of the Role

The Kassia Academy is a specialist SEMH provision within the Kings Academy Trust, offering a small, nurturing school environment for young people who are unable to access mainstream education. The academy supports up to 60 learners, providing a highly personalised approach that enables pupils to re-engage with education and achieve positive outcomes.

We are committed to a trauma-informed and therapeutic approach, where strong relationships, consistency and high expectations underpin every aspect of school life. Alongside a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils benefit from a rich personal development offer, targeted pastoral support and access to therapeutic interventions, including counselling.

As part of our dedicated team, you will play a key role in creating a safe, structured and nurturing environment where learners can rebuild confidence, re-engage with education and develop the skills needed for future success.

As Head of English & Literacy, you will lead both the English curriculum and a whole-school literacy strategy, ensuring that all learners develop the reading, writing and communication skills required to access learning across the curriculum and beyond. This includes strategic oversight of phonics provision, reading development, writing across the curriculum and targeted literacy interventions.

You will work closely with colleagues across the school to support the delivery of high-quality English teaching and to embed effective literacy practices in all subject areas. A key aspect of the role will be coaching and developing staff to confidently deliver phonics, reading, writing and handwriting interventions, ensuring consistency and impact across the academy.

Working within a small specialist setting, you will build strong, trusting relationships with learners, support their emotional regulation and engagement with learning, and contribute to a trauma-informed, inclusive and literacy-rich culture where every pupil is supported to succeed.

Main responsibilities

General

- To undertake such duties as the Headteacher may reasonably determine, in accordance with the School Teachers Pay and Conditions of Service document in force at the time.
- To recognise that she/he is appointed as a member of staff at The Kassia Academy and that she/he may be deployed in any situation appropriate to her/his qualifications, experience and/or skills.

Knowledge and Skills

- Principles and practices of effective teaching and learning
- School improvement strategies and the process of school self-evaluation
- Principles and practices of monitoring/assessment/evaluation
- Principles of curriculum planning
- The application of ICT to learning, teaching and subject management
- Working in partnerships to deliver improvements
- Processes and systems for quality assurance
- Resource planning and management

Teaching

- Planning and preparing courses and lessons.
- Teaching pupils according to their educational needs including the setting and marking of their work.
- Curriculum coverage, continuity and progression in the subject for all pupils, including those of high ability and those with special educational needs and SEMH needs.

Positive reinforcement of school behavior management strategies

- To develop and maintain positive reinforcement of school behavior management strategies among the pupils and safeguard their health and safety, both on the school premises and when they are engaged in authorised activities elsewhere.

Pastoral and communication

- Promoting the general progress and well-being of individual pupils and of any class or group of pupils assigned.
- Providing guidance and advice to pupils on educational and social matters and on their further education and future careers.
- Making records of and reports on the personal and social needs of pupils.
- Communicating and consulting with the parents of pupils

Assessment, reporting and monitoring

- Provide oral and written assessments, reports and references relating to individual pupils and groups of pupils.
- Establish clear targets for pupils' achievement, and evaluate progress and achievement by all pupils, including those with special needs.
- Use data effectively to identify pupils who are underachieving and, where necessary, create and implement effective plans of action to support those pupils.
- Ensure that information about pupils' achievements in previous classes and schools is used effectively to secure good progress.

Staff Meetings

- Participate in school meetings relating to the curriculum, pedagogy, administration and general organisation of the school.

Professional Development

- To lead and deliver high-quality CPD on literacy, including:
 - Phonics teaching and assessment
 - Reading strategies and interventions
 - Writing development across the curriculum
 - Handwriting approaches for learners with additional needs
- To coach and support staff in delivering:
 - Phonics interventions
 - Reading interventions (e.g., decoding, comprehension, fluency)
 - Writing interventions
 - Handwriting interventions
- To model best practice in literacy teaching and intervention delivery.
- To support staff in adapting teaching to meet the needs of learners with low literacy, SEMH and ASC.
- To contribute to the school's instructional coaching model, with a focus on improving literacy outcomes.

Subject Leadership (Head of English & Literacy)

Strategic Planning and Curriculum

- To lead and implement a coherent English and whole-school literacy strategy, ensuring high standards of reading, writing and communication across the academy.
- To oversee the development and implementation of phonics provision, ensuring appropriate assessment, grouping and intervention for learners with gaps in early reading.
- To lead on whole-school reading, including reading culture, interventions, and targeted support for learners below age-related expectations.
- To lead on whole-school writing, ensuring consistency in expectations, modelling and scaffolding across all subjects.
- To ensure a structured approach to handwriting development, particularly for learners with SEND and SEMH needs.
- To implement successful exam pathways that enable all pupils to realise their full potential within KS3 and KS4 English.
- To work with senior leaders and the exams officer to secure appropriate qualifications (GCSE, Functional Skills, Entry Level).
- To develop and implement schemes of work and literacy frameworks that reflect the needs of learners with SEMH and ASC.
- To ensure literacy is embedded across the curriculum, supporting non-specialist staff to deliver high-quality reading and writing opportunities.
- To analyse data (reading ages, phonics assessments, writing outcomes) to inform teaching, intervention and curriculum planning.
- To monitor the effectiveness of English and literacy provision through lesson visits, book scrutiny, and data analysis.

Leading and Managing

- To lead the English and literacy strategy across the school, ensuring consistency and high expectations.
- To support and challenge staff to deliver effective literacy instruction in all subject areas.
- To ensure staff meet assessment and data deadlines, particularly relating to reading and literacy progress.
- To establish strong, collaborative working relationships across departments to promote literacy development.
- To contribute to a positive and purposeful learning environment where literacy is valued and promoted.

Equal Opportunities

- Promote equal opportunities within the school and to seek to ensure the implementation of the academy's Equal Opportunities policy.

Other duties

- Job descriptions are expected to give candidates clear guidance on what they are expected to achieve; however, they rarely capture all tasks and responsibilities. All members of staff are expected occasionally to undertake other duties not detailed above, but within the scope of the job.

This job description may be amended at any time after discussion with you, and in any case will be reviewed annually. For the full Conditions of Employment please refer to the relevant pages of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

Head of English & Literacy Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Applicati on	Intervie w
Qualifications	Qualified teacher status	Relevant NPQ qualification (e.g. NPQLL)	√	
Experience	- Experience or expertise of working with students with SEN - Experience of teaching English from KS3 into KS4 - Evidence of ongoing professional development - Experience of delivering GCSE English Language and/or alternative qualifications. - Experience of teaching outside of specialism (in the short term) - Experience of leading or contributing to literacy development across a school or department - Experience of supporting learners with low literacy levels, including reading and writing interventions	- Evidence of qualifications or relevant SEN experience in ASD and SEMH settings. - Evidence of ongoing professional development - Experience working in a specialist provision, alternative provision, or PRU. - Experience of leading a subject or curriculum area. - Experience of leading or implementing a phonics programme - Experience of delivering or coordinating reading interventions (e.g. phonics, comprehension, fluency) - Experience of developing whole-school literacy strategies	√	√
Professional Understanding, Knowledge and Skills	- Knowledge of how the National Curriculum can be adapted to meet the needs of pupils with ASD and a range of complex needs relevant to the age range of the school. - Knowledge of assessment recording and reporting - Experience of creating and maintaining effective partnerships with parents to support pupil's learning and pastoral needs - Knowledge of commonly used resources to support pupils with sensory, ASD and SEMH needs.	- Understanding of behaviour regulation and trauma-informed approaches - Knowledge of alternative accreditation pathways (e.g., Entry Level, Functional Skills). - Knowledge of evidence-based literacy interventions - Understanding of reading assessment tools (e.g., reading ages, diagnostic assessments)	√	√

	• Secure understanding of safeguarding responsibilities • Secure understanding of how pupils learn to read, including phonics, fluency and comprehension • Knowledge of effective strategies to develop writing across the curriculum • Understanding of literacy barriers for pupils with SEMH and ASC			
Specific Knowledge Understanding and skills	• Awareness of the Education Acts and the SEN code of Practice • Ability to create a safe, stimulating and inclusive classroom environment • Ability to engage, motivate and inspire pupils with SEND • Ability to reflect on own practice and seek professional development • Ability to support staff in delivering high-quality literacy teaching across subjects • Ability to design and implement intervention programmes for reading, writing and handwriting	• Knowledge of strategies to support learners with communication difficulties or low literacy levels. • Experience developing engaging and accessible English curriculum resources. • Evidence of working towards EHCP targets • Knowledge of systematic synthetic phonics approaches • Experience in developing structured handwriting programmes • Ability to analyse and interpret literacy data to inform intervention	√	√

Teaching and Learning	• Practical understanding of effective teaching and evaluation strategies for pupils with ASD and SEMH. • Able to flexibly deliver a creative model of teaching and learning for pupils with a range of needs who require a nurturing approach. • Knowledge and understanding of the relevant curriculum requirements • Able to manage pupil behaviour effectively in an SEMH setting. • Experience or understanding of the different qualifications taught within the department. • Ability to deliver and model high-quality literacy instruction, including reading and writing • Ability to adapt teaching for learners with significant literacy gaps	• Experience of monitoring and evaluating teaching • Experience of planning a curriculum area relevant to the needs of pupils including relevant courses • Experience embedding literacy across the curriculum. • Experience embedding literacy across the curriculum • Experience supporting staff to deliver reading and writing strategies in non-English subjects	√	√
Leadership and Management	• Able to deploy teaching assistants/support staff effectively. • Able to motivate pupils and staff, setting high standards and provide a focus for improvement • Ability to lead and drive whole-school literacy improvement • Ability to coach and develop staff in literacy teaching and intervention	• Previous experience in a subject leadership role. • Experience supporting curriculum development in a specialist setting. • Experience coaching or supporting colleagues to improve teaching practice • Experience leading phonics or reading strategy implementation • Experience monitoring and evaluating literacy provision across a school • Experience designing and delivering literacy-focused CPD programmes	√	√

Professional values, qualities and skills	• Able to establish and develop good relationships with all involved in the school • Able to work effectively as a team member • Ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally. Competent in the use of ICT • Flexible and approachable • Resilient under pressure and motivated by challenge. • Able to deal sensitively with people and resolve conflicts • Positive and energetic approach to work	• Bring personal interests and enthusiasms to the school community • Commitment to continuous professional development. • Ability to contribute positively to a collaborative and supportive staff team.	√	√
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