Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

Job Description

Job title: Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

Leadership status: Associate Member of the Senior Leadership Team

Salary: L4- L8 (£57,699 -£63,688)

Hours: 1.0 FTE (Full time)

Contract type: Permanent

Reporting to: Headteacher or designated member of SLT

Responsible for: Leadership and coordination of SEND provision; line management of designated SEND support staff; designated teacher responsibilities for looked-after and previously looked-after children

Main purpose

The SENCO, under the direction of the headteacher or designated member of SLT, will:

- Lead the implementation and evaluation of SEND policy and provision, contributing to the school's strategic inclusion priorities under the oversight of the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Inclusion
- Be responsible for day-to-day operation of the SEN policy and co-ordination of specific provision to support individual pupils with SEN or a disability
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues, working closely with staff, parents and carers, and other agencies
- The SENCO will be expected to fulfil the responsibilities of a teacher, as set out in the STPCD.
- While the SENCO will have responsibility for the oversight of provision for pupils with SEN or a disability, class teachers will hold responsibility for the day-to-day education and support of pupils within their classroom.

Duties and responsibilities

Strategic development of SEN policy and provision

- Maintain an evaluative overview of SEND provision across the school, monitoring its quality, impact and compliance with statutory requirements
- Contribute to school self-evaluation, particularly with respect to provision for pupils with SEN or a disability
- Ensure SEND policy is implemented effectively and that agreed SEND priorities contribute to the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of national and local initiatives that may affect the school's policy and practice

- Evaluate whether funding is being used effectively, and suggest changes to make use of funding more effective

Operation of the SEN policy and co-ordination of provision

- Maintain an accurate SEND register and provision map
- Provide guidance to colleagues on teaching pupils with SEN or a disability, and advise on the graduated approach to SEN support
- Advise colleagues on appropriate adaptations, reasonable adjustments and individual approaches for pupils with SEND, working alongside the AHT responsible for teaching and learning
- Advise on the use of the school's budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively, including staff deployment
- Be aware of the provision in the local offer
- Work with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and other external agencies
- Be a key point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA)
- Analyse assessment data for pupils with SEN or a disability
- Coordinate and evaluate targeted interventions for pupils with SEND, ensuring their effectiveness is reviewed and provision adjusted as necessary

Support for pupils with SEN or a disability

- Identify a pupil's SEN
- Co-ordinate provision that meets the pupil's needs, and monitor its effectiveness
- Secure relevant services for the pupil
- Ensure records are maintained and kept up to date
- Coordinate the review of education, health and care (EHC) plans, including annual reviews, pupil and parental participation, associated records and statutory timescales
- Communicate regularly with parents/carers
- Ensure that if the pupil transfers to another school, all relevant information is conveyed to that school, and support a smooth transition for the pupil
- Promote the pupil's inclusion in the school community and access to the curriculum, facilities and extra-curricular activities
- Act as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children, promoting their educational achievement and ensuring appropriate coordination of support, including SEND provision where relevant

Leadership and management

- Contribute as an associate member of the Senior Leadership Team, working with the Headteacher and relevant senior leaders to ensure statutory responsibilities, including reasonable adjustments and access arrangements, are met

- Prepare and review statutory SEND information for publication and provide accurate evidence for senior leaders and governors
- Contribute to the SIP and whole-school policy
- Identify training needs for staff and how to meet these needs
- Lead INSET training for staff
- Share procedural information, such as the school's SEN policy
- Promote an ethos and culture that supports the school's SEN policy and promotes good outcomes for pupils with SEN or a disability

Line management and SEND team leadership

- Lead and manage designated SEND support staff, including HLTAs and teaching assistants, with clear expectations for their work and contribution
- Undertake appraisal and professional development responsibilities for designated staff, in accordance with Trust policy
- Monitor the effectiveness and deployment of SEND support staff, providing feedback, support and appropriate challenge

Associate senior leadership responsibilities

- Contribute to whole-school leadership and improvement within the scope of the associate SLT role, with particular responsibility for SEND and the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Attend and contribute to SLT meetings when required, particularly where SEND, safeguarding, inclusion or relevant school improvement matters are under discussion; regular weekly attendance is not expected
- Lead or support agreed school improvement priorities and projects appropriate to the post, particularly those involving SEND and inclusion
- Promote high expectations for pupils with SEND and contribute to whole-school priorities for achievement, attendance, behaviour and inclusion within the role's remit
- Contribute to quality assurance and evaluation of SEND provision, using pupil outcomes, attendance, provision reviews and other evidence to identify and act on improvement priorities
- Support consistent implementation of relevant school policies, particularly SEND, safeguarding, inclusion and reasonable adjustments
- Provide professional guidance to staff on SEND provision and contribute specialist expertise to staff development alongside the AHT Teaching & Learning
- Work closely with the AHT Inclusion, AHT Teaching & Learning, governors, Trust colleagues and relevant external agencies to improve provision and outcomes for pupils
- Represent the school at relevant Trust meetings, external partnerships and professional networks as required
- Undertake proportionate senior-leader operational duties, including scheduled break and lunchtime supervision, and other reasonable duties commensurate with the associate leadership role

Monitoring, reporting and designated teacher responsibilities

- Provide regular evaluative reports to the Headteacher and AHT Inclusion on the quality, effectiveness and impact of SEND provision, including progress, attendance, interventions and statutory compliance.
- Prepare and present periodic reports to the Local Governing Body or SEND link governor, as required, highlighting outcomes, priorities, risks and actions taken.
- Maintain oversight of statutory SEND processes and timescales, escalating risks and significant concerns promptly to the appropriate senior leader.
- As designated teacher, take responsibility for the educational progress of looked-after and previously looked-after children, working with carers, social workers, Virtual School Heads and other relevant professionals.
- Oversee the development, implementation and review of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for looked-after pupils; promote effective support and information-sharing for previously looked-after pupils, recognising that they do not ordinarily require a PEP.
- Provide appropriate information on the educational progress and provision of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils to senior leaders and governors, respecting confidentiality.

Safeguarding

- Act as one of the school's designated safeguarding leads (DSLs), working within the established safeguarding team and under the overall coordination of the lead DSL, in accordance with statutory guidance and school/Trust procedures
- Remain alert to the fact that pupils with SEN may be more vulnerable to safeguarding challenges

Other areas of responsibility

The SENCO will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and follow school policies and the staff code of conduct.

Please note that this is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the SENCO will carry out. The postholder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role, as directed by the Headteacher.

Person specification

CRITERIA	QUALITIES
Qualifications and training	• Qualified teacher status (essential) • A degree or equivalent recognised teaching qualification (essential) • National professional qualification (NPQ) for SENCOs or a recognised predecessor qualification, or willingness and eligibility to complete the required qualification within the statutory timeframe (essential) • Relevant SEND, safeguarding or designated teacher professional development (desirable)
Experience	• Successful classroom teaching experience and a commitment to inclusive practice (essential) • Experience of supporting pupils with a range of SEND needs and working effectively with families and colleagues (essential) • Evidence of taking initiative, leading an area of work or contributing to improvements beyond one's own classroom (essential) • Previous SENCO experience or responsibility for coordinated SEND provision (desirable) • Experience of staff development, line management or leading an improvement initiative (desirable) • Experience of working with looked-after or previously looked-after children, or with external professionals (desirable)
Skills and knowledge	• Sound working knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice, graduated approach and statutory responsibilities (essential) • Understanding of effective adaptive teaching, reasonable adjustments, interventions and inclusive provision (essential) • Ability to use assessment, attendance and provision evidence to evaluate impact and plan improvements (essential) • Ability to coordinate statutory processes, maintain accurate records and meet deadlines (essential) • Strong communication, interpersonal skills and the confidence to advise and influence colleagues, parents and external agencies (essential) • Potential to lead, deploy and develop a team of support staff (essential) • Knowledge of the educational needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including PEPs and the Virtual School (desirable) • Knowledge of safeguarding responsibilities and willingness to undertake designated safeguarding lead training (essential)
Personal qualities	• Commitment to securing strong outcomes and a sense of belonging for all pupils, including those with SEND and those who are care-experienced (essential) • Sound judgement, discretion, integrity and commitment to safeguarding and confidentiality (essential) • Ability to prioritise competing demands, respond calmly to emerging issues and meet statutory deadlines (essential) • Ability to collaborate constructively, provide supportive challenge and contribute to school leadership (essential) • Commitment to professional learning and development, whether an aspiring or experienced SENCO (essential)