



**MERCHANTS'**  
**ACADEMY**

Assistant Head  
(including SENDCo)



INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

[merchantsacademy.org](https://merchantsacademy.org)

## Assistant Head (incl. responsibility as SENDCo)

**Permanent, full-time position, to start as soon as possible**

**LPS10-LPS14 (£55,357 - £61,040) per annum + Health Cash Plan and Benefits package.**

**Merchants' Academy is a 3-18 Academy sponsored by the Society of Merchant Venturers and the University of Bristol. This is an exciting time to join us as the Academy grows and standards continue to rise. The Academy is very well resourced, where staff and their development is a priority.**

We are seeking an inspirational Assistant Head who is committed to raising the attainment and aspirations of our students.

**Candidates for this post should be:**

- Keen to work hard - to motivate and challenge our students to make rapid progress, and share your love of your subject with students up to A Level
- Be kind - to establish strong relationships and have excellent interpersonal skills
- And courageous - in setting and achieving high standards

**In return we can offer you:**

- A genuine opportunity to make a difference where it is needed.
- Well-resourced classrooms, necessary IT equipment and structured administrative support.
- A fantastic community of children, parents and carers who deserve the best.
- To join a wonderful team and have every opportunity to further your professional development and career with an excellent benefit package including; Wellbeing Health Cash Plan, Higher Degree Support Funding, Retail Discounts, ICT Loans, Professional Introduction Incentive plus others.

If you are hardworking, reflective, resilient, and looking to further develop your talents and skills at Merchants' Academy then we would love to receive an application from you.

**We particularly welcome applications from under- represented groups including ethnicity, gender, transgender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.**

**Closing Date: Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 9:00      Interviews: W/c 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

***Merchants' Academy is part of Venturers Trust and is committed to equality, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS check is required for all staff.***



## Venturers Trust and our Sponsors



Venturers Trust is a dynamic and focused multi-academy trust based in Bristol, formed in September 2017 through the merger of CGS Trust and Merchants' Academy Trust. The Trust is responsible for eight academies, 3,500 pupils and 700 staff with a commitment to making a significant and lifelong difference to the lives of young people from some of Bristol's most disadvantaged communities.

The Trust is currently made up of five primary schools: Bannerman Road Community Academy, Barton Hill Academy, Fairlawn Primary School, The Dolphin School and The Kingfisher School; the all-age Merchants' Academy; Colston's Girls' School for girls aged 11-16, located alongside its sixth form, V6, for girls and boys; and Venturers' Academy, the first state-funded school in Bristol for students aged 4-16 diagnosed with Autism and with an EHCP. Our academies are happy, vibrant and exciting places to learn and work and are led by a team of talented, morally driven and committed Principals. A recent development is the launch of Venturers Trust institute which puts professional learning and instructional coaching at the heart of what we do.

The Trust is sponsored by the Society of Merchant Venturers and the University of Bristol.

The Society of Merchant Venturers (SMV) is a philanthropic organisation that works with and supports people and communities from the wider Bristol area through education, care for older people, charitable giving and social enterprise. In education, SMV's simple but highly ambitious vision is to transform the life-chances of students from the richly diverse set of schools within Venturers Trust, both during their educational journey and beyond. The Society's expertise in education spans more than four centuries and today, the commitment is practical as well as financial, with many of its members taking active roles in the governance of Venturers Trust and the wide range of schools within the Trust. SMV firmly believes there is nothing more important to the health of our communities than outstanding education and training in life skills for young people.

The University of Bristol ranks as one of the top 10 universities in the United Kingdom. It is actively involved in the governance of our schools. The university offers support in areas such as curriculum development, subject expertise, higher degree and research opportunities for staff at Venturers Trust. It also offers student mentoring and an innovative and inclusive programme for students as part of the university's commitment to widening participation and access to higher education. These activities include extensive support and opportunities for our Sixth Forms including scholarships, preferential offers of grades to gain a place, with the additional possibility of bursaries to support undergraduate degree studies.

Both sponsors seek to ensure that all our young people receive a truly inspiring education. Their hands-on support, challenge and expertise are greatly valued.







Venturers Trust is fortunate to be able to recruit and retain the very best staff. In addition to contractual entitlements such as annual leave and occupational pension, we recognise the important role our staff play by providing for them a range of benefits as well as flexible employment arrangements and a family-friendly approach.

Our current benefits *(for all staff on Venturers Trust contracts and working over 10 contractual hours per week)* include:

**WELLBEING HEALTH CASH PLAN** - A valuable Health Cash Plan that provides cover for routine healthcare such as dental check ups, eye tests, physiotherapy, and specialist consultations. Benefits for children of employees up to the age of 18 are included free.

**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME** - The EAP offers cover for employees and their immediate family members residing at the same address, including children in full-time education.

**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT** - First class training and development opportunities are provided within the Trust.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** – 8 Professional Learning days per year

**HIGHER DEGREE SUPPORT FUNDING** – Significant contribution to the funding of Master's Degrees at the University of Bristol by the Trust and the University of Bristol as our sponsors

**BICYCLE PURCHASE LOANS** - After having successfully passed the probationary period employees are eligible to request a Bicycle Purchase loan up to the value of £1,000, through enrolment with the Cyclescheme.

**ICT LOANS** - After having successfully passed the probationary period employees are eligible to request an ICT loan up to the value of £1,000, through an arrangement with Techscheme.

**TRAVEL TICKET LOANS** - After having successfully passed the probationary period employees are eligible are eligible to apply for an interest free Travel Ticket Loan that can be used for purchase of a season travel ticket for bus or train travel.

**RETAIL DISCOUNTS** - An extensive range of free goods/services and discounts available to staff through membership to Perkbox.

**LONG SERVICE AWARD** – Payable to employees after 25 years continual service.

**EMPLOYEE REFERRAL SCHEME** - Payable following the successful completion of the probationary period of the new member of staff to the member of staff who made the introduction.

*Further details of our employee benefits can be found on the [Venturers Trust](#) website.*



## Merchants' Academy

Merchants' Academy provides a unique opportunity for students in Bristol to join a school from Reception through to the age of 18. In addition to those who progress into the Secondary from our own Primary, we welcome students every year from many primary schools across the city and whilst students from our primary have an understanding of our vision and ethos, the pastoral team work with all incoming students to ensure that there is a clarity for all with respect to both our expectations and our vision.

'Our successful sixth form is rapidly growing and our sixth form students are ambassadors for the academy community.'

**Vicki Starkie, Head of Secondary**

Merchants' Academy has a distinctive and positive ethos which guides our work and the education of our students. Preparation for adult life underpins our Academy aims and the well-developed culture which is established across all aspects and functions of the Academy. We are committed to the success of each of our students whatever stage they are at in their education and this is reflected through the Academy's values and commitment to:

- provide high quality education and a thirst for life-long learning
- enable everyone to enjoy success and achievement
- promote confidence and a strong sense of personal worth
- have high expectations which will be reflected in the targets set for staff and students alike
- harness the energies of children, students, staff and parents to establish a genuine partnership with the Academy for the benefit of all
- establish a business-like ethos by beliefs in values and attitudes such as hard work, honesty, integrity, respect and concern for others
- provide quality opportunities for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children and young people
- ensure that the effectiveness of all Academy staff is maintained and developed through considerable investment in high quality, continuous professional learning



## SEND at Merchants' Academy

Our department is made up of a number of Learning Support Assistants (LSA) who support students both across the curriculum and through targeted interventions and personalised curriculum plans. Our LSAs work closely with our students working collaboratively with classroom teachers to ensure that they receive the correct scaffolding in lessons as we believe that all students should aim high. We also provide a space for students with additional needs where they are able to work or receive support directly from LSAs at any point in the day. This space is open all day including break and lunch times and is seen as a nurturing and reflective space by students.

In addition, LSAs plan and deliver interventions for literacy and speech language and communication needs and work collaboratively with our Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) and the English department. This ensures that these interventions are delivered, monitored and reviewed as part of the graduated response to need in addition to maintaining high standards of teaching and learning. As part of our provision at Merchants' Academy we also have a Speech and Language Therapist who works across the school providing teachers with direct strategies and targets to embed speech language and communication into all lessons, as well as carrying out assessments when needed for students as part of our identification process. Our SALT also runs interventions to help students refine their communication skills and supports them to transfer these skills into a range of different contexts.

Merchants' Academy values the importance of collaborative work both internally and with external agencies, working with a high number of professionals to plan and deliver provision for students with a wide range of additional needs. As part of Venturers Trust our Trust schools SENCo's meet regularly to plan whole Trust SEND provision, share resources and look to strengthen and expand the provision that we provide for our students across the City of Bristol.

Currently Merchants' Academy has 29% of students identified as SEND, requiring something additional and different to their peers. It is the Academy's aim to strengthen provision around early identification and resources for teachers across the 4 categories of needs as outlined in the SEND Code of Practise; Cognition and Learning; Communication and Interaction; Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs and Physical and Sensory needs.

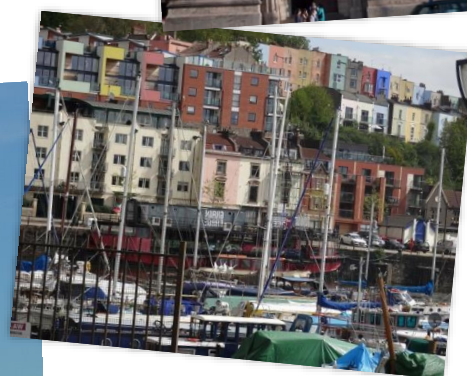


## Living in Bristol

Merchants' Academy is on the southern fringe of Bristol very close to the open fields of Bath and North Somerset and easy travelling distance from the city, country villages and further afield. Academy staff have an enviable choice of places to live within a city and region that is viewed as one of the areas with the highest quality of living in the UK.

Bristol is the largest city in the South West and the region's leading centre for business, culture and education. It has been the subject of a massive programme of investment and regeneration that has had a major impact on its retail, leisure and business facilities. The city has a long tradition of trade and engineering and is also home to many of the newer financial services, creative and media industries. It is also close to some of the most beautiful countryside and coastal areas.

Bristol itself is a beautiful, vibrant and fashionable city. Its harbour, which weaves its way through the heart of the city is lined with restaurants, clubs and bars, museums, arts, science and media centres. The narrow winding streets, radiating from the water's edge, reveal elegant parks, squares and stunning architecture. Recently the city celebrated Brunel 200, the 200th anniversary of the birth of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, one of the most inspirational engineers of the 19th century and the person responsible for some of the great icons of Bristol's industrial heritage. Bristol is the 8th largest city in the United Kingdom with a population of over 400,000. Built on the confluence of the Rivers Avon and Frome, it has been in existence from well before the time of the Romans.







## ASSISTANT HEAD

### JOB DESCRIPTION

L10-L14

**Post:** Assistant Head (including responsibility as SENDCo)

**Responsible to:** Vice Principal : Welfare

**Responsible for:** Teachers, HLTA's, Teaching Assistants

**Purpose:**

To promote an inclusive culture throughout the academy, enabling all children to achieve their best, overcoming barriers to learning and participation. The Assistant Head (SENDCo) holds a very important strategic role in the senior leadership team of the Academy. Supporting teachers to meet the wide range of needs of pupils within the secondary phase of the academy by developing and co-ordinating appropriate provision for children with additional needs and liaising with colleagues, parents/carers and outside agencies.

The Assistant Head (SENDCo) will work closely with Vice Principals for welfare and curriculum supported by SEND, pastoral and therapy teams; to provide the high quality provision for pupils with a wide variety of additional needs.

**Duties and responsibilities:**

This leadership role will carry a small teaching commitment within SEND provision.

**The internal organisation, management and control of the Academy**

- Work with central school improvement and Governors to implement the vision and values of the Academy.
- Work within the Academy community to translate the vision and ethos into agreed objectives and operational plans that will promote and sustain Academy improvement
- Contribute to the leadership of the Academy
- Take a leading role in promoting excellence, equality, high expectations and aspirations amongst all members of the Academy community
- Provide professional leadership and management for all aspects of the Academy
- Take a leading role in creating a safe learning environment which is engaging and fulfilling for all students
- Undertake Strategic Planning which will aid the production of the Academy Improvement Plans
- Develop and lead on aspects of the Academy Improvement Plans

**Inclusion**

To contribute to:

- The development, organisation and implementation of the Academy's/inclusion curriculum, and ensure Academy policies on curriculum, teaching and learning styles, assessment, recording and reporting are inclusive
- Ensuring that the learning and teaching provided by different departments and teaching teams form a co-ordinated, coherent curriculum entitlement for all individuals
- Ensuring that information on pupil progress is used to improve teaching and learning to inform and motivate pupils and to inform parents.
- Ensuring that the individual pupil's continuity of learning and effective progression of achievement are provided
- The promotion of extra-curricular activities in accordance with the educational aims and Academy's ethos.
- To work with all staff and external agencies to ensure to drive high standards of pupil behaviour and meeting emotional needs.
- To oversee the provision of in-depth therapeutic programmes which prevent mental ill-health, change behaviour and ensure that students can engage in learning with reduced or limited withdrawal.



## **Pupil care**

To contribute to:

- The development, organisation and implementation of Academy policy for the personal and social development of pupils including pastoral care and guidance in accordance with the teachings and policies of the Trust
- The effective induction of pupils
- The determination of appropriate pupil groupings
- Improving pupil attendance
- The promotion among pupils of standards of conduct/discipline and the encouragement of good behaviour.
- The handling of individual pupil behavioural incidents.

## **The management of staff**

- To participate in the selection and deployment of teaching and non-teaching staff
- To contribute to good management practice by ensuring positive staff participation, effective communication and procedures
- To participate in arrangements made in accordance with the regulations for the appraisal of the performance of teachers and volunteers
- To contribute to staff development policies and practices appropriate to each Academy in relation to:
  - The induction of Early Careers teachers and other staff such as volunteers
  - The provision of professional advice and support and the identification of training needs
  - Students under training/work experience
- To demonstrate effective leadership, representation and liaison both within the Academy and other interested or involved persons or bodies.
- To maintain good relationships with individuals, groups and staff unions and associations.
- To keep up to date with national and local educational strategies and developments and communicate these to staff where and when relevant

## **The management of resources**

- To contribute to the formulation of Academy policies and procedures concerning resource management in accordance with the Trust's vision
- To allocate, control and account for those financial and material resources of the Academy which are delegated by the Head in line with budget
- To promote an attractive environment which stimulates learning, enhances the appearance of the Academy and expresses its identity
- To contribute to arrangements for the security and effective supervision of the Academy buildings, their contents and grounds, including aspects of health and safety
- To maintain effective working relationships with external agencies and services contracted to the Academy and the Trust

## **Specific SENDCo responsibilities:**

- Ensure consistency of approach in teaching and learning of children with SEND
- Support staff in understanding the learning needs of children with specific needs and the importance of raising their achievement; disseminating the most effective teaching approaches.
- Ensure all aspects of teaching and learning are planned appropriately to take into account the needs of all groups, inclusive of SEND, FSM and CiC
- Ensure that the most appropriate curriculum is followed by SEND students at all key stages and that schemes of work are regularly reviewed and lesson plans developed.
- Understand and demonstrate the characteristics of high-quality teaching as well as strategies for improving and sustaining high standards of teaching, learning and achievement for all pupils.
- Facilitate collaborative planning and assessment to ensure the highest possible level of teaching, learning and SEND student progress.
- Monitor and analyse attainment and progress levels across the Academy and within teaching groups in order to put in place appropriate interventions.
- Liaise with other co-ordinators to ensure that appropriate provision is made for children across all areas of the curriculum.
- Complete examination analysis and use this information to scrutinise practice, identify priorities and inform future planning.
- Complete assessment for top up funding and EHCP paperwork
- Advise and assist subject teachers and other members of staff in planning individual or group programmes for children who require extra provision.
- Ensure that appropriate methods of assessing and recording children's needs and progress are introduced and maintained.
- Liaise with other agencies including educational psychologist, social services, speech therapists, E.W.O., CAMHS etc
- Organise and chair inter agency meetings to discuss the needs and progress of identified children as required.
- Support teachers to organise and chair review meetings for parents to discuss progress of individual children.
- Liaise with Primary Academies to promote continuity and progression for children with special needs.
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- Organise professional development opportunities for staff and be able to deliver staff training throughout the Academy (and throughout the Trust).
- Monitor teaching and learning of pupils who have been identified as requiring specific support.
- Ensure inclusive practice and equality of opportunity for all.
- Carry out other duties that the Head of the Merchants' Academy may reasonably request.

#### **Teacher responsibilities**

- To carry out the duties of a teacher as set out in the current Teachers' Standards
- To carry out the duties of a teacher as detailed in the teacher job description, including the provision of cover for absent teachers

#### **Organisation:**

- Promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people within the Academy.
- To ensure all personal data is processed in line with General Data Protection Regulation.
- Comply with and assist the development of policies and procedures relating to all Academy and Trust policies including Child Protection, Health and Safety, confidentiality and Data Protection, freedom of information and reporting all concerns to the appropriate person.
- Be aware of and support difference and ensure equal opportunities for all.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the overall ethos/work/aims of the Academy.
- Develop positive relationships and communicate with pupils/parents/colleagues/agencies/professionals.

This job description is intended as an outline indicator of general areas of activity and will be amended in light of the changing needs of the Trust and its academies. It is expected that the post holder will be as positive and flexible as possible in using this document as a framework.

## ASSISTANT HEAD (incl. responsibility as SENDCo)

### PERSON SPECIFICATION

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<b>Qualifications</b>	Good Honours Graduate with QTS or as required by the DfE SENDCo qualification	Higher degree NPQSL Level 3 safeguarding training
<b>Experience</b>	Working as a SENDCo Excellent classroom teacher with a proven commitment to enhancing the quality of children's learning Experience of monitoring teaching and learning Experience using data to raise standards and achievement for all pupils	Experience working in schools serving communities of deprivation or disadvantage Successful financial management of school budgets
<b>Skills</b>	Skills set as outlined in the Teachers' Standards Has a presence within and beyond the classroom which inspires confidence in children and adults Ability to communicate clearly and effectively, verbally and in writing, to a range of individuals, groups and larger audiences	
<b>Professional Learning</b>	Commitment to continuing personal and professional learning development	Evidence of Professional Learning relevant to the role
<b>Leadership Skills and Values</b>	Ability to motivate and lead a team with sensitivity and energy Commitment to the pursuit of excellence in educational standards Ability to communicate effectively with colleagues, students, parents and external agencies Ability to tackle difficult issues tactfully and sensitively for a positive resolution Confident managing and positively communicating change Experience of successful leadership of a core area of the Academy Knowledge and experience of leading areas of Academy Improvement Planning and curriculum planning Experience of line managing staff	Evidence of high level co-curricular activities Ability to foster links with local community and with other schools, locally, nationally and internationally Ability lead staff meetings or training sessions
<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge including the national curriculum Know how to secure outstanding progress and outcomes by students adapting teaching as needed Experience using data to raise standards and achievement for all pupils	Possess a good understanding of serving communities of deprivation or disadvantage
<b>Student Involvement</b>	Commitment to student involvement Personal commitment to listen to student voice Focus on individual student's needs and development of independent learning High expectations of students Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people Experience and knowledge of managing challenging behaviour of pupils and staff	
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	Flexibility to cope with diverse needs of the post Ability to work flexibly as part of a team Resilience to work under pressure Positive, tenacious and optimistic Ability to quickly establish positive relationships with students, staff and parents	Initiative and ability to create new processes and practices to raise standards

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# HOW TO APPLY



## **Closing Date for Applications:**

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 9:00**

## **Interviews:**

**W/c 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

Application forms must be completed in full and applicants should directly address the skills and experience outlined in the person specification.

An Application Form is available in electronic format at [venturerstrust.org](https://venturerstrust.org) and should be returned electronically along with the Equality Monitoring Form by following the instructions at the **Work With Us** section of the Academy's website.

**Please note due to the expected high volume of applications it may not be possible to acknowledge and respond to all applicants.**

## SAFER RECRUITMENT IN EDUCATION

Venturers Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work. The aims of our Safer Recruitment procedures are to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to working with them.

### **Information for Applicants**

All applicants for all vacant posts will be provided with:

- A job description outlining the duties of the post, including safeguarding responsibilities.
- A person specification which will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.
- A Venturers Trust Application form, and all applicants for employment will be required to complete this application form, containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history).

### **Shortlisting and Reference Requests**

References will be requested at the selection stage directly from the referee. They will be asked:

- the referee's relationship with the candidate;
- details of the applicant's current post and salary;
- performance history and conduct;
- any disciplinary action involving the safety and welfare of children, including any in which the sanction has expired;
- details of any substantiated allegations or concerns relating to the safety and welfare of children;
- whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate's suitability to work with children. If so, the Trust/Academy will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the candidate may be unsuitable to work with children.

### **Interviews**

At least one member of each interview panel will have completed Safer Recruitment Training. The selection process for every post will include exploration of the candidate's understanding of child safeguarding issues.

### **Pre-Employment Checks**

All staff will require an enhanced DBS. Prohibition and Overseas checks will also be completed if necessary.