

Assistant Headteacher (SEND)





Headteacher's Letter

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining our highly motivated, innovative team of around 27 teachers and 43 associate staff from all walks of life. We are a highly collaborative, mutually supportive and dedicated staff team.

Working together to understand the unique, complex learning and additional needs of our 170 students, sharing expertise and embedding best practice are all hard-wired into our weekly schedule with daily briefings as well as regular meetings. There is plenty of support for continuing professional development for those who want to progress their careers and for those who want to become even better at what they do.

We have high expectations for student outcomes, alongside an equally strong commitment to supporting pupils to overcome their individual barriers to learning. All of our students have learning difficulties, and over 40% are autistic or have social communication needs; a similar proportion have speech and language difficulties, while others experience physical challenges or complex health care needs. Staff at The Abbey gain a significant proportion of their job satisfaction from the little 'wins' every week.

Structure and routine are vital, but the curriculum is an ambitious combination of academic and life-skills learning to prepare our students for future education and training, more independent living and better employment prospects so no two days are the same. We embrace the challenges, seeking solutions and improvements and are not afraid to try new things. We share the 'laughs' and celebrate the achievements.

I very much look forward to receiving your application and having the opportunity to meet you beforehand, introduce you to our fantastic students and staff and show you our amazing school. In the meantime, if you have any queries not covered in the application pack, please contact the school office on 01252 725059 or email enquiries@abbey.surrey.sch.uk and one of the team will get back to you. I would also encourage you to have a look at the school website www.abbey.surrey.sch.uk if you would like to find out a bit more (the Year 11 leavers' films in the news area give you a fantastic insight into the Abbey School journey for our students).



David Jackson
Head teacher



Job Advert

Assistant Headteacher (SEND) Outstanding Secondary Special School

**Pay scale WL7 to WL11
(£61,582 to £67,796)**

We are seeking an exceptional, ambitious and values-driven leader to join our dedicated and experienced Senior Leadership Team as Assistant Headteacher (SEND) at our Outstanding secondary special school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD).

This exciting role carries strategic responsibility for SEND across the whole school, including fulfilling the statutory role of SENCo. The successful candidate will lead and further develop inclusive practice, contribute significantly to senior leadership decision-making, and play a key role in shaping the next phase of the school's development. The post will particularly appeal to experienced leaders aspiring to Deputy headship who wish to deepen their leadership experience within a highly supportive and successful school environment.

We welcome applications from candidates who are:

- Experienced leaders from special or mainstream settings
- Primary or secondary specialists with relevant leadership experience
- Strongly committed to inclusive practice and high-quality SEND provision

The successful candidate will join a highly skilled, collaborative and committed staff team and will play a key role in driving continued excellence and shaping the school's future development.

Why join us?

- Consistently judged outstanding by Ofsted (2009, 2012, 2016, 2018, 2024)
- A thriving and ambitious school, exceptionally well-placed to move confidently into its next phase of development, supported by outstanding facilities and a superb, committed staff team.
- Robust support, coaching and development for senior leaders
- A strong commitment to staff wellbeing, with staff voice valued and promoted through an active staff voice group
- Working within a forward-thinking, values-driven and highly supportive Trust (WMAT) that invests in leadership development.



Job Description

Assistant Headteacher (SEND) Job Description

The Abbey School is committed to creating a diverse workforce. We will consider all qualified applicants for employment without regard to sex, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, age, disability, marriage or civil partnership.

This job description reflects the requirements of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and the vision, aims and policies of the Governing Body.

Job details

Salary: WMAT: WL7 – WL11 (£61,582 to £67,796pa)

Hours: Full Time

Contract type: Permanent

Reporting to: Headteacher

Responsible for: Line management of TAs, SEND Team and Lead Medical Admin

The Assistant Head Teacher is to be:

- An outstanding teacher with substantial experience and knowledge of SEND across key stages
- An experienced and inspirational team leader, able to motivate and develop others
- Skilled in teaching and leading provision for pupils with a wide range of complex special educational needs
- A leader of teaching and learning, contributing strategically and operationally as a key member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Highly experienced in managing and supporting challenging behaviour, with a strong commitment to inclusive and trauma-informed practice

The post holder will undertake these responsibilities alongside the duties of an Assistant Head Teacher, as set out in the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, and will work collaboratively to further strengthen inclusive practice and high-quality provision across the school and Trust

Leadership, Management and SEND Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership and Senior Management

The Assistant Head Teacher (SENCo) will be a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, working closely with the Head Teacher, governors and colleagues to secure high standards, inclusive practice and continuous school improvement.



The postholder will:

- Work in close partnership with the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team to support the strategic and operational leadership of the school
- Contribute significantly to the development, implementation and evaluation of the School Development Plan (SDP) and Self-Evaluation processes (SEF)
- Promote a positive, inclusive and aspirational school culture, underpinned by high expectations for teaching, learning, behaviour, wellbeing and professional conduct
- Provide leadership for high-quality teaching and learning, ensuring learning environments are engaging, well-resourced and meet the diverse needs of all pupils
- Support effective school governance by contributing to relevant meetings and ensuring governors are well informed and able to hold leaders to account
- Promote consistently high standards of behaviour and relationships across the school, ensuring shared responsibility and consistency of practice
- Ensure communication with parents and carers is timely, accurate and reflects the school's high professional standards
- Assume shared responsibility for the leadership and management of the school in the absence of the Head Teacher, alongside other SLT members

2. Teaching Commitment

- The Assistant Head Teacher (SENCo) will carry a teaching commitment of approximately 25%, delivering high-quality teaching aligned with the school's expectations for inclusive practice and effective pedagogy
- The teaching commitment will be structured to ensure sufficient capacity to fulfil senior leadership responsibilities and the statutory duties of the SENCo role effectively
- Through their teaching, the postholder will model best practice in inclusive classroom provision, using this experience to inform strategic SEND leadership and whole-school improvement

3. Leadership and Management of SEND Provision

As the school's named SENCo, the Assistant Head Teacher will provide strategic leadership for SEND, ensuring statutory duties are fulfilled and that provision is coherent, inclusive and impactful.

The postholder will:

- Fulfil all statutory responsibilities of the SENCo role in line with the SEND Code of Practice
- Lead the strategic development, implementation and review of SEND policy and provision across the school
- Ensure SEND priorities are reflected in the School Development Plan and self-evaluation processes
- Use the graduated approach to oversee the identification, assessment, support and review of all pupils
- Support the school in relation to SEND tribunals and legal processes, including representation where required



- Work with the Head Teacher and governors to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Prepare and maintain information required for publication and reporting to the governing board
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of local and national SEND developments and guidance

4. Operational Coordination and Multi-Agency Working

The Assistant Head Teacher (SENCo) will ensure SEND provision is effectively coordinated, monitored and evaluated.

This includes responsibility to:

- Maintain an accurate and up-to-date map of the universal offer and individual student provision
- Oversee the coordination of the Annual Review schedule, leading reviews where appropriate and training staff as required
- Act as a key point of contact for parents/carers and external agencies, including the local authority
- Work collaboratively with education, health and social care professionals to secure appropriate support for pupils
- Lead Team Around the Child (TAC) processes for pupils with more complex needs
- Ensure accurate, compliant and up-to-date SEND records are maintained
- Ensure effective transition planning for pupils joining, moving within the school year or leaving the school

5. Staff Leadership, Line Management and Professional Development

The postholder will provide strong leadership and management.

This includes:

- Strategic and operational leadership of the SEND team, including the Deputy SENCo, Assistant SENCo and SEND Administrators
- Line management of the Assistant SENCo and SEND administrators
- Line management and effective deployment of the Teaching Assistant team
- Responsibility for performance management and professional development of allocated staff including Lead Medical Admin
- Identification of SEND training needs and delivery of SEND-focused INSET for all staff
- Providing professional advice and guidance to colleagues on inclusive practice and supporting pupils with additional needs



6. General Senior Leader Responsibilities

As a senior leader, the Assistant Head Teacher (SENCo) will:

- Attend and contribute fully to SLT and Local Governing Body meetings as required
- Maintain a visible leadership presence across the school day, supporting a calm, safe and purposeful environment
- Lead working groups, contribute to policy development and present reports to staff and governors as required
- Model the highest professional standards in conduct, commitment, attendance and leadership
- Promote and champion the ethos and values of the school and Trust within the wider community
- Be willing to work flexibly to meet the demands of the role
- Undertake any other reasonable duties as directed by the Head Teacher, consistent with the seniority of the post

Person Specification

CRITERIA	QUALITIES
Qualifications	<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) • National Award for SEN Coordination (NASENCo/NPQ SENCO) <i>or</i> commitment to complete within statutory timescale • Degree or equivalent professional qualification • Evidence of continuing professional development, particularly in SEND and inclusive leadership <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate qualification related to SEND, leadership, or inclusion • SENCo experience in a leadership role • Safeguarding training at DSL or deputy level



<p>Experience</p>	<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful teaching experience across at least one key stage • Significant experience of working with pupils with SEND • Proven impact in improving outcomes for pupils with SEND • Experience of leading or contributing to whole-school improvement • Strong understanding of the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and statutory responsibilities • Experience of working with parents/carers and external professionals (e.g. EPs, SALT, CAMHS) <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience as a SENCo or Deputy SENCo • Experience of line-managing staff • Experience of SEND provision mapping and resource deployment • Experience working within a specialist or complex SEND context • Experience of Ofsted inspection relating to SEND or inclusion
<p>Knowledge</p>	<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEND Code of Practice ○ Graduated response (Assess–Plan–Do–Review) ○ EHCP processes and statutory timelines ○ Inclusive quality-first teaching ○ Behaviour, attendance, safeguarding, and wellbeing as they relate to SEND • Strong knowledge of adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments • Understanding of leadership accountability and school improvement planning <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of trauma-informed practice and neurodiversity-affirming approaches • Understanding of commissioning and joint working with local authorities and health services • Knowledge of specialist interventions and alternative provision pathways • Knowledge/awareness of the 2026 White Paper ‘Every Child Achieving & Thriving’ and how this relates to specialist MLD settings



<p>Skills and Abilities</p>	<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership and interpersonal skills • Ability to influence, coach, and develop staff practice • Excellent communication skills (written and verbal) • Ability to analyse data to inform SEND strategy and provision • Confident in leading Annual Reviews and complex multi-agency meetings • Strong organisational and time-management skills • Ability to work strategically while retaining attention to individual pupil needs <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience leading SEND training for staff and governors • Ability to support curriculum adaptation at whole-school level • Confident presenting SEND priorities to governors and external agencies
<p>Leadership and Personal Qualities</p>	<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear commitment to inclusion, equity, and high aspirations for all pupils • Demonstration of integrity, resilience, and emotional intelligence • Values collaboration and professional learning • Ability to challenge practice constructively and advocate effectively for pupils • Willingness to be a visible leader within the school community • Model reflective practice and continuous improvement <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambition for further future senior leadership • Experience leading school-wide initiatives beyond SEND • Creative and solution-focused approach to complex challenges
<p>Safeguarding & Professional Conduct</p>	<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people • Willingness to undergo enhanced DBS checks • Commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice • Upholds professional standards and confidentiality at all times

Notes:

This job description may be amended, following consultation with the post holder, to reflect the evolving needs of the school.

The responsibilities outlined above are subject to the general duties and conditions set out in the written statement of terms and conditions of employment.

The post holder is expected to uphold and actively promote the school's ethos and to work in accordance with the policies, procedures, and objectives agreed by the governing body.

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.



The Abbey can offer:

- Amazing students who want to learn
- A consistent approach to behaviour which ensures learning is not disrupted
- An additional 2 days holiday each year with our wellness (long) weekend in November
- Westfield Health Cash Plan
<https://www.westfieldhealth.com/individual/health-cash-plan>
This includes **reimbursement towards the cost of** dental, opticians, physiotherapy and other medical appointments. Your dependants are included at no extra cost to you!
- External leadership/NPQ opportunities, including supporting masters' applications and aspiring senior leader's development programme
- Opportunities to collaborate across a range of mainstream and specialist provision schools within the Weydon MAT
- Outstanding, state-of-the-art facilities across the school
- Extensive CPD opportunities that support professional growth in and out of the classroom, including six early closure days, five INSET days, and well-defined professional learning routes for teachers
- A welcoming and very supportive staff community
- On site car parking





Expansion Project

The Abbey has very recently undergone a huge £7.8million investment expanding from a 2- to 3-form entry school to support Surrey County Council's SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

As a result The Abbey now has:

- 15 general classrooms, nine of which are newly built
- A newly equipped Food Technology classroom
- A specialist Art room in a new, enhanced space
- A purpose-built Music and Drama classroom
- A newly built Design Technology classroom
- Two specialist Science laboratories, one of which is newly built

In addition, there is:

- A full-size sports hall, supported by two newly built PE storage areas
- A newly built multi-use games area (MUGA)
- A modern, purpose-built staff room
- A newly constructed school office
- A welcoming, fully furnished waiting area for parents, carers and visitors
- A purpose-built conference and meeting room
- Three additional therapy rooms
- Newly built boys' and girls' PE changing rooms
- Five additional office spaces
- Two newly built accessible (disabled) toilets
- A state-of-the-art staff workroom with 12 workstations
- A 'Cubbie' immersive sensory space, designed to support sensory regulation through professionally tailored programmes for students

This is an exciting time for The Abbey as we expand and flourish in our new buildings with their first-class technology!

Over recent years, as part of the school's expansion project, we have undertaken a comprehensive refurbishment of our IT infrastructure. An investment of over £200,000 has transformed our network and systems. All classrooms are now equipped with state-of-the-art interactive whiteboards, Wi-Fi and an internet-based phone system. Every student has been issued with a school-funded Chromebook, which is embedded into daily teaching and learning. In addition, all IT systems have fully migrated to the cloud.



How to Apply

Please click on the following link to view our profile and select 'Current Vacancies' and search by role.

Link to vacancy:

<https://recruit.sampeople.co.uk/Jobboard/Trust/weydonmultiacademytrust/00010>

If you have any queries, please contact:

Zoe Mackie

Operations Manager

The Abbey School, Menin Way, Farnham GU9 8DY

e-mail: recruitment@abbey.wmat.org.uk

The Abbey School reserves the right to interview candidates before the closing date.

PLEASE NOTE THAT NEITHER COVERING LETTERS OR CVs WILL BE ACCEPTED

Closing Date: Friday 15th May
Interview Date: Thursday 21st May

Pre-visits are essential. To arrange a visit, please contact us on 01252 725059.

**We look forward to receiving your application to join our
dedicated and passionate team**

The Abbey is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff to share this commitment. Enhanced DBS, Children's Barred List and Right to work in the UK checks are required for this post.

The Abbey School is committed to creating a diverse workforce. We'll consider all qualified applicants for employment without regard to sex, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, age, disability, marriage or civil partnership.

Enclosures/attachments:

- Application Form
- WMAT Staff Prospectus
- FPN for Applicants

