

Autism Specialist Teacher

Job Description

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

- To provide high-quality, inclusive and specialist education that supports autistic pupils with complex learning profiles to thrive academically, socially and emotionally, while meeting associated communication, sensory, regulatory and cognitive needs.
- To promote and uphold the aims, values and strategic objectives of the school and the trust, ensuring that these are reflected consistently in professional practice and interactions.
- To embed the trust's commitment to equity, inclusion and equal opportunities across all aspects of school life, ensuring that diversity is respected, valued and celebrated.
- To provide excellent, engaging and meaningful learning opportunities for all pupils, supporting progress, independence, wellbeing and positive life outcomes.
- To support autistic learners with complex learning profiles and associated communication, sensory, regulatory and cognitive needs.
- processing and regulation needs, emotional dysregulation, cognitive and thinking differences, and/or additional needs such as physical disabilities, attention-related needs, sensory impairments, or social, emotional and mental health needs.
- To deliver teaching using autism-informed, evidence-based approaches, including structured, predictable environments, flexible curriculum pathways and adaptations responsive to pupils' regulation and readiness to learn.
- To ensure pupils have access to appropriate communication systems, in line with the school's Total Communication approach, including AAC, visual supports and structured communication strategies, enabling autonomy, choice, self-expression and meaningful participation.
- To promote emotional regulation, wellbeing and a sense of safety, using proactive, relational and trauma-informed strategies, including co-regulation, to reduce barriers to learning and engagement.
- To place the individual learner at the centre of all planning and decision-making, ensuring highly personalised provision informed by assessment, observation, professional collaboration and pupil voice (in accessible and appropriate forms).
- To support the development of independence, functional skills and preparation for adulthood, including communication, self-advocacy and life skills, in line with pupils' individual pathways and future destinations.
- To work collaboratively with families, carers and multidisciplinary professionals, recognising them as key partners in supporting pupils' learning, development and wellbeing.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Teaching, Learning and Autism-Informed Practice

- Plan, prepare and deliver high-quality, autism-informed teaching that meets the needs of autistic pupils and pupils with complex learning profiles.
- Provide structured, predictable and supportive learning environments that promote emotional regulation, engagement and access to learning.
- Teach across a range of subjects using personalised, flexible curriculum pathways responsive to pupils' regulation, communication and learning readiness.

- Embed the school's Total Communication approach, ensuring pupils have access to appropriate communication systems, including AAC, visual supports and structured communication strategies, enabling autonomy, choice, self-expression and meaningful participation.
- Use proactive, relational and trauma-informed strategies to support emotional regulation and wellbeing, including the effective use of Team Teach de-escalation and positive handling strategies in line with training and policy.
- Maintain a safe, secure and inclusive learning environment, ensuring health, safety and safeguarding procedures are consistently followed.

Assessment, Progress and EHCP Responsibilities

- Assess, monitor and record pupils' progress using a range of appropriate autism-sensitive assessment methods, in line with school and trust assessment policies.
- Plan, implement and evaluate individual, group and class programmes of work based on EHCP outcomes, personalised learning targets and ongoing assessment.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date records of pupil learning, development and wellbeing.
- Contribute effectively to Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Annual Reviews, reviews of provision and multi-agency meetings as required.

Classroom Leadership and Team Working

- Lead and manage teaching assistants and other support staff within the classroom, ensuring their deployment supports pupils' communication, regulation and learning needs.
- Work collaboratively with therapists, pathway leads and other professionals to deliver integrated and holistic support for pupils.
- Maintain a stimulating, organised and autism-friendly learning environment, including meaningful classroom and corridor displays that support learning and celebrate pupil achievement.
- Ensure appropriate resources are available, accessible and adapted to meet pupils' sensory, communication and learning needs within budgetary constraints.

Collaboration with Families and Wider Teams

- Fulfil a pastoral role as required, supporting pupils' wellbeing and emotional development.
- Communicate effectively and sensitively with families and carers, recognising them as key partners in pupils' education and development.
- Support effective transitions for pupils within school and between classes, pathways or key stages.

Professional Responsibilities

- Uphold and implement school, trust and departmental policies, including those relating to curriculum, inclusion, safeguarding, behaviour, health and safety and wellbeing.
- Work collaboratively with the Pathway Lead and wider team in departmental and pathway planning, administration and development.
- Attend and contribute to professional meetings, training and professional development opportunities in line with Directed Time.
- Maintain up-to-date professional knowledge of autism-specific practice and evidence-based approaches.
- Promote high standards of professional conduct in line with the Trust's Employee Code of Conduct.
- Comply with all statutory requirements and trust policies relating to safeguarding, SEND, equality, data protection, health and safety and professional conduct.

Please note that this job description is not exhaustive, and the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties commensurate with the role.

Person Specification

CRITERIA	Experience, Qualifications and Training: On their application form, candidates will demonstrate that they have the following training, qualifications and school experience:	
ESSENTIAL		DESIRABLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). • Experience of teaching autistic pupils and/or pupils with SEND, with evidence of impact on learning, wellbeing and engagement. • Commitment to ongoing professional development and reflective practice. • Ability to form positive and effective partnerships with families and carers. • Understanding of trauma-informed and autism-informed practice. • Willingness to develop specialist skills in autism education, communication and regulation support. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional qualification or accredited professional development in Autism / SEND. • Training or experience in AAC, Total Communication or alternative communication approaches.
CRITERIA	Ability, Skills and Knowledge: In their statement of suitability and during the selection process, candidates will demonstrate that they have the following ability, skills and knowledge:	
ESSENTIAL		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective classroom practitioner with the ability to deliver high-quality, autism-informed teaching. • Knowledge and understanding of strategies to support autistic pupils' communication and sensory needs, including the use of visual supports and adapted learning environments. • Ability to support pupils' emotional regulation and engagement using proactive, relational approaches. • Experience of assessing, tracking and responding to pupil progress, including working towards EHCP outcomes. • Ability to evaluate and adapt teaching based on pupil response and evidence of learning. 		

CRITERIA

Personal style and behaviour: In their statement of suitability and during the selection process, candidates will explain how they have they demonstrate their personal style and behaviour:

ESSENTIAL

- Reliable attendance and professional approach to work.
- Demonstrable commitment to working with autistic pupils and pupils with complex needs.
- Ability to lead and support other adults in the classroom.
- Collaborative and flexible team player.
- Approachable, patient and sensitive to the needs of pupils and families.
- Willingness to work positively with distressed or dysregulated behaviour, using de-escalation and reflective practice.
- Strong commitment to inclusion, equity and equal opportunities.

Please note that this role is subject to safer recruitment checks, including an enhanced DBS check. The post-holder is expected to comply with all statutory requirements and trust policies relating to safeguarding, SEND, equality, data protection, health and safety and professional conduct.