



Job Description: Co-Headteacher
Reports to: Governing Board

“Working hard and caring for each other”

1. Context

Merton Abbey is a vibrant, happy one-form-entry school situated in the heart of South Wimbledon. It is very much part of a dynamic and diverse community, maintaining good working relationships with parents, community, arts and sports groups and other schools within the borough.

Our motto is *“working hard and caring for each other”* and the values that guide everything we do are respect, inclusion, resilience, responsibility and joy.

This role forms part of a co-headship model, working in equal partnership with the current Headteacher, who will split their week between leadership and educational research. Together, you will share strategic leadership, day-to-day management, and accountability for school performance and culture.

2. Purpose of the Role

The Co-Headteacher provides strategic, operational, and inspirational leadership that enables every child to thrive, every member of staff to feel valued, and the school to deliver consistently high-quality teaching and learning.

Working collaboratively with the Co-Headteacher and the Governing Board, the role ensures that Merton Abbey:

- Lives its ethos and values every day
- Delivers excellent outcomes for all children
- Embeds a strong safeguarding culture
- Builds positive, respectful relationships across the community
- Delivers the school’s “Celebrate, Sustain and Grow” strategic priorities
- Operates with financial, legal and operational integrity



3. Key Responsibilities

3.1 School Culture & Vision

- Lead with warmth, integrity and visibility, modelling the school's values.
- Champion an inclusive, nurturing culture where pupils experience joy and a strong sense of belonging.
- Be open to new ideas and colleagues' suggestions and adapt to changes to educational practice and national requirements.
- Respect all members of the school community, so that they feel confident and valued in a safe working environment.
- Build strong relationships with pupils, parents, staff, governors and community partners.
- Translate the school's "Celebrate, Sustain and Grow" strategic priorities into daily leadership.

3.2 Teaching & Learning

- Sustain high-quality, evidence-informed teaching across the school.
- Work with staff to make learning opportunities both enjoyable and challenging.
- Ensure teachers benefit from strong subject leadership, coaching and professional dialogue.
- Promote effective use of formative assessment and responsive teaching.
- Maintain high expectations for all pupils, including bilingual learners and high attainers.

3.3 Curriculum & Assessment

- Oversee a broad, coherent and ambitious curriculum across Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Ensure statutory requirements are met, including phonics and early reading.
- Use data insightfully to inform planning, provision and interventions.
- Celebrate curriculum excellence and creativity through partnerships in arts, music, sport and outdoor learning.

3.4 Safeguarding

- Ensure safeguarding and child protection are embedded as a whole-school responsibility and understood clearly by all staff.
- Maintain a vigilant, proactive safeguarding culture where children feel safe, listened to and able to raise concerns.



- Oversee robust policies, procedures and reporting systems in line with statutory guidance, ensuring they are implemented consistently.
- Ensure staff receive regular, high-quality training and are confident in recognising and responding to concerns.
- Work in effective partnership with the local authority, social care, health services and other external agencies.
- Ensure accurate, confidential recording and secure transfer of safeguarding information.
- Lead or support Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsibilities as agreed within the co-headship model, ensuring full coverage across the school.

3.5 Behaviour, Inclusion & Pastoral Care

- Uphold a positive behaviour culture built on relationships, consistency and respect.
- Ensure behaviour policies are clearly understood, fair and calmly applied.
- Promote strategies that support emotional well-being, resilience and restorative practice.
- Work with staff and external specialists to support pupils with challenging behaviour.

3.6 Additional & Special Educational Needs

- Set supportive but ambitious expectations for all pupils with SEND.
- Ensure effective identification, assessment, provision and monitoring of needs.
- Work closely with the SENCO, parents and external agencies to deliver high-quality support.
- Ensure statutory duties under the SEND Code of Practice are met.

3.7 Professional Development & Staff Well-Being

- Build a collaborative, motivated staff culture where everyone feels valued.
- Arrange regular, whole-school INSET meetings to address areas of general and current interest.
- Lead the appraisal process and identify with senior staff whole-school Continuing Professional Development priorities.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of teachers' strengths and opportunities for development, to guide them to consolidate and improve their practice.
- Encourage and enable staff to feel confident in and address their own professional development, including subject specialism.
- Promote workload awareness and sustainable working practices.
- Actively engage in their own personal professional development.



3.8 Organisational Management & Operations

- Ensure safeguarding processes remain robust, proactive and embedded across the school.
- Oversee key systems including timetabling, risk management, site safety and data.
- Work with the Co-Headteacher to allocate resources effectively and manage the school budget.
- Maintain compliance with Ofsted, London Borough of Merton policies and other regulatory frameworks.

3.9 School Improvement

- Work with the Governing Board to annually review and update the school's strategic priorities
- Lead implementation and maintenance of the School Development Plan and evaluate progress regularly.
- Use evidence-informed approaches to identify barriers and design improvement strategies.
- Ensure improvement work is realistic, sequenced, and aligned to the school's context and priorities.
- Report accurately and clearly to governors on progress and risks.

3.10 Partnerships & Community

- Maintain strong relationships with parents through clear communication and a warm, open approach.
- Build partnerships with other local schools, playgroups, arts organisations and community groups.
- Promote the school to prospective families and the wider community.

3.11 Governance, Finance & Accountability

- Work constructively with the Governing Board, providing transparent information and advice.
- Ensure staff understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account fairly.
- Oversee financial decision-making with probity, efficiency and long-term planning.
- Ensure the school meets all legal and statutory obligations, including safeguarding, health and safety, SEND, and data protection.



5. Person Specification

Candidates should be headteachers, teachers in senior roles, in equivalent educational employment, or recently employed in any of the above.

Candidates should satisfy the criteria from the National Standards of Headteachers and the conditions of employment of headteachers from School Teachers' Pay and Conditions.

Essential

- Qualified teacher status
- Significant successful senior leadership experience in primary education
- A track record of improving outcomes and strengthening teaching practice
- Strong understanding of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 curricula
- Clear, inclusive approach to behaviour, SEND and pastoral care
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to build trust and strong working relationships
- Commitment to the school's ethos, values and community
- Wants to work collaboratively and constructively within a co-headship model
- Strong understanding of safeguarding responsibilities

Desirable

- Experience of managing budgets and resources
- NPQH or equivalent leadership qualification
- Experience leading partnerships or community-facing projects
- Experience supporting bilingual learners
- Experience delivering school improvement linked to Ofsted frameworks

Date: April 2026