OAKWOOD PARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Head of Social Sciences
(Sociology and Politics)

Responsible to	Senior Leadership Team Line Manager
Salary	MPS/UPS + 2C
Start date	Easter or September 2027

Job Purpose

To provide outstanding leadership and strategic direction for the Sociology and Politics departments, ensuring that both subjects continue to achieve exceptional academic outcomes and provide an ambitious, engaging and challenging educational experience for all students.

The postholder will lead the development of teaching and learning, curriculum, assessment and professional practice across both departments, establishing and sustaining the highest standards of achievement, behaviour and student engagement.

As a middle leader at Oakwood Park Grammar School, the postholder will contribute to the wider strategic priorities of the school, modelling its values of Strive and Serve and ensuring that students remain at the heart of all decision-making.

1. Leadership and Management

- Provide clear, ambitious and strategic leadership for both Sociology and Politics.
- Establish a shared vision and high expectations across both departments.
- Develop and implement departmental improvement plans which align with the School Development Plan.
- Ensure that both departments continue to achieve exceptional outcomes and sustain their strong academic performance.
- Lead departmental meetings effectively, ensuring that they have a clear focus on improving student outcomes, teaching and learning and professional development.
- Monitor the effectiveness of provision across both subjects, identifying strengths and areas for further development.
- Manage departmental resources and budgets effectively, ensuring value for money.
- Contribute positively to the wider leadership and development of the school.

2. Teaching and Learning

- Promote and secure consistently excellent teaching across Sociology and Politics.
- Establish a culture of high expectations, intellectual challenge and academic ambition.
- Ensure that teaching is responsive to the needs of highly able learners and enables all students to achieve their potential.
- Lead the development and sharing of effective teaching strategies and evidence-informed practice.
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning through appropriate quality assurance activities, including learning walks, work scrutiny and student voice.

- Support colleagues in developing their classroom practice through constructive feedback, coaching and professional learning.
- Promote opportunities for independent learning, critical thinking, debate and academic scholarship.

3. Student Outcomes and Achievement

- Take responsibility for the academic outcomes of students studying Sociology and Politics.
- Analyse assessment information, examination results and progress data to identify trends, strengths and areas for improvement.
- Ensure that outcomes in both departments remain exceptional when compared with appropriate national benchmarks and similar schools.
- Identify and address variation in student performance, including differences between classes, teaching groups and student cohorts.
- Ensure that appropriate intervention and support are in place for students who are not making expected progress.
- Monitor the progress of disadvantaged students and those with SEND, ensuring that barriers to achievement are identified and addressed.
- Lead effective examination preparation, ensuring that students are well prepared and supported to achieve the highest possible grades.

4. Curriculum Development

- Lead the development, review and implementation of an ambitious and coherent curriculum for Sociology and Politics.
- Ensure that curriculum planning provides appropriate progression, depth and challenge.
- Maintain high standards of subject knowledge and ensure that curriculum content reflects current examination specifications and developments within the disciplines.
- Ensure that schemes of learning, assessment plans and departmental resources are regularly reviewed and updated.
- Promote opportunities for wider academic engagement, including debate, discussion, independent research and enrichment.
- Ensure that curriculum provision reflects the school's commitment to inclusive excellence.

5. Staff Development and Professional Learning

- Lead, motivate and develop colleagues within both departments.
- Establish a collaborative culture in which staff share effective practice and take collective responsibility for student outcomes.
- Identify professional development priorities and support colleagues in developing their subject knowledge and classroom practice.
- Contribute to the professional development and performance management processes in accordance with school procedures.
- Support the induction and development of new colleagues.
- Promote reflective practice and a commitment to continuous professional improvement.

6. Assessment, Monitoring and Quality Assurance

- Ensure that assessment is rigorous, consistent and effectively informs teaching and learning.
- Monitor the quality and consistency of marking, feedback and assessment across both departments.
- Ensure that student progress is regularly reviewed and appropriate action taken where necessary.

- Lead departmental analysis of GCSE and A Level outcomes, identifying patterns and priorities for improvement.
- Maintain accurate departmental records and provide information required by senior leaders.
- Prepare departmental reports and contribute to relevant school self-evaluation and development planning activities.

7. Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development

- Establish and maintain high standards of behaviour, conduct and engagement within lessons.
- Promote positive relationships and a culture of mutual respect.
- Ensure that students demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning and take responsibility for their academic progress.
- Support the school's wider commitment to student personal development and enrichment.
- Promote the importance of Sociology and Politics in developing informed, thoughtful and responsible young people.

8. Wider School Responsibilities

- Work collaboratively with other middle leaders and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Contribute to the implementation and evaluation of the School Development Plan.
- Support the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Uphold school policies, procedures and expectations consistently.
- Participate in appropriate school events, meetings and professional development.
- Act as a positive ambassador for Oakwood Park Grammar School.

Personal Qualities and Professional Attributes

- A commitment to the highest standards of teaching, learning and student achievement.
- Strong subject knowledge in Sociology and/or Politics.
- The ability to lead and motivate colleagues and secure collective commitment to improvement.
- High expectations of themselves, colleagues and students.
- The ability to analyse performance information and translate findings into effective action.
- Excellent communication, organisational and interpersonal skills.
- A commitment to professional learning and continuous improvement.
- A positive, collaborative and solution-focused approach.
- A strong commitment to inclusion, safeguarding and the wider development of young people.
- A commitment to the ethos and values of Oakwood Park Grammar School: Strive and Serve.

Safeguarding

Oakwood Park Grammar School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All appointments are subject to appropriate safeguarding checks, including an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with statutory requirements and the school's safer recruitment procedures.

General

This job description is not exhaustive. The postholder will be expected to undertake other reasonable duties commensurate with the level of responsibility of the post, as directed by the Headteacher or an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.