



Ancora House School

Head Teacher

Candidate Information Pack

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Welcome from the Chair

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Head Teacher of Ancora House School.

As Chair of our Management Committee, I am proud to introduce you to the work of our unique school. Ancora House School provides educational support for children and young people aged 11 to 19 who have social, emotional and mental health needs.

Our school is based on two sites, Ancora House Mental Health Unit in Chester supports young people between the ages of 13 and 18 years old who are experiencing acute mental health problems, the site is a regional in-patient unit.

Our other site is a community provision in Frodsham, this element of the school supports young people who are unable to attend school because of their medical needs. The provision also offers places to children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan for social, emotional and mental health needs.

We provide personalised learning and support for pupils so that, despite the challenges they face, they are enabled to make progress in their learning and emotional well-being. As far as we can, we aim to be an ordinary school for exceptional children and young people in extraordinary circumstances.

Although our pupils are unwell, through highly personalised nurture and support, we represent normality and predictability for them when in crisis. As such, we have the highest expectations of our pupils, their attendance, engagement and continued commitment to their education. We know that the majority of our children and young people will leave us to re-join their 'home' school or go on to the next phase of their learning; some are with us a few days, some weeks and some for a number of months. It is therefore vital that we assess pupils' learning needs quickly and accurately, in order to ensure that we make a tangible and positive difference to their learning experience in their short time with us.

For all of our pupils, those on dual roll and single roll, our approach is to enable them to regain their self-confidence and self-esteem, and to offer them opportunities to build resilience so that they may experience success in their chosen educational or vocational destination. We believe in our pupils. We believe they can achieve, find joy and purpose in their lives and overcome many of the challenges they face.

The successful candidate will be energetic, excited and ambitious for our pupils and our school. You are passionate about education and inclusion; you will have proven leadership experience working with vulnerable pupils with mental health needs and/or SEND. With highly developed interpersonal skills, you will work in partnership with all our stakeholders, including parents, governors, the Hospital Trust and the Local Authority. Ancora House School has a key role in developing a clear and coherent approach to the provision and funding of educational support to children and young people who have complex presentations associated with social, emotional and mental health challenges.



As our Head Teacher, you will lead our school with vision and confidence on the next phase of our journey, upholding our values and putting pupils – current and future - first in all you do. You will be an ambassador for the school, supporting the governors' vision to find innovative ways to extend the reach of our work. As well as supporting our children and young people in their educational endeavour we hope to empower them and their families to help challenge the stigma, silence and prejudice that exists toward mental illness- we know this to be as great a hurdle to success as illness itself.

I hope you are inspired by what you read in this information pack to take on this exceptionally rewarding challenge. I look forward to hearing from you and receiving your application.

Chair of the Management Committee

Helen Nowakowska



Our Vision

‘Building Resilience for Future Success’

Our vision forms the bedrock on which we build each learner’s individualised curriculum; PHSE provides the framework for establishing wellbeing to prepare for and scaffold progress and learning. Our teaching and learning is aligned to the different stages of recovery young people are in. Our aim is to promote the joy of learning; excite, energise and re-engage learners who are experiencing significant personal challenge. The strength and complexities of what we do is the personalisation of individual curriculum.

Our Values

Our school operates as a strength-based service, our values are anchored in the belief that young people, their circle of support and communities, have their own expertise and strengths, they are resourceful and have the capacity to develop their own solutions with appropriate support. We value and celebrate diversity in a learning environment where safety and wellbeing are paramount.

Quality of Education: Our Curriculum Intent is to provide a curriculum that provides all learners despite their challenges, access to core transferrable behaviours, skills and knowledge, that scaffolds their return to school or college.

Leadership and Management: As a workforce, all contributions are valued and recognised; staff feel in control, valued, motivated and supported.

Personal Development: We work collaboratively to enable young people, families in our community to reach their potential of being capable, resourceful and empowered.

Behaviour and Attitudes: Through our person-centered approach we promote prevention, engagement and support towards **sustainable** well-being, not just a response to a single event or intervention.



Contextual Information

Ancora House School hospital site supports learners across the sub region of the North West and sometime beyond, the demographic is wide ranging.

Ancora House School community site supports learners from Cheshire West and Chester, with some learners travelling in from foster placements and care settings beyond the Council's boundaries.

Our pupils have a complex range of needs that affect their learning and often their ability to access their education and communities safely and successfully.

The essence of our school is that each pupil's individual needs are accurately assessed to inform individualised learning programmes. Within the context of both of the school sites, teaching and learning groups and lessons, each pupil's needs are specifically planned for and met so that they can make the maximum progress possible. The length of time that pupils are with us is determined by the hospital for in-patients, and by a review panel for Medical Needs pupils. Pupils with an EHCP place attend with us on single roll subject to Annual Review.

At the time of admission or referral many pupils' attendance and engagement with education is extremely low. We specialise in re-engaging those young people and by the time of discharge or transition, engagement in education has risen substantially. Intensive transition support is offered to maximise their successful return to education, employment or training on discharge.

As a Specialist Alternative Provision, the pupil population fluctuates dramatically both in numbers and mobility, with a much higher than average pupil mobility.

At Ancora House School community site, the pupil age range is 11 – 19 years, whereas at the Adolescent Mental Health Unit the age range is 13 to 18 years old. Currently young people cannot remain at the unit beyond their 18th birthday, at which time they are transferred to adult services.

Pupils have a wide range of abilities across all ages. Analysis of our baseline data shows that we have pupils with a far wider range of skills on intake than would be found in the general school-age population. Many of the pupils are confronted by considerable barriers to learning and before admission to our school a significant proportion had low attendance at their home school.

At the Adolescent Mental Health Unit, pupil numbers vary on a daily basis. Pupils may be admitted for as little as a few days or atypically for over a year. By the nature of the challenges faced by our pupils, admissions are often of an emergency nature with the school knowing nothing more than a pupil's name on arrival. The SEND Assistant and the Transition Team work to rapidly secure the important information around baseline, presenting problems and other barriers that the pupil may be facing, this is disseminated to the team to ensure effective and appropriate planning.



Locations:

Ancora House School Community Site

Castle House

Frodsham Castle Park

Chester Road

Frodsham

WA6 6SB

Telephone: 01244 506670

admin@ancora.cheshire.sch.uk

Ancora House School

Ancora House Adolescent Mental Health Unit

Countess of Chester Health Park

Liverpool Road

Chester

CH2 1BQ

Tel: 01244 397598

admin@ancora.cheshire.sch.uk

Person specification: Headteacher

Criteria	Qualities	Essential	Desirable	Evidence
Qualifications and training	A good honours degree.	X		Application
	Qualified teacher status	X		
	National professional qualification for headship (NPQH)		X	
	Safeguarding: Designated Person Training		X	
Experience	Demonstrable experience of successful senior leadership and management in a school	X		Application/Interview
	Substantial successful teaching experience	X		
	Knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in secondary schools and or alternative provision	X		
	Successful experience of leading teams across more than one site		X	
	Ability to plan strategically and operationally with the Senior Leadership Team, allocate resources effectively and evaluate impact	X		
	Understanding of what constitutes quality in educational provision for children and young people with mental health needs and/or SEND in a specialist setting	X		
	Significant experience of work with other agencies such as social care and health services	X		
	Demonstrable experience of implementing successful strategies for planning,	X		

Criteria	Qualities	Essential	Desirable	Evidence
	<p>implementing, monitoring and evaluating school improvement</p> <p>Experience of working with external partners eg alternative education provider, local authority, health professionals</p>	X		
Skills and knowledge	<p>Data analysis skills, and the ability to use data to set targets and identify weaknesses</p> <p>Understanding of high-quality teaching based on evidence, and the ability to model this for others and support others to improve</p> <p>Understanding of school finances and financial management with understanding how to use finance to drive improvement</p> <p>Effective communication and interpersonal skills</p> <p>Ability to communicate a vision and inspire others</p> <p>Ability to build effective working relationships through collaborative leadership</p> <p>Ability to advise the governors on the future strategic direction of the school</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of statutory requirements and experience of Child Protection, Safer Recruitment, Safeguarding procedures and Prevent</p> <p>Knowledge of the key legal issues relating to leadership of a school including: equal</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>		Application/Interview

Criteria	Qualities	Essential	Desirable	Evidence
	<p>opportunities, disability, race relations, employment, health and safety and public relations</p> <p>Sound understanding and experience of trauma informed practice and working alongside children, young people and families who have ACEs</p>	X		
Students and Staff	<p>Provide inspirational leadership which challenges, motivates and empowers young people, staff and parents</p> <p>Successful experience of curriculum development and assessment to maximise young peoples' educational outcomes and provide a personalised curriculum</p> <p>Appreciate the importance of staff wellbeing</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>		Application/Interview
Accountability	<p>Experience and evidence of highly developed skills of robust appraisal and performance management of direct staff and systems for all staff, recognising high performance and tackling underperformance to resolution</p> <p>Experience of effective strategic financial and resource management to achieve educational priorities and ensure efficiency and value for money</p> <p>Able to understand the role of governance and work co-operatively with governors</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>		Application
Personal qualities	Ability to embrace the core concept of 'personalised	X		Application/Interview

Criteria	Qualities	Essential	Desirable	Evidence
	learning' for all young people and the School's core values			
	A commitment to uphold the 7 principles of public life (the Nolan principles) at all times	X		
	Ability to be an outward facing leader, when appropriate, determined with sound judgement and strong negotiation/advocacy skills	X		
	Able to relate empathetically to and maintain empathetic relationships with parent/carers, pupils, staff, governors, hospital staff and the wider community	X		
	Approachable with outstanding communication and interpersonal skills across all media and a range of audiences	X		
	Have stamina, resilience, tenacity; remains positive and enthusiastic whilst working under pressure	X		
	Have a passion for working with young people with mental health needs, SEND and medical needs	X		
	Have a commitment to personal and professional development for all	X		
	A commitment to getting the best outcomes for all pupils and promoting the ethos and values of the school	X		
	A commitment to safeguarding and equality. A commitment always to act in the best interests of the pupils	X		



Job Description

Job Title: Headteacher

Salary: L18 – L24

Contract type: Full-time permanent

Reporting to: The governing body known as the Management Committee

Responsible for: Immediately line-managing the Senior Leadership Team: currently two deputy headteachers; an assistant headteacher; and the School Business Manager; monitoring teaching and support staff; liaising with the hospital trust, ward staff and the Local Authority Inclusion and Education Team.

Main purpose

The Headteacher will:

- Establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction together with the governing board
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies so the school can operate effectively
- Identify problems and barriers to school effectiveness, and develop strategies for school improvement that are realistic, timely and suited to the school's context
- Ensure these school improvement strategies are effectively implemented
- Monitor and drive progress towards achieving the school's aims and objectives
- Allocate financial resources appropriately, efficiently and effectively
- Work with other hospital schools and the National Association for Hospital Education in promoting the interests of their pupils and organisations
- Work with the hospitals, the pupils' home schools, local authorities and the multi-disciplinary teams, both within the hospital and beyond them
- Monitor and respond to external change pro-actively, at a national, regional and local level, where needed.

Qualities

The Headteacher will:

- Uphold public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics, behaviour and professional conduct
- Build positive and respectful relationships across the school community and beyond

- Serve in the best interests of the school's pupils
- Remain calm, respectful and supportive at all times
- Be committed to keeping all pupils safe.

Duties and responsibilities

School culture and behaviour

The Headteacher will:

- Create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- Uphold educational standards in order to support pupils from all backgrounds to return to their home schools; move to new ones where necessary, or to train and enter employment
- Ensure a culture of staff professionalism and continual professional development
- Facilitate high standards of behaviour from pupils, built on setting clear and achievable expectations whilst understanding and developing individual needs and capabilities. Model this to staff and to pupils whose needs are varied and changeable. Ensure such standards are demonstrated by all adults in school.
- Manage risk safely through systems that maximise pupil success and minimise any potential for harm
- Use consistent and fair approaches to managing behaviour, in line with the school's Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Demonstrate kindness and responsiveness alongside having attainable expectations for all pupils.

Teaching, curriculum and assessment

The Headteacher will:

- Establish and sustain high-quality teaching across all subjects and phases, based on evidence
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by expertise in subjects
- Use formative assessment effectively to inform planning for progress
- Ensure the teaching of a broad, structured and coherent curriculum that is pupil-centred and reflects their age, stage, aspirations and current functioning
- Ensure that teachers' subject expertise mirrors a diverse curriculum, meeting the needs of pupils

- Use valid, reliable and proportionate approaches to assessing pupils' knowledge and attainment levels and use this information to guide teaching where no other attainment information about the pupil is available.

Additional and special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities

The Headteacher will:

- Promote a culture and practices that enables all pupils to access their curriculum
- Have ambitious expectations for all pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities
- Make sure the school works effectively with parents, carers and professionals to identify additional needs and provide support and adaptation where appropriate
- Ensure the school fulfils statutory duties regarding the current SEND Code of Practice.
- Share professional knowledge gained on what works for each pupil with those involved, within the school and beyond.

Managing the school

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure pupils', often complex, safety and welfare needs are met through effective approaches to safeguarding, as core to the school's ethos
- Ensure staff safety and welfare needs are met as core to the school's ethos
- Manage staff well with due attention to workload
- Ensure rigorous, consistent and continuous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk
- Work with the clinical team whilst respecting their different professional and organisational boundaries and objectives.

Professional development

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure staff have access to appropriate, high standard professional development opportunities that complement the school and pupils' needs
- Keep up to date with developments in education
- Seek training and continuing professional development to meet needs.



Governance, accountability and working in partnership

The Headteacher will:

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, including accepting responsibility
- Ensure that staff understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties
- Be approachable, understanding and committed to the welfare of pupils and staff
- Work successfully with other schools and organisations, especially the hospital trust
- Maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues to promote educational outcomes for all pupils.

Other areas of responsibility

Ensure that the Headteachers' Standards are met.

Please note that this is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the headteacher will carry out. The postholder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role.