



Expanse Learning Wigan School

HEADTEACHER RECRUITMENT PACK

2026-27 Academic Year



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A WORD FROM OUR CURRENT HEADTEACHER



“As the retiring headteacher of Expanse Learning Wigan School, I would like to share my experiences of the role with you. The last 6 years have been the most fulfilling of my professional life. During this time, the size of the school has trebled; the resources and facilities are first-class, and we are acknowledged as an integral part of the special educational landscape.

All of this has not been achieved in isolation, I have an excellent and dedicated staff team who support all our wonderful students. On a personal level, I am supported by a totally committed Board of Directors and Governors and I’m sure my successor will be given the same opportunities to continue to drive the school forward.”

“Good luck with your application.”

**Ed Hanley, Headteacher,
Expanse Learning Wigan School**



WELCOME FROM OUR CEO, DIRECTORS & CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

“Thank you for expressing an interest in the position of Headteacher at Expanse Learning Wigan School.”

We are now recruiting for an outstanding and enthusiastic Headteacher to lead our School Community on to the next chapter of its success story.

Mr. Hanley has been our inspiring, caring and supportive Headteacher for the last four years and has led the school through many changes including our last full Ofsted inspection, significant growth in the numbers of staff and students, significant improvements and developments to the school site and the establishment of a fantastic reputation amongst parents, funders and other mainstream or specialist schools across the North West as a leading Independent Special School.


“Mr. Hanley is retiring at the end of the Summer Term 2026 and will be greatly missed.”

This recruitment pack will outline what we are looking for in our new Headteacher and give prospective applicants a good understanding of our school, its aims, ethos, strengths and challenges.

ELWS is in very good shape, you will find a well-run, well-established thriving Independent Special School with a ‘Good’ with ‘Outstanding’ features Ofsted rating (June 2025). You will have the opportunity to lead a school that has an open, friendly culture that is nurturing to students, has supportive parents and engages with the wider community.

Governors and staff are committed to supporting professional development and improvements. We aspire for our school to continually improve, and be better, day by day.





“We see the recruitment of a new Headteacher as a fantastic opportunity to enrich the school and take it in new, exciting directions on our journey to Outstanding.”

We are seeking to appoint a Headteacher to lead ELWS. The successful candidate will be passionate about reducing inequalities in education, special educational needs and secondary education. They will be an outstanding, inspirational senior leader, they will motivate, challenge and empower our school team, they will be an outstanding classroom practitioner, they will display the highest levels of integrity and uphold the highest level of commitment to quality, policy, procedure and safeguarding.

We very much encourage you to visit us, we will be happy to show you around.

Please contact **richard.king@expansigroup.co.uk** to make an appointment or to hold an informal conversation about the role. Please ensure you leave your name and contact details.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this opportunity visit:

[www.expanselarning.co.uk/job opportunities](http://www.expanselarning.co.uk/job-opportunities) or at www.TES.com/jobs

“We look forward to meeting you and wish you well through this process.”

Please visit www.expanselarning.co.uk for more information about our school and Expanse Learning Group in general.





ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Expansive Learning Wigan School (ELWS) opened in September 2018. We are a designated as an Independent Specialist Secondary School that is Section 41 approved.

We are located on Tyrer Avenue in Worsley Mesnes, Wigan, Greater Manchester. Since opening, our school has grown from a handful of students and staff to a roll profile of 90 students and 40 contributing staff.

We are a school for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. All students have an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP).

Typically, our cohorts are approximately 75% male and 25% female year on year. In terms of need, our current cohort is 57% ASD, 19% ADHD and 19% 'Other'. Our students also fall under the categories of Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) and Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH).

Our site is purpose built as a school. Since opening we have continually and purposefully developed the facilities available for students including internal adaptations to create more teaching & learning spaces, astro turf pitch, soft play area, walking/bike track, nature pond, sensory rooms, polytunnel and teaching equipment.

Other significant developments include the opening of our Vocational Centre for the delivery of Design Technology and Construction and the creation of our Therapy Centre where students benefit from access to Arts and Play therapeutic interventions. At the commencement of the 24-25 academic year, we opened our Forest School site at Dean House Farm in Skelmersdale for our KS3 children and we



launched our outreach teaching service for those children with EBSA.

Mainly, our students come from the borough of Wigan via the local authority, with whom, we enjoy a very positive relationship. We hold an excellent reputation amongst parents and wider stakeholders across the borough and beyond. Places at our school are almost always full, across all year groups. Our Year 7 intake for the 25-26 academic year is proving to be very popular with parents.

Students follow qualifications in a range of GCSE subjects; we are actively expanding this offer on an annual basis. For students who cannot follow a GCSE pathway, Functional Skills are available. Alongside this, students can follow extensive options related to vocational qualifications either through our internal delivery or through one of our alternative provision partners.

Our curriculum is built around four different pathways of Nurture, Explore, Inspire and Engage and our ethos dictates that our students are central to all that we do. ELWS believes that everyone, regardless of their current situation and starting point can achieve and make progress towards their goals and aspirations with the right package of education and care provision.

It is our aim to provide a safe and happy environment in which all students can develop not just academically but personally, physically, socially and spiritually alongside providing access to a range of entitlement, enrichment and extra-curricular activities.

You can see the performance of our school on our website including student outcomes and destinations.

Our awarding bodies include NOCN, Pearson, AQA, OCR and WJEC.

Our school holds several accreditations and affiliations, including ELKLAN Communication, ADHD Friendly, Restraint Reduction Network, Disability Confident Committed, Nurture UK, 260 Safe, DoE, and the PSHE Association. We are currently working towards the National Autism Accreditation.

We employ an extensive staff structure to support the Headteacher and Governors to fulfil all the aims of the school. Including Assistant Headteachers to take direct responsibility for the EIF dimensions of Behaviour & Attitudes, Personal Development and the Quality of Education. The school has a high number of support staff, teaching assistants, cover supervisor, a dedicated pastoral team, therapists, lunch time supervisors and our shared services team will support you with all aspects of wider business such as human resources and health, safety & welfare for example.

We are currently rated 'Good' for overall effectiveness by Ofsted, (June 2025). You can find our Ofsted reports here: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/27/145289>

Thank you for reading this section.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Expanse Learning Wigan School (ELWS) opened in September 2018. We are a designated as an Independent Specialist Secondary School that is Section 41 approved

Job Title: Headteacher

Contract Type: Full Time. Permanent, subject to successful probation period

School Type: Independent Special School (Section 41 Approved)

Reporting to: Board of Governors and Governors Advisory Body

Responsible for: All staff, students and stakeholders that encompass the school community

Core Purpose

The Headteacher is accountable to the Board of Governors and the Governing Advisory Body for ensuring the educational success of the school within the framework of Expanse Learning's strategic plans, values, operating principles, policies and procedures.

The Headteacher will provide professional leadership and management to the school and must maintain a culture that promotes excellence, equality and high expectations for all students.

Expanse Learning is an independent school. As such, we are required by law to meet the standards as set out in Section 162(A) of the Education Act 2002. Suitable candidates for this role are expected to adhere to and meet these standards on a consistent basis. Knowledge and experience of working to the standards in a school setting is desirable and advantageous to applicants.

Responsibilities

To be accountable to the Board of Governors and the Governing Advisory Body for:

- The effective implementation and embedding of the agreed school vision, principles and policies within the school
- Providing leadership & management across all aspects of the school and across all dimensions of the Education Inspection Framework (EIF)
- Creating a culture of constant improvement and being an inspirational leader, committed to the highest achievement for all, in all areas of the school's work
- The Headteacher will have line management responsibilities for the Assistant Headteachers, Pastoral Manager and School Business Manager at the school.
- Promote excellence in teaching and learning, continuously raise standards, and improve the quality of teaching. Ensuring a continuous and consistent focus on students' achievement and development including the quality of education, personal development and behaviour & attitudes.
- Ensuring that a high-quality educational experience is available for all students.
- Ensure that all children make good progress including where there are barriers to learning,



- Ensure effective and appropriate pastoral support is available to students in the school.
- Identify and act on areas of improvement in relation to the curriculum, teaching & learning, assessment and delivery using an established quality cycle.
- Keep informed of curriculum developments to ensure that the curriculum is rich, relevant and inspirational and contributes to outstanding educational and whole-person outcomes
- Develop an inclusive and supportive approach so that the school is a place where all young people and the wider school community feel welcome.
- Ensure that the allocation and use of accommodation within the school provides a positive learning environment that promotes the highest achievement for all
- Work with the Board of Governors and the Governing Advisory Body to maximise the level of external funding that is attracted to support the school's development and support the stated group to support all elements of Governance.
- Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents and carers to support and improve student achievement and personal development.

Developing Self and Working with Others

- Treat all school stakeholders fairly and equitably.
- Develop a culture of personal responsibility that recognises both excellence and supports appropriate strategies to deal with under-performance.
- Ensure a high standard of professional development for all staff and for self, including attending and completing all mandatory training events.
- Work with the school SLT to recruit and retain staff of the highest quality, in line with safer recruitment procedures
- Work with school SLT to deploy all staff effectively to improve the quality of education provided.
- Manage and organise the school environment efficiently and effectively to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum, safeguarding and HSW regulations.
- Work with the Governing Body and Advisory Board to enable them to meet their responsibilities in relation to school governance.
- Ensure that individual staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed and are subject to rigorous review and evaluation.
- To uphold the school ethos to allow all staff to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success and accept responsibility for outcomes and actions,
- Develop and present a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences including governors, funders, regulatory bodies and wider stakeholders as appropriate.
- Reflect on personal contribution to school achievements and take account of feedback from others

Securing Accountability



Strategic Leadership

- Work with the Board of Governors and Governor's Advisory Body to enhance and maintain the shared vision and strategic plan for our school, ensuring it is responsive to the community it serves.
- At the core of this should be the educational and personal development of the students.
- Work within the school community to translate the vision into agreed objectives and an operational plan, which will drive forward and sustain school improvement.
- Ensure the sustained raising of aspiration, achievement and attainment.
- Ensure the school achieves its performance targets.
- Demonstrate the vision and values of the school and Expanse Group in everyday work and practice.
- Motivate and work with others to create a shared culture and positive climate.
- Promote the school effectively, maintain and develop effective and productive relationships with a wide range of stakeholders.
- Lead the design, implementation, and continuous improvement of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure the curriculum is inclusive, caters to diverse student needs, and aligns with national educational standards.
- Promote the integration of new teaching methods and technology into the curriculum.
- Use data-driven approaches to monitor student progress and attainment across all key stages.
- Identify and address gaps in student performance, ensuring intervention strategies are effective.
- Provide instructional leadership and coaching to enhance teacher performance.
- Identify professional development needs and organise targeted training programs.
- Promote collaborative learning among staff to share best practices.
- Utilise our processes for assessing and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.
- Oversee the implementation of assessment frameworks that inform planning and improve outcomes.
- Ensure compliance with regulatory and inspection requirements.
- Stay informed of current trends and research in education to ensure practices remain cutting-edge.
- Lead initiatives to integrate innovative teaching practices into the school's ethos.
- Encourage reflective practice and a commitment to continuous improvement among teaching staff.
- Ensure effective deployment of resources to support curriculum delivery and teaching excellence.

Leading Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- Develop and implement a clear vision and strategic plan for high-quality teaching and learning.
- Set high expectations for curriculum delivery, student progress, and achievement.
- Monitor and evaluate teaching standards to ensure consistency and excellence across the school.



- Advocate for necessary investments in teaching tools, materials, and staff development.
- Monitor the impact of resource utilisation on student outcomes

Equal Opportunities

- Take responsibility, appropriate to the post, for tackling unlawful discrimination amongst all groups in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensure that our school meets the requirement for independent schools to have an accessibility policy and plan in place that is reviewed regularly and is fit for purpose.

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment

- Have due regard for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and to follow all associated child protection and safeguarding policies as prescribed by Expanse Learning.
- Ensure that all policies and procedures adopted by the school are fully implemented and followed by all staff
- Play an active role as part of the safeguarding team and fulfil all associated duties as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Ensure that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the designated person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children, and

such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing practices.

Health, Safety & Welfare

- Work in compliance with the schools Health and Safety policies and under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), ensuring the safety of all parties with whom contact is made, such as members of the public, in premises or sites controlled by the school.
- Ensure compliance with procedures is always observed under the provision of safe systems of work through a safe and healthy environment and including such information, training, instruction and supervision as necessary to accomplish those goals.

Data Protection

- To ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act (2018) and the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

Additional Information

- Expanse Learning are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This post is subject to an Enhanced DBS with a Children's Barred List Check and two satisfactory references. The duties outlined in the Job Description may be varied to meet the changing demands of the school at the reasonable direction of the Board of Governors. This job description does not form part of the contract of employment.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

STATUTORY	Essential	Desirable
Right to work in the UK	●	
Enhanced DBS clearance and suitability to work with children, including section 128 checks.	●	
Knowledge & Understanding of the standards contained in Section 162(A) of the Education Act 2002		●
QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Essential	Desirable
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	●	
National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) or willingness to undertake.		●
Evidence of significant and relevant continued professional development, particularly in the areas of SEND and inclusive education.	●	
Additional qualifications or training related to SEND, autism, or specific learning difficulties.		●
EXPERIENCE	Essential	Desirable
Proven track record of successful middle/senior leadership within a school, preferably in a special school setting.	●	
Experience of leading and improving teaching, learning, and assessment, particularly for students with diverse and complex needs.	●	
Demonstrable experience in curriculum design tailored to the needs of SEND learners.	●	
Experience of managing safeguarding procedures and ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.	●	
Proven ability to lead staff development, including coaching and mentoring to build high-performing teams.	●	
Experience of working collaboratively with parents, carers, governors, and multi-agency professionals.	●	
Evidence of successful management of budgets and resources to ensure the best outcomes for students.		●
KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING	Essential	Desirable
In-depth understanding of SEND and the legislative and statutory frameworks governing special education, including the Annual Review process.	●	
Strong understanding of effective teaching and learning strategies for students with SEND.	●	



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Familiarity with assessment frameworks and progress measures suitable for students with complex needs.	●	
Knowledge of current developments in education policy, particularly relating to SEND and inclusion.	●	
Understanding of how to develop and sustain a positive, inclusive, and aspirational school culture.	●	
SKILLS & ABILITIES	Essential	Desirable
Strong strategic leadership skills with the ability to articulate and implement a clear vision for the school.	●	
Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills to inspire and motivate students, staff, and stakeholders.	●	
Analytical and data-driven decision-making abilities to monitor and improve pupil outcomes.	●	
Capacity to innovate and adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining focus on priorities.		●
Competence in managing complex situations and resolving conflicts effectively.		●
Ability to foster partnerships with external agencies to support pupil development and well-being.		●
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	Essential	Desirable
Passionate advocate for inclusive education and the rights of children with SEND.		●
High levels of emotional intelligence, empathy, and resilience.	●	
Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students.	●	
Visionary and inspirational leader who leads by example and fosters a culture of trust and collaboration.	●	
Strong moral purpose and integrity, ensuring accountability and fairness.	●	
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable
Commitment to ongoing professional development for self and staff.	●	
Willingness to engage in the life of the school beyond day-to-day leadership duties and contractual hours.	●	
A dedication to working closely with families and the wider school community.	●	



BENEFITS OF WORKING AT EXPANSE

At Expanse Learning, we believe in creating a supportive, rewarding, and fulfilling work environment for all our team members.

We offer an incredible range of benefits designed to enhance both personal and professional well-being. From private medical healthcare and employee assistance programs to dedicated wellbeing days, we prioritise the health and happiness of our staff.

Our attractive pay scales, enhanced sick pay, and pension sacrifice schemes provide financial stability, while welfare meetings

and well-being days ensure every individual feels valued and supported.

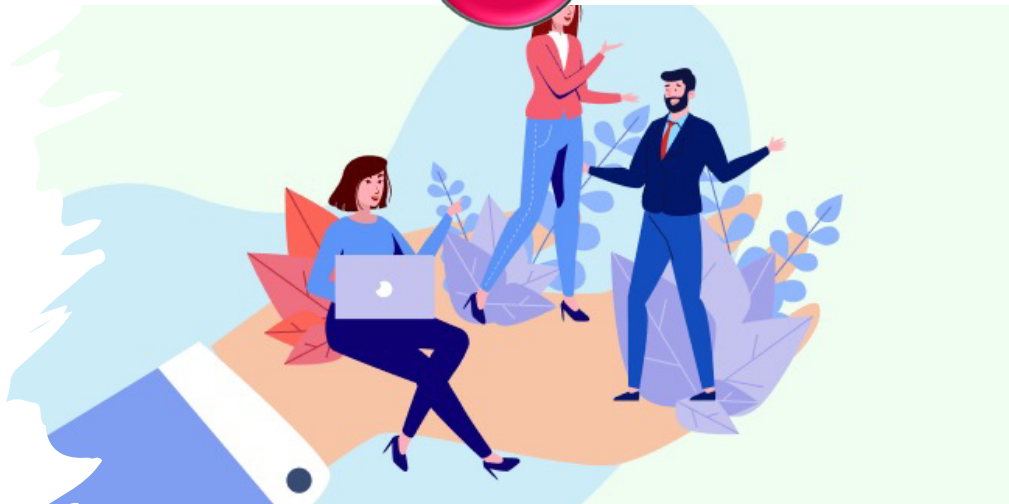
With free parking, exceptional training and development opportunities, and a commitment to fostering career growth, we go above and beyond to invest in our employees. At Expanse Learning, we don't just offer benefits—we create a community where everyone can thrive.

OUR VALUES **MATTER**

- Accountability & Ownership
- Teamwork & Togetherness
- Organised & Efficient
- Innovation & Courage
- Open & Honest



WELLBEING





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