

Headteacher Candidate Pack



Hawthorn Academy

Start date: April 2025 (can be subject to negotiation)

Welcome



Dear Prospective Candidate,

Many thanks for your interest in the role of Headteacher at Hawthorn Academy.

We are seeking a new Headteacher who is committed to providing the best possible education and life opportunities for all our pupils. If you are an experienced leader with a passion for improving the life chances of pupils with SEND, have a drive, vision, and relentless pursuit of excellence, then Hawthorn Academy is for you.

Hawthorn Academy is a new SEMH secondary school based in Bracknell Forest due to open in September 2025, providing specialist education for children aged 11 — 16 years with social, emotional, and mental health needs (SEMH). The school will open with 10 places, growing to 50. The school will be sited at the College Hall campus in year 1, moving to a purpose-built school during year 2.

The school is part of The Propeller Academy Trust, a special school MAT comprising currently of 3 schools based in South Oxfordshire: Fitzwaryn, Kingfisher and Bishopswood. The Trust is due to welcome Woodeaton Manor School (an SEMH provision in Oxford) in June '25 and Forest View School in Bracknell (estimated opening Sept '27) following a successful free school application.

The Trust has a successful outreach programme and supports over 70 local mainstream schools with outstanding feedback and outcomes. Propeller works closely with Oxfordshire County Council, collaborating on many projects. Propeller is proud of its educational performance. Its curriculum is personalised and focuses on the destinations and long-term aspirations of its pupils and their families, linking directly with their communities including pupils moving directly into employment.

The new Headteacher at Hawthorn Academy will arrive at a very exciting time. As well as having the opportunity to shape and develop their own team, with support from the newly formed governing body, CEO and Executive Leadership Team, the Headteacher will have responsibility for the leadership, organisation, and management of the school.

In addition, we offer.

- Excellent professional support
- A highly effective central team
- Competitive pay
- Access to Teachers Pension (TPS) with enhanced benefits for members i.e., life insurance
- Refer a friend bonus (up to £500)
- Maternity, paternity, adoption, and shared parental leave entitlement
- Free occupational health support
- Free eye test for DSE users
- Free flu vaccinations
- Wellbeing days (3 per year, pro rata for part time staff)
- Free tea and coffee
- A welcoming and supportive school with a friendly team of staff and governors
- Full training and ongoing support

For further details and to apply, please visit <https://thepropelleracademytrust.face-ed.co.uk/vacancies>. If you would like more information, please contact Clare Offill at clare.offill@propellertrust.org to arrange a discussion with Tom Pegler, CEO of The Propeller Academy Trust.

Applications will be considered upon receipt and interviews arranged accordingly. Please note that CVs will not be accepted.

Tom Pegler

CEO, The Propeller Academy Trust



The Propeller Academy Trust

Our Values

The Propeller Academy Trust supports young people with special needs. It's a special place where every pupil moves forward on their own trajectory. We never stand still!

Our Headteachers create enriched curriculums which enable our young people to move through society with academic achievements, life experiences and emotional, communication & sensory skills.

The Trust is the enabler for creating opportunities, working with Headteachers to deliver what our next generation of pupils need.

Every young person has a personalised journey everyone is different!

Our schools have their own identity and values. However, we come together with a shared vision, mutual respect, and amazing resources. In return we are a collective team of passionate staff, who believe anything is possible!

Our Schools

Kingfisher and Fitzwaryn Schools are both Special Needs Schools based in South Oxfordshire, who joined together in 2013 to form The Propeller Academy Trust. In 2024, Kingfisher was again graded a good school, and in 2022 Fitzwaryn was again graded Outstanding. Bishopswood School joined the Trust in January 2023.

The Trust is due to welcome Woodeaton Manor School (an SEMH provision in Oxford) in June '25 and Forest View School in Bracknell (estimated opening Sept '27) following a successful free school application.



JOB DESCRIPTION



HEADTEACHER Hawthorn Academy

Title: Headteacher
Leadership scale: L22 — L27
Start Date: April 2025 (can be subject to negotiation)
Location: Wokingham, RG40 3BT (year 1), Bracknell, RG42 3SS (year 2 onwards)

Job Overview

With support from the Governing Body, CEO and Executive Leadership Team, the Headteacher (HT) will have professional responsibility for the educational aspects of the school and responsibility for the leadership, organisation, management and conduct of the school.

Main Purpose

The Headteacher will create a culture of constant improvement through inspirational leadership, being committed to the highest achievement for all areas of the school, in order to provide an outstanding education of all pupils.

The Headteacher will manage the day-to-day operations of the school and have a sound grasp of the essentials of running a successful specialist school: teaching and learning; curriculum design and staff development. This requires a hands-on approach. At the same time, the Headteacher will be an outward-facing ambassador, able to communicate effectively with wider stakeholders both inside the Propeller Academy Trust and externally.

The duties outlined, in line with Headteacher and Teacher Standards, are in addition to the ones stated in the latest School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document that you will automatically be required to meet. You may also be required to undertake professional duties delegated by the CEO.

Key Responsibilities

- To ensure a high-quality service is provided to meet the educational and support needs of our pupils.
- To oversee the day-to-day operational running of the school
- To provide effective strategic leadership
- To be the outward facing ambassador for the School and the Propeller Academy Trust
- To ensure the school operates on a sound financial basis.
- To have in place appropriate systems, regulations and processes that align with the Propeller Academy Trust
- To ensure the school meets the essential requirements of relevant inspection and regulatory bodies.
- To develop the school's offer for present and future needs
- To ensure there is effective pupil recruitment to deliver sustainable pupil levels.
- To support the school and implement the Propeller Academy Trust governance and QA framework.
- To work with the Propeller Academy Trust leadership to ensure the school meets the Propeller Academy Trust's strategic objectives.



JOB DESCRIPTION (cont.)



Leadership and Management

The Headteacher to work with The Propeller Academy Trust and their Local Governing Body (LGB) to develop the strategic view of the school and analyse and plan for its future needs and future developments.

The post holder will:

- Create and shape the teaching and learning values and ethos of the school and therefore communicate and drive the direction to ensure outstanding teaching and successful learning for all pupils.
- Drive an outstanding commitment to the continuous professional development of staff and themselves, focusing on improving standards which are linked to individual and school needs through performance management, continuous professional development (CPD), coaching and feedback.
- Ensure full safeguarding compliance and effective and appropriate systems and processes.
- Assume overall responsibility and accountability for Safeguarding and Health & Safety
- Ensure all staff have effective performance management.
- Lead by example, being personally visible and committed to demonstrating The Propeller Academy Trust values.
- Develop and ensure effective implementation of the school's strategic and operational plan via the Self Evaluation Form (SEF)
- Monitor, appraise and report on the performance of the school to the CEO of The Propeller Academy Trust Board and the school's LGB.
- Enable the school's Chair of Governors and the LGB (including Trustees) to execute their role, particularly in relation to statutory compliance.
- Manage and be accountable for the school budget in conjunction with the central finance team and Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- Ensure full compliance with the requirements of funding and regulatory bodies.

Achievements

- Oversee day to day management of the curriculum, pastoral care, safeguarding, and administration of the school, all of which should be appropriate to the pupil's needs
- Ensure appropriate and effective provision for all pupils as outlined in their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)
- Ensure there is a sustainable, attractive, and motivating environment for learning
- Oversee the development of a wide range of teaching and learning opportunities that continue to meet the changing needs of all pupils
- Manage the system for monitoring and developing the quality assurance of teaching and learning wherever it is taking place, providing coaching, and mentoring where necessary
- Ensure all teaching staff have regular management supervision
- Promote the effective management of positive pupil behaviour
- Oversee the effective assessment, recording and reporting system of pupil progress, ensuring there is sufficient rigour and challenge for each pupil
- Oversee the regular monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum to ensure it is pupil centred and is appropriate, engaging and challenging
- Encourage new developments in the curriculum to ensure it is responsive and adaptable to both local and national changes
- Ensure the effective implementation of a behavioural management policy throughout the school.

School Improvement

- Develop and maintain an effective SEF which identifies appropriate priorities and targets for the next academic year.
- Integrate and implement the key priorities of the SEF into an effective, shared school development plan.
- Identify and communicate the long-term objectives for the school to staff and other internal and external stakeholders.
- Monitor the implementation of the development plan, reporting progress to the CEO, LGB and the Board
- Link the development plan to the overall financial plan for the school.

Assessment, Reporting, Recording

- Lead on achieving outstanding pupil success and driving a culture of continuous improvement.
- Monitor, evaluate and review pupil progress through analysis of pupil assessment data and intervention with input and support from staff with designated responsibility
- Report as required on pupil achievement to the CEO, the LGB, the Board and parents and carers.

JOB DESCRIPTION (cont.)



Compliance: Behaviour, Safety and Care of Pupils

- Oversee the Single Central Record (SCR) and ensure it is accurate and up to date.
- Report on safeguarding to the CEO and the LGB
- Ensure safer recruitment standards are compliant.
- Ensure that systems are in place to ensure the needs of Children We Care For (CWCF) are met.
- Work with pupils, teachers, and families to enhance awareness of Safeguarding issues.
- Promote a culture of Health and Safety wherever pupil learning takes place.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant Health and Safety legislation.
- Initiate, review, and publish school policies in all areas and ensure compliance with national guidelines.
- Promote equality of opportunity regardless of gender, social, cultural, linguistic, religious, or ethnic background through a range of activities

Financial Management

- Work in collaboration with the CEO, COO and LGB to secure the most cost-effective funding allocation and to manage these resources both prudently and efficiently.
- Provide as required regular reports to the school's LGB.

Estate: The Learning Environment

- Ensure the school buildings, its grounds, and any learning areas (including off site) are safe, appropriately equipped, and well-maintained.
- Ensure the learning environments are compatible with the vision of the school and provide the highest quality learning opportunity for all our pupils by working with the Central Services and Premises team to make improvements and maintain the facilities to meet the needs of all pupils.

The Community (we serve): Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

- Communicate the vision of the school to parents, stakeholders, and the wider community, both in person and via written and/or electronic media
- Oversee the management of the school website to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the needs of its users.
- Promote and maintain good links with the local community.
- Maintain and promote The Propeller Academy Trust open door policy with parents, carer, and local stakeholders.
- Work strategically with other professional providers to continually review, improve, and develop provision.

Other Duties

Please note that The Propeller Academy Trust is based over a number of sites in and around the area and you may be required to work from different sites, as directed by the CEO.

The post holder may be required to perform duties other than those given in the job description. The duties and responsibilities attached to posts may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and would not themselves justify the re-valuation of a post.

The CEO and LGB retains the right to implement changes to this job description to reflect changes in the demands of the post and this will be done in consultation with the post holder.



Person Specification



KEY CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL/DESIRABLE	
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils	E	D
Enhanced DBS	✓	
Able to model and oversee the Propeller Academy Trust Safeguarding Policy and procedures	✓	
Undertake mandatory Safeguarding training as directed by the Propeller Academy Trust	✓	
Commitment to the Safeguarding of vulnerable young people	✓	
Have experience and understanding of practice and principles for Safeguarding children, young people, or vulnerable adults within an organisation	✓	
Training and Qualifications	E	D
First Degree or equivalent	✓	
DfE recognised Qualified Teacher Status/ Qualified Teacher Learning and skills	✓	
Evidence of participation in recent and Continuing Professional Development	✓	
Evidence of, and impact from, CPD relevant to a senior leadership post	✓	
For a first headship, NPQH or alternative	✓	
Relevant post-graduate qualification		✓
Experience	E	D
Experience of participating in successful validation processes or inspection regimes	✓	
Relevant experience as a Senior Leader	✓	
Evidence of successful use of a range of monitoring and evaluation strategies to raise standards across a school	✓	
An understanding of the importance of evidence-based approaches to school improvement	✓	
Evidence of managing, planning, and organising major curriculum areas and driving innovations in teaching and learning	✓	
Experience of the application of new technologies to teaching, learning and management	✓	
Experience of successfully managing negative and challenging behaviour and helping young people to grow in confidence with a positive vision for the future	✓	

Experience of supporting all aspects of inclusion to successfully meet the needs of pupils with complex special educational needs	✓	
Evidence of working with the statutory framework for education, the SEN Code of Practice, safeguarding, health and safety and related statutory regulations and other current legislation	✓	
Working with and securing the involvement of external partners and the local community in support of the pupils' wider educational experience	✓	
Ability to work collaboratively with and report to Board members on all aspects of management including staff performance, development, and well-being; pupil outcomes and welfare; premises and health and safety; parent and community involvement	✓	
Experience and understanding of Ofsted inspections		✓
Experience of analysing and interpreting assessment data to ensure effective pupil progress, raise standards and achieve outstanding pupil outcomes		✓
Leadership and development of specialist programmes for young people with severe or profound learning difficulties		✓
Ability to work collaboratively with and report to Board members on budgetary responsibilities		✓
Knowledge	E	D
Knowledge of features that constitute an outstanding school	✓	
Wide knowledge of teaching, learning and assessment strategies and a willingness to accept new and/or innovative ideas to promote outstanding learning and pupil progression	✓	
Knowledge of the current and relevant inspection frameworks for special schools	✓	
Knowledge of Teacher Standards and how to apply these to assess teacher performance and promote professional development of others	✓	
Knowledge of development planning and self-evaluation	✓	
An understanding of the characteristics and qualities of a leader that can drive cultural change within an organisation	✓	
An understanding of the range of special needs	✓	
An understanding of the role of different agencies operating within the wider spectrum of Children's Services		✓
Skills and Abilities	E	D
Demonstrates a detailed understanding of what constitutes outstanding teaching and learning combined with the ability to lead and inspire staff to continually improve their own practice	✓	
Communicates effectively and regularly to drive a shared vision and ethos so that it impacts positively on day-to-day practice and pupils' experiences	✓	

Engages parents in supporting pupil's learning	✓	
Understanding of equal opportunities and a commitment to promoting equality for pupils and staff	✓	
The ability to motivate staff, pupils and the wider community and engage their active commitment to the Trust's vision	✓	
Competent in the use of comparative data and performance indicators to establish benchmarks and set targets for improvements		✓
Can articulate the key principles of budget management, financial responsibilities, and reporting procedures		✓
Ability to develop strategies for networking with local businesses, education partners and the wider community		✓
Personal Aptitudes	E	D
Personal and professional resilience in the face of challenging situations	✓	
Strong personal motivation and drive	✓	
Commitment to an open, collaborative style of management	✓	
A good team member and leader with sensitivity and an understanding of when to lead, listen, motivate and delegate	✓	
Commitment to own personal and professional development and that of all staff	✓	
Displays a passion for the most vulnerable and a drive to redress injustice and remove barriers to learning	✓	
A personal commitment to promoting inclusion, diversity, and access	✓	
Excellent communication skills in a variety of media to a range of audiences including pupils, parents/ carers, colleagues, external agencies, and the wider community	✓	
A commitment to the vision, values and aims of the Propeller Academy Trust	✓	
Relentless energy and passion in pursuit of the vision, working collaboratively with colleagues to achieve collective goals		✓
High order analytical and problem-solving skills and the ability to make informed judgements		✓

How to Apply

If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or you wish to have an informal discussion, please contact Tom Pegler, CEO, via Clare Offill at clare.offill@propellertrust.org

A shortlist will be drawn up based only on the completed application and supporting statement. You must explain clearly in your supporting statement why you are applying for the role and how you have been equipped for it by your experience and qualifications. In your concluding section, please also outline how you believe your skills, experience, and educational philosophy have prepared you for the role of Headteacher at Hawthorn Academy.

When providing details of referees, applicants must provide two references. One reference should be from your current employer or, if unemployed, your last employer. The school will contact referees for verification before the interview.

This job description sets out the main duties of the post on the date it was drawn up. However, it is not intended to be an exhaustive or definitive list. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post. You may be required to carry out other duties commensurate with your role.

The Propeller Academy Trust and its member schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people according to child protection and safeguarding guidelines. We expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

This post is classed as having a high degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All post holders are subject to necessary pre-employment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check, including a Child/Adult's Barred List check (where applicable to the role in question). Shortlisted candidates will be subject to online searches for publicly available information.

The Propeller Academy Trust is committed to creating a diverse workforce. We will consider all qualified applicants for employment without regard to sex, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, age, disability, marriage, or civil partnership.



The Propeller Academy Trust
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