



Assistant Principal – Vocational Learning

Job description, 2026

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Job description

Job title	Assistant Principal – Vocational Learning	Team	St John's College
Job band	Band 8	Reporting to	Head of St John's College
Hours	40 hours p/w Annual leave entitlement of 32 days + bank holidays all to be taken outside of term time	Line manages	Supported Internship Lead Follow on Job Coach

Approved by: Executive Head - St Johns College

Updated: February 26

Role purpose

To have overall responsibility for existing Supported Internships and strategic oversight of the development of future supported internships and social enterprises provided by St John's College. It will also include strategic oversight and development of some vocational aspects of the college curriculum such as the development of a pre supported internship offer as well as the leadership and management of relevant current and future staff. This role will require working across multiple geographical locations across the Southeast of England.

The role is part of the College Leadership Team (CLT), ensuring the educational aims and services are delivered effectively and efficiently around the needs of our learners and ensuring our policies, practices and training are all aligned to this, enabling autistic young people to learn and gain the skills needed for a successful transition to adult life.

Demonstrate a continual commitment to the promotion of diversity initiatives and the sharing of best practice in line with Ambitious about Autisms Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and procedures

Key accountabilities and dimensions

- Develop and lead the strategic direction and growth of Supported Internships and Social Enterprises delivered by St John's College.
- Ensure high quality teaching and learning in these programmes.

- Responsibility for the leadership and management of an effective team.
- Responsibility for partnership/stakeholder management and the development of new partnerships as required.
- Budget management related to Supported Internships and Social enterprises.

Supported Internships and Social Enterprises. The post holder is responsible for:

- The strategic management of existing Supported Internships. This will include ensuring that the operational team have everything they need to function effectively.
- Ensuring that there is a high-quality offer in place evidenced by the Supported Internship Quality Assurance Framework (SIQAF).
- Ensuring that all vocational learning programmes meet, or are working towards, the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Key stakeholder/relationship/partnership management. This will include partnership building where required.
- Overall responsibility for the development and oversight of the post internship follow-on support programme.
- Overall responsibility for ensuring that day-to-day H&S and Safeguarding needs of all vocational learning programmes are met.
- Leading the development of any fundraising bids/business cases and production of required progress reports as per agreed timelines.
- Leading on admissions for all vocational learning programmes. This will include chairing a supported internship admissions panel, ensuring statutory compliance, facilitating assessments and hosting open days as required.
- Leading on the development of any new Supported Internships and social enterprises. This will include working with AaA's Business Development Team, host employers, Local Authorities and any other key stakeholders to ensure that the programmes are operational as per agreed timelines and within set budgets.
- Being responsible for the relationship with awarding bodies and ensuring that industry relevant qualifications are effectively run where required. This includes ensuring that effective IV and EV processes are in place.

Vocational Curriculum

- Leading the development of aspects of the college's vocational curriculum offer. This will include, but is not limited to, the design and implementation of a pre-internship offer.
- Working collaboratively with the Colleges Employment Manager and Deputy Head of College to align the college's employability curriculum with the vocational learning offer.
- Ensuring that high quality CEIAG is in place and meets the needs of all interns. This will include ensuring that staff have the required level of qualification to undertake this work.
- Being responsible for the relationship with awarding bodies and ensuring that industry relevant qualifications are effectively run where required. This includes ensuring that effective IV and EV processes are in place.
- Leadership and management of vocational learning lecturers.

Leadership and management

- As part of the College Leadership Team, the post holder will support the Head of College in developing and implementing St John's College's strategic and business plan. This will require attendance at, and contribution to, leadership team meetings.
- Forge and develop partnerships with external organisations to support the development of vocational learning offer at St John's College.
- As part of the College Leadership Team, support, and when identified lead on, organisational policy creation and review.
- As part of the College leadership team, provide regular vocational learning reports to the leadership team and the College governing body. This may require attendance and contribution at governing body, and subcommittees, as and when required.
- Attend tribunals and give evidence on behalf of St John's College when required.
- Overall responsibility for the recruitment, selection, induction, probation, training and ongoing performance management of all key members of the vocational learning team.
- Overall responsibility for ensuring that SI Lead Lecturers and Social Enterprise Managers are effectively performance managing their direct reports in line with the college's and Ambitious about Autism's policies and procedures.
- Lead on the planning, organisation, communication, and facilitation of twilight training, INSET days and training weeks for the vocational learning team. This will include working collaboratively with the Heads of College on wider college CPD.
- Be overall responsible for a range of staffing functions, including day-to-day staffing requirements of the Internships and Enterprises, the provision of staff cover arrangements, monitoring and reporting of staff sickness and annual leave in line with relevant college policies.
- Management of relevant budgets. This will include ensuring that access to work claims are completed efficiently.
- To keep up to date with sector and policy changes and consider how they will impact on St John's College.

Training and professional development

- The post holder is required to contribute to and support the overall aims and ethos of the college.
- All staff are required to participate in training and other learning activities, and in performance management and development, as required by the college's policies and practice.

Additional duties:

- Demonstrate a continual commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- To uphold Ambitious about Autism policies to protect and safeguard interns in order to secure their health, safety and wellbeing.
- Demonstrate a continual commitment to the promotion of diversity initiatives and the sharing of best practice in line with Ambitious about Autism's Equality, Diversity and

Inclusion policy and procedures.

- Ensure the highest degree of confidentiality and data protection of all materials
- Demonstrate the vision and values of Ambitious about Autism in everyday work and practice, upholding the ethos of challenge and support where interns can reach their full potential and maximise their engagement in learning.

This job description is not exhaustive and reflects the type and range of tasks responsibilities and outcomes associated with the role. The post holder will be expected to also complete any tasks, as requested by the Head of College.

Person specification

Role and band competencies	Essential
Specific knowledge, experience and technical skills	
1. Educated to degree level or equivalent, relevant professional qualification	X
2. Qualified Teaching and Learning status	X
3. Experience of developing and running supported internships/vocational learning programmes for learners with SEND	X
4. Experience of building and maintaining effective relationships with external partners, employers and stakeholders	X
5. Knowledge of the new Ofsted Further Education and Skills Inspection Toolkits, particularly the vocational learning elements	X
6. Experience of successful curriculum development for learners with SEND	X
7. Successful teaching experience and demonstrable understanding of the key components of high-quality teaching and learning for learners with autism	X
8. Experience of quality assuring educational provisions for learners with SEND and the successful embedding of quality improvements to ensure success/outcomes for learners	X
9. Experience of completing support plans and claims to gain access to work funding from the Department for Work and Pensions.	X
10. Proven experience of the effective leadership and management of staff	
11. A working understanding of the current HNS (High Needs Students) landscape	
12. IT skills sufficient to meet the requirements of the post, including the implementation of interactive learning technology for teaching	
13. Ambitious about Autism is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.	X
Personal attributes	
14. Innovative and creative	X
15. A 'can do' attitude and aspirational for learners with SEND	X
16. A self-directed person who is also able to work as part of a team	X
17. Interpersonal skills and the ability to lead and build effective partnerships with individuals and organisations	X
18. Ability to plan, manage and deliver work to agreed deadlines	
19. Being self-directed and able to work autonomously off-site/lone work	X

20. Good appreciation of health and safety in the workplace, data protection principles and equal opportunities.	X
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Stage	Timescale
Closing date for applications	22/02/2026
Candidates informed of outcome of application	23/02/2026
Interviews	26/02/2026

How to apply

If you would like to find out more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or wish to have an informal discussion please contact Ben Lowe, **Recruitment Manger** blowe@amambitiousaboutautsim.org.uk

Equal opportunities monitoring

Ambitious about Autism is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and we warmly welcome applications from all suitably-qualified candidates. We welcome applications regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, disability, or age. All applications will be considered solely on merit.

Ambitious about Autism is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check.

We are Ambitious about Autism

Ambitious about Autism is the national charity standing with autistic children and young people.

We believe every autistic child and young person has the right to be themselves and realise their ambitions.

We started as one school and have become a movement for change. We champion rights, campaign for change and create opportunities.

Contact us

The Pears National Centre for Autism Education
Woodside Avenue, London N10 3JA

☎ 020 8815 5444

✉ info@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

🌐 ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

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Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust is an exempt charity in England and Wales and a registered company: 02885007.