



Job Title: Executive Headteacher

Location: Abbey Infant and Junior Schools

Start Date: 1st September 2025

Contract Type: Permanent

Salary: (Group 4) Leadership point L22 £83,464 – L27 £94,332

At Abbey Schools, our vision is:

“To provide a high quality, relevant educational community which enables children to achieve their best in a safe, creative and exciting environment. All are valued and inspired to flourish and grow as individuals, leaving us believing anything is possible”.

Our schools are vibrant and inclusive educational communities committed to providing high quality learning experiences for all pupils. The schools have a holistic approach in ensuring personalised support for all pupils and strive to create an environment where every child can believe in themselves, achieve their goals and develop the skills necessary to succeed in their future.

Abbey Infant and Junior Schools have an excellent reputation within the local community and beyond, with both schools individually achieving a “Good” grade from Ofsted in their most recent inspections. They are located close to the center of Darlington, with both the infant and junior schools situated within the same large site. The senior leadership at Abbey work across both schools to ensure all 614 pupils receive an inspiring curriculum that provides children with the best possible start to their education. Abbey Schools joined Melrose Learning Trust in February 2024 and now work closely in partnership with the other eight schools in the Trust, situated in Darlington, Durham and Teesside.

The Trust Board and the schools’ Local Governing Body are looking to appoint an experienced, enthusiastic and dedicated Executive Headteacher to start on 1st September 2025. This is a great opportunity for an existing Executive Headteacher, Headteacher, or ambitious Deputy Head, with a forward-thinking vision and enthusiasm to lead across two exceptionally popular schools.

As Executive Headteacher, you will have the full support of two exceptional Deputy Headteachers, as well as the backing of an enthusiastic, motivated and talented team of staff and governors.

Our ideal candidate will:

- Provide visionary leadership and strategic direction.
- Have a commitment to raising standards and enriching the curriculum.
- Have the drive and ambition to lead a large staff team, ensuring ongoing school improvement.
- Monitor and evaluate the schools’ performance and implement improvement plans.
- Foster a positive and inclusive school culture.
- Nurture a teamwork ethos - ensuring professional development and high standards of teaching.
- Engage with parents, pupils, and the wider community to promote the schools’ values and achievements.
- Lead by example, ensuring high expectations across all aspects of school life.
- Have a keen awareness of the national education agenda and assessment procedures.
- Demonstrate a commitment to ensuring the wellbeing of pupils and staff.



How to Apply:

For informal enquiries, to request an application pack, or to arrange a visit to Abbey Schools, please contact Stacey Tomlinson, HR and Compliance Manager, on 0191 380 5050 or via email stomlinson@melroselearningtrust.org.uk

We would also welcome visits to Melrose Learning Trust to speak to the CEO, which can be arranged in the same way as visits to the schools.

For more information about us, please visit www.abbeyschools.org.uk and www.melroselearningtrust.org.uk

Closing Date for Applications: 17th February 2025 at noon

Interviews: Week commencing 3rd March 2025

Position Available: 1st September 2025

Melrose Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to relevant vetting checks in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 3, including an enhanced disclosure, satisfactory references, before an offer of employment is confirmed. All shortlisted candidates will be subject to an online check as part of the safer recruitment process. Melrose Learning Trust welcomes a diverse population of both children and staff and is committed to promoting and developing equality of opportunity in all its functions.



Melrose Learning Trust

Abbey Schools

Executive Headteacher Job Description and Person Specification



Melrose Learning Trust Vision:

As a Trust, our aim is for all of our schools to maintain their own unique identity whilst working together to ensure that the educational potential of each child is maximised and that their wellbeing is fundamental to everything we do.

Melrose Learning Trust are committed to providing children with high achievement, confidence and enrichment, developed through excellent teaching, stimulating curriculums, and strong moral values.

Our aspirations as a Trust are:

- to ensure the physical and spiritual well-being of every member of the school community is maintained and enhanced
- to create learning environments where children develop a love for learning and learn how to use knowledge wisely
- to share expertise across a range of settings to enhance professional development of staff
- to ensure our schools are at the forefront of modern technology and to make the best use of the resources available to us.
- to be central to the life of their communities



Abbey Schools

We have a warm, inclusive environment with a strong sense of community and a commitment to excellence for all children in our care. We aim to ensure that our children feel safe and happy and achieve their potential as unique individuals and as learners.

Abbey is a learning community, which evolves and changes. We believe that education is about expanding our expectations and building on firm foundations. It is critical for our success that every learner is well equipped with a balance of social, moral and academic skills. We have excellent staff who are committed to providing unique, stimulating and interesting learning opportunities, which motivate our learners to apply their skills.



Employment details

Job title:	Executive Headteacher – Abbey Infants and Juniors
Reports to (job title):	Local Governing Body, CEO and Trust Board
Salary Scale:	Permanent (HT Group 4) L22 – L27 (£83,464 - £94,332)

Purpose of the role

The Executive Headteacher is required to work with the LGB, CEO and other leaders within the MAT, to ensure the best education for pupils by achieving the organisation's aims and objectives. This role also requires the Executive Headteacher to carry out statutory duties, develop and manage the curriculum, teaching and learning policies, and lead the SLT across both the infant and junior schools.

Job Description

Melrose Trust Board and Local Governing Body of Abbey Schools recognise the influential position held by the Executive Headteacher and their role in shaping the future of the schools and the lives of the pupils and families within our community. Their leadership has a decisive impact on the quality of teaching, staff performance and morale, as well as pupils' achievements.

As a Trust, we believe in providing high quality professional development opportunities for all of our staff, including senior leaders. The successful candidate will be supported by the CEO of Melrose Learning Trust, the Local Governing Body and The Trust Board with the resources they need to further develop an incredibly hard-working, dedicated and talented staff team. The Executive Headteacher will be expected to lead by example to ensure all stakeholders are invested in Abbey Schools, ensuring the learning environments are something to be truly proud of.

The role of Executive Headteacher:

- To carry out their professional duties in accordance with all the requirements and responsibilities as set out in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document, which is published annually. Nothing in this job description can amend, or is intended to amend these overriding requirements.
- To provide professional leadership and management, in order to secure the schools' ongoing success and improvement by ensuring high quality education for all its pupils and improved standards of learning and achievement.
- To be responsible for securing high standards of behaviour and creating an ethos which recognises differences and respects cultural diversity in order to prepare children for life in Britain today. The Executive Headteacher works in partnership with the Local Governing Body towards 'Excellence as Standard'.
- To promote and safeguard the welfare of all children in School, (in line with current DfE guidance and Ofsted requirements e.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education) by ensuring that the policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection are fully implemented and followed by all staff; that resources are allocated to allow staff to discharge their responsibilities; and that staff, pupils, parents and others feel able to raise concerns and that these are addressed sensitively and effectively.



The Executive Headteacher will:

1. Ensure the vision for Abbey is clearly articulated, shared and understood across the schools.
2. Work across the schools to translate the vision into agreed objectives and operational plans which will promote and sustain school improvement.
3. Provide appropriate information, advice and support to the LGB, CEO and the MAT's directors, eg providing timely and accurate reports, helping them to meet their responsibilities.
4. Demonstrate the vision and values in everyday working practice with personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards pupils, staff, parents, local governors and members of the local community.
5. Motivate and work with others to create a positive climate, leading by example with integrity, creativity, resilience and clarity.
6. Ensure creativity, innovation and the use of appropriate new technologies to achieve excellence, using current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally/nationally/globally.
7. In collaboration with subject leaders, develop and maintain an appropriate and inclusive curriculum, designed to reflect current educational trends, practice and research.
8. Proactively engage with stakeholders to ensure Abbey has a positive reputation within the community.
9. Ensure accountability and articulate high expectations by demanding ambitious standards for all pupils, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality.
10. Involve all staff and local governors in Abbey's self-evaluation processes in order to bring about the highest achievement for all pupils.
11. Collaborate with the MAT's CEO to provide directors, the LGB, parents and others, e.g. Ofsted, with information and accurate accounts of the schools' performance.
12. Regularly review own practice and achievements, set personal targets and take responsibility for own personal development, taking account of any feedback.
13. Manage own workload and that of others to allow an appropriate work/life balance.
14. Ensure excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of pupils learning and the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to the enhancement of our rich curriculum opportunities and wellbeing of all pupils and staff.



15. To oversee and work with key stakeholders, including outside agencies, to ensure effective leadership, management and provision for increasing levels of higher, and more complex special educational needs.
16. Continue an educational culture of 'open classrooms' as a basis for sharing best practice within and between schools, drawing on relevant research and robust data analysis.
17. Contribute to the ethos within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their own skills and subject knowledge, and to support each other.
18. Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning.
19. Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice.
20. Maintain a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in the wider society.
21. Sustain rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice.
22. In partnership with the Trust, CEO and LGB exercise strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, in the best interests of pupils' achievements and Abbey's sustainability.
23. Nurture an outward-facing approach, working with other schools and organisations - in a climate of mutual challenge - to champion best practice, secure excellent achievements for all pupils and meet the needs of individual pupils and their families.
24. Work with relevant stakeholders to ensure the schools are compliant with all statutory duties, eg safer recruitment, risk assessments, first aid etc.

This job description may be amended at any time after consultation with the post holder and will be reviewed annually.

Signed.....Date.....



Executive Headteacher Person Specification

Abbey Schools

Evidence will be obtained through the application and interview process including written references. You should demonstrate your experience and skills using the personal statement section of the application form or in a covering letter.

	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified Teacher status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of further study - this could be ongoing and/or Further Professional Qualifications NPQH SEND training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application form Selection Process Certificates
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful and substantive experience at Senior Management level within a primary school. Experience of successful and collaborative working, leading a team to further improve a school setting. Experience of the successful leadership of change across all areas of school. Experience of improving teaching and learning. Experience of leading and reviewing effective safeguarding procedures in a school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of leadership, management and teaching experience in more than one context. Teaching experience in more than one Key Stage. Experience of leading and managing quality SEND provision. Experience of leading and delivering high-quality, child-centred and innovative Early Years provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application form References Interview
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a broad, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally and nationally. Engaged in research and development, covering leadership, curriculum and management issues that have resulted in successful change and effective practice. Significant contribution and evidence of impact to the professional development of other colleagues in school. Committed to own personal professional growth and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of leading high quality CPD, including mentoring, coaching and supporting all staff to develop within their roles. Experience of overseeing and managing successful appraisal cycles, including support and direction for underperforming staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application form Interview References
Skills/knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to communicate effectively in a variety of situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of the National Standards of excellence for Headteachers (2020) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application form Interview References



Personal Qualities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to challenge stakeholders and be held to account. • Proven leadership skills. • Knowledge and understanding of administration, HR and budget management processes. • Ability to lead by example drawing on their own and others expertise, skills and knowledge. • Ability to lead, manage and improve an effective curriculum. • Ability to analyse and evaluate school self-evaluation processes, including the use of data and other sources, in order to accurately prioritise strategic leadership objectives. • Ability to initiate and lead change by inspiring and influencing others. • Evidence of being able to build and sustain effective relationships with staff, local governors, academy colleagues, parents and the wider community. • Commitment to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of both pupils and staff. • Detailed knowledge of the structure and content of the current primary curriculum and Early Years curriculum. • Experience of working with external agencies and having impact with both disadvantaged and SEND children and families. • Understanding and knowledge of current issues in education, including the current Ofsted Inspection Framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and overseeing complex HR casework, in line with organisation policies. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to uphold and support the school's vision and associated values. • A clear vision and understanding of the needs of all pupils in order to close gaps in achievement. • A commitment to promoting high quality care guidance and support for pupils, staff and wider community. • Commitment to working with other schools within the MAT and organisations beyond in order to secure excellent achievements for all pupils. • Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • Interview • References



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calm, approachable and supportive nature with a welcoming, open-door approach.• People-centred, with an awareness and ability to manage varied personalities across a large setting.		
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