



EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

Role Briefing Pack

A message from Rebecca Slayford

Managing Director Compass Schools

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining Compass Schools. I'm delighted to introduce this exciting and impactful opportunity.

At Compass, we are deeply committed to transforming lives through tailored education and care. This role is pivotal to our mission, changing children's lives through trauma-informed, therapeutic education. As a headteacher, you will play a strategic leadership role — leading the service, guiding multidisciplinary teams, and embedding best practice across our settings.

We're looking for dynamic, compassionate, and experienced Executive Headteachers —those who are ambitious for our young people and understands the nuanced challenges of special education and inclusion. Your work will directly influence outcomes, enrich staff capability, and enhance provision for some of the most vulnerable learners in our care.

This is a chance to drive real change, contribute to a values-led culture, and be part of a passionate and innovative team.

We look forward to learning more about you, your values, and how you can help shape the future of specialist education at Compass Community.

Warm regards,



Rebecca

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca Slayford".

ABOUT COMPASS COMMUNITY

Compass Community is a high quality national service created from Education, Residential, Fostering and therapy services.

We are highly driven to ensure we offer the best therapeutic support to vulnerable children and children with a wide variety of SEND.

Our schools are amongst the top independent education providers in the country and it is important to us that we continue to develop into 'exceptional schools' where pupils have the opportunity to thrive and reach their potential.

MOTIVATE | EDUCATE | INSPIRE

We believe every child should access — and enjoy — their education. Our aim is for learners to stay curious, grow in confidence and make the most of the opportunities ahead. We hold high aspirations for every pupil, recognising that learning happens both in and beyond the classroom. Our curriculum is built to spark interest, build skills and open up new experiences.

We're proud of the progress our pupils make — academically and emotionally. Each day, we help young people strengthen their self-belief, relationships and resilience.

We're committed to inclusive education that gives every learner strong access to learning and qualifications.

Our residential service extends nationwide, offering care for young people with various needs, including Problematic Sexual Behaviour, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, Learning Difficulties, and those affected by sexual exploitation.

But we are much more than just the outstanding services we offer. At the heart of everything we do are the children that need our support; they are at the centre of each of our services and will always be our priority.

With the right support, pupils can be taught to manage their own behaviour, and our specialist staff create calm, consistent environments where they feel safe to learn.

Personalised learning sits at the centre of our approach. Our provision is shaped around each child's needs, supporting positive behaviour and healthy emotional development.

Our graduated, reward-focused behaviour-for-learning system helps us understand triggers, celebrate progress and give pupils regular opportunities to reflect and take responsibility.

SPACES THAT SUPPORT EVERY LEARNER

With over 20 Compass Community Schools spread across England, careful consideration is made on where these are located, to ensure we are utilising our supporting offices and children's homes.

We ensure that all of our schools are situated in areas conducive to the thriving growth of children. It's a holistic approach that prioritises accessibility and the optimal environment for learning and development.

Our schools are designed and furnished with the needs of SEND learners at the centre. Every space is created to reduce anxiety, support regulation and make learning feel safe, predictable and achievable.

Classrooms are calm, uncluttered and purposefully arranged, with neutral colours, soft lighting and clear visual structure to help pupils focus without feeling overwhelmed. Furniture is adaptable, allowing staff to adjust layouts quickly for individual, small-group or whole-class work.

Across our sites, you'll find sensory-friendly spaces that support pupils who need quiet moments to regulate. These areas use soft furnishings, warm textures and low-stimulation décor, offering a safe place for pupils to pause, reset and return to learning when they feel ready. Corridors and shared spaces are wide, clearly signed and intentionally calm to ease transitions, a key support for many learners with anxiety or sensory processing needs.

Every design choice, from the materials we use to the flow of our buildings, ensures learners experience consistency, dignity and the right level of support to thrive.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Executive Headteacher

Contract: Full time Permanent

Reporting to: Assistant Director

Responsible for: Direct Line Management of SLT and Teaching Staff within the school of which they are the substantive Headteacher. Headteachers within their assigned school cluster.

This Job Description is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the executive headteacher will carry out. The postholder may be required to undertake other duties appropriate to the level of the role.

Ethics and Professional Conduct

The Executive Headteacher will:

- Like other teachers, meet the [Teacher Standards](#).
- Provide the conditions in which all teachers can fulfil the Teacher Standards.
- Demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct by upholding and demonstrating the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#) at all times.
- Known as the Nolan principles, these form the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders:
 - Selflessness
 - Integrity
 - Objectivity
 - Accountability
 - Openness
 - Honesty
 - Leadership
- Build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position.
- Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain.
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit their position, pupils' vulnerability or might lead pupils to break the law.
- Uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility.
- Know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research.

Headteachers' Standards

The Executive Headteacher will:

- Like all other Headteachers, meet the Headteachers' Standards at all times pertaining to;
 - School Culture
 - Teaching
 - Curriculum and Assessment
 - Behaviour
 - Additional SEND
 - Professional Development
 - Organisational Management
 - Continuous School Improvement
 - Working in Partnership
 - Governance and Accountability

Main Purpose

With regards to their own school as substantive Headteacher, The Executive Headteacher will:

- Fulfil all duties and responsibilities outlined in the Headteacher Job Description.

With regards to their cluster, regional and national roles, The Executive Headteacher will:

- Provide the conditions in which all Headteachers can fulfil all duties and responsibilities of their role via:
 - effective line management, supervision, support and training appropriate to their needs
 - in line with the national Strategic Plan and Compass Community Schools' established policy, practice and procedures.
- Facilitate high performance by ensuring that Headteachers and SLT within their cluster receive meaningful appraisal and performance management in line with Compass Community Schools' established policy, practice and procedures to achieve our vision of 'Exceptional Schools'
- Provide effective leadership and management to their assigned cluster of schools and their Headteachers via support, challenge, quality assurance and considered school improvement partnering.
- Ensure that the schools in their assigned cluster are delivering high-quality provision and securing the best outcomes for pupils via;
 - the review and monitoring of pupil progress (both holistic and academic) and
 - the review and monitoring of school improvement plans and self-evaluation forms
 - providing necessary challenge in order to achieve a sustained focus on the strategic objectives.
- Promote a culture of, as well as actively managing and facilitating, meaningful collaboration among all Compass Community Schools, providing effective peer-to-peer and school-to-school support, resource sharing, and modelling of best practice.
- Establish and sustain the cluster's strategic direction;
 - in line with Compass Community Schools' ethos, vision and strategic plans,
 - together with the Governing Board and Proprietary Board.
- Support and inform the development of national Strategic Plans and 'big moves'.
- Both in their assigned cluster and, where appropriate, nationally, drive organisation-wide strategic development priorities as laid out in Strategic Plans and directed by Assistant and Senior Directors.
- Advocate for the schools in their cluster, being an effective systems leader and ensuring that policy is put into practice, not only by school leaders and, but also by colleagues in the wider organisation and beyond.

Leading and Managing the Organisation

The Executive Headteacher will:

- Model and embody the vision and ethos of Compass Community Schools, ensuring they are clearly articulated, understood and enacted by all.
- Support efficient management of the cluster's budget and resources, engaging in business partnering with finance colleagues.
- Co-develop and implement Compass Community School policies.
- Recruit, develop and retain high-quality staff through effective professional development, performance management, talent mapping and CPD management.
- Establish and sustain clear and open lines of communication with all stakeholders.
- Monitor staff wellbeing and workload, and implement strategies to promote an emotionally literate and healthy working environment.
- Ensure the cluster effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties.
- Ensure staff and pupils' safety and welfare through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of duty of care in line with national policy.
- Maintain effective relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues to improve educational outcomes for all pupils.
- Prepare and lead their school and associated schools through Ofsted and other external inspections successfully.

Teaching, Curriculum and Assessment

The Executive Headteacher will ensure, and quality assure, that SLT across their cluster;

- Establish, facilitate and sustain a broad and balanced curriculum that;
 - Is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment across a broad range of career options,
 - is appropriate to the needs, abilities, developmental stages, and levels of attainment for every pupil on roll,
 - is engaging, exciting and aspirational,
 - gives all pupils the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life and to prepare them for the next step in their learning and social journey.
- Establish and sustain high-quality teaching and learning across all subjects and phases, based on evidence, contemporary best-practice and meaningful quality assurance, training and CPD.
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by subject expertise. Where teachers of subjects are not specialists, they facilitate access to high quality subject knowledge enhancement opportunities and specialist support.
- Establish and sustain collaborative working with regional and central curriculum leadership, including subject leaders with relevant expertise and access to professional networks and communities.
- Ensure that teaching and support staff have access to high-quality resources to support effective teaching and learning.

- Use valid, reliable and proportionate approaches to assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum in line with Compass Community Schools' policy, practice and procedures.
- Effectively use formative assessment and summative assessment data to inform strategy and child-centred decision-making.
- Ensure the systematic and embedded use of evidence-informed approaches to reading so that all pupils are taught to read.
- Responsibly commission and procure third parties to meet pupils' needs where necessary.

With regards to SEND, across all schools in their cluster, the Executive Headteacher will:

- Establish and sustain a culture and practices, together with SENCOs, and internal and external multi-disciplinary partners, that enables all pupils to access the curriculum in full and meaningfully.
- Have ambitious expectations for all pupils with SEN and disabilities, as well as disadvantaged pupils.
- Make sure the schools work effectively with parents, carers and professionals to identify additional needs and provide support and adaptation wherever required.
- Make sure the school fulfils statutory duties regarding the SEND Code of Practice.

Behaviour for Learning and School Culture

The Executive Headteacher will ensure, and quality assure, that SLT across their cluster;

- Implement and oversee Behaviour for Learning Policy, practice and procedures that reflect and align with the vision, ethos and therapeutic approach of Compass Community Schools.
- Expect and demand high standards of behaviour and attitudes from pupils, built on rules and routines that are understood by all stakeholders, and are clearly and consistently facilitated by all adults in school.
- Ensure that all staff comply with the Staff Code of Conduct, and foster a culture of transparency, safety, challenge, support and professionalism.
- Ensure that all examples of pupil behaviour that falls below expected standards, and any associated consequences, are logged and shared with parents, carers and MDT colleagues promptly and clearly.
- Monitor behaviour and attendance data to inform strategy and child-centred decision-making.
- Ensure all school staff have access to high-quality and relevant training to enable them to facilitate consistently high standards of pupil behaviour.
- Ensure that the school is a purposeful, safe and effective learning environment at all times.

Leading and Managing School Staff

The Executive Headteacher will ensure, and quality assure, that SLT across their cluster;

- Work effectively with Compass Community colleagues to recruit, select and appoint appropriate staff in line with Safer Recruitment guidelines.
- Together with Therapeutic and Compliance Managers, deploy and manage all staff, allocating duties to them in accordance with the needs of the school and pupils, and their conditions of service.
- Facilitate high performance by ensuring that all staff have access to meaningful line-management, supervision, support and training appropriate to their needs and in line with the school's strategic direction and Compass Community Schools' established policy, practice and procedures.
- Facilitate high performance by ensuring that all staff receive meaningful appraisal and performance management in line with Compass Community Schools' established policy, practice and procedures.
- Challenge all under-performance using transparent and fair protocols in line with Compass Community Schools' established policy, practice and procedures.
- Make appropriate arrangements for suitable persons to assume responsibility for the discharge of their duties at any time that they are absent from the premises.

With regards to professional development, The Executive Headteacher will ensure, and quality assure, that SLT across their cluster;

- Seek training and continuing professional development to meet the needs of all staff members.
- Ensure staff have access to appropriate, high standard professional development opportunities, drawing on experts both within and beyond the school.
- Keep up to date with developments in education.
- Together with the Learning and Development Team, ensure training and continuing professional development is effectively planned, delivered and evaluated.
- Identify and nurture talent and future leaders, considering pathways for retention and backfill.

Safeguarding

The Executive Headteacher will ensure, and quality assure, that SLT across their cluster;

- Demonstrate commitment to, and ensure compliance with, statutory guidance and regulations including, but not limited to, the most recent iterations of
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children
 - The Independent School Standards
- Be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Compass Community Schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and any practice and procedures contained therein, as well as any other policy that pertains to the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and staff including Health and Safety, Risk Management, First Aid and so on.
- Be responsible for the maintenance and safety of the school building, its contents and its grounds.
- To ensure the safety and supervision of pupils both in school and during off-site activities.
- To monitor the use and safety of school transport.
- To ensure that the medical needs of all pupils are effectively met.

Governance and Accountability

The Executive Headteacher will ensure, and quality assure, that SLT across their cluster;

- 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.
- Collaborates successfully with other Compass Community Schools and the wider organisation.
- Collaborates successfully with other schools, organisations and teams to achieve mutually agreed objectives.
- Maintain working relationships through high quality, timely and effective communication with fellow professionals and colleagues to improve educational outcomes for all pupils.
- Produce regular, accurate and timely reports regarding school performance and provide information, support and objective advice to the Executive Headteacher, Assistant and Senior Directors of Education, the Governing Board and the Proprietary Board.
- Ensure that parents, carers and local authority teams are well informed about all aspects of Compass Community Schools and, in particular, about their child's progress and development.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Experience

Essential

- Education management experience (at least 3 years)
- Headteacher or equivalent experience
- Experience of managing and motivating disaffected or challenging students
- Evidence of producing outstanding outcomes for children/young people

Desirable

- Teaching experience in two or more establishments
- Special school experience
- Multi-site experience and experience of supporting other schools
- Experience of public sector and private sector

Education, Training and Qualifications

Essential

- Evidence of regular and appropriate professional development
- Successfully completed NPQH (or willing to undertake)
- Professional qualifications e.g. post grad Techer (appropriate to experience)

Desirable

- Higher level of qualifications in education or education management
- Advanced SEN qualification
- On teaching register

Special Knowledge

Essential

- Curriculum development (primary and secondary)
- Strategies for raising pupil's achievements (educationally and socially)
- Use of comparative data to establish benchmarks and set targets for improvements
- Strategies for promoting pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development including knowledge about citizenship, ethnic and cultural diversity
- Fluent in SEN Code of Practice

Desirable

- Knowledge of 'Looked After' Process
- Performance management and threshold process
- Training to Level 5 Safeguarding
- Knowledge of Equality and Diversity

Management Skills

Essential

- Effective financial management within a school environment
- Communication skills - the ability to make points clearly, listen to and understand the views of others
- Decision making skills - the ability to investigate, solve problems and make and implement decisions.
- Self management - the ability to plan time effectively and organise oneself efficiently.
- Change management skills
- High quality inset planning and delivery skills
- Detailed knowledge of the National Curriculum and approaches within SEN
- Good IT skills

Personal Qualities/Ability to

Essential

- Demonstrate enthusiasm and sensitivity
- Demonstrate innovation
- Ability to work to timeframes and processes
- Commitment to residential care
- Reliability, persistence and even temperament
- Evidence of being able to build and sustain effective working relationships with young people, staff, parents/carers and the community
- Appropriate levels of fitness and health in order to participate in the use of restrictive physical intervention
- High professional standards