



Trust Counsellor & Senior Mental Health Lead

Job & Person Specification

CONTRACT TYPE
Permanent

CONTRACT TERM
Full time

CLOSING DATE
08.03.2026

Start Date
From April 2026



Job Description

Responsible to: CEO and Executive Lead for Safeguarding, SEND and SEMH
Responsible for: The Trust wide mental health support network
Purpose of the role: To deliver high-quality therapeutic services and lead the strategic development of mental health provision across HEARTS Academy Trust.
Place of work: HEARTS Academy Trust – HEARTS House (2 Mount Road, Wickford, Essex. SS11 8HE) and across school sites in Wickford, Basildon and Rochford
Pay scale: Band 5 of the HEARTS Pay Scale (Pt. 29-37 depending on skills and experience)
Start Date: April 2026 – with flexibility
Application Closing Date: Sunday, 8 th March 2026
Shortlisting: Monday, 9 th March 2026
Interviews: Friday 13 th March, 2026 and/or Monday 16 th March, 2026 (TBC)
Contract: Full-time, permanent. 37 hours per week. 40 working weeks (46.2 paid weeks) Working pattern to be confirmed pending appointment.

Purpose of the role

Thank you for your interest in the position of Trust Counsellor & Senior Mental Health Lead at HEARTS Academy Trust. As the Trust Counsellor & Senior Mental Health Lead, you will deliver high-quality therapeutic services and lead the strategic development of mental health provision across HEARTS Academy Trust.

Key duties and responsibilities:

Therapeutic Practice:

- Provide Level 3 therapeutic interventions.
- Deliver crisis and trauma support.
- Maintain clinical records and ensure secure storage of all data in line with GDPR, including oversight of any digital therapy, clinical reporting, or recording platforms.

Strategic Leadership, Data & Reporting

- Lead the Trust-wide mental health strategy.
- Collate and analyse Trust-wide SEMH data.
- Support workload and wellbeing committees across all schools.
- Contribute to SEMH sector research.
- Report to governance bodies, including LAB Boards and Trustees.
- Publish internal termly SEMH bulletins.
- Deliver on the Trust's 5-year strategic plan, including contributions to Trust-wide wellbeing KPIs.
- Contribute to the central risk register with an informed understanding of all HEARTS settings.
- Line-manage trainee counsellors in partnership with the Trust Executive Lead for SEND, SEMH & Safeguarding.

Training & CPD

- Plan and deliver staff continued professional development, responsive to need

Clinical Supervision

- Provide clinical supervision for EYFS staff, DSLs, and colleagues working in The Atrium (SEMH provision).

MHFA Network Leadership

- Lead the Mental Health First Aid network and oversee termly data collection.
- Chair MHFA meetings and coordinate national mental health events.

Trainee Counsellor Programme

- Maintain and expand links with universities and placement providers.
- Manage trainee recruitment, training, caseloads, supervision, and progress reporting.

Family and Community Engagement

- Work directly with parents, carers, and families where appropriate.
- Lead family-focused mental health support, including workshops and guidance sessions.
- Represent the Trust in local SEMH and mental-health multi-agency networks.

General Responsibilities:

- To be aware of, and comply with, HEARTS values, our multi academy Trust policies and procedures, including those relating to child protection, health and safety, security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to the appropriate person
- To participate in training, learning activities and performance development as required
- Willingness and ability to work flexibly in response to the operational needs of the Trust, particularly during critical periods when enhanced mental health support for pupils, families or colleagues is essential.

The Trust Counsellor & Senior Mental Health Lead is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct. The post holder must uphold and demonstrate the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#) at all times. Known as the Nolan principles; these form the basis of the ethical standards of public office holders:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified and the post holder may reasonably be expected to undertake other duties commensurate with the level of responsibility that may be allocated from time to time.

The job description will be subject to periodic review.

Essential Experience:

- Level 4+ counselling/psychotherapy qualification.
- Experience working with young people and families to deliver early intervention mental health support
- Experience supporting adult mental health, including in a workplace context
- Strong safeguarding knowledge and ability to collaborate with safeguarding leads, including making referrals when/where needed
- Skilled in assessing needs and planning targeted interventions
- Crisis management, safeguarding and multi-agency experience.
- Excellent communication and organisational skills.
- Knowledge of SEMH national frameworks, policy, and statutory expectations

- Evidence of ongoing CPD in therapeutic/mental health fields
- Ability to design Trust-wide SEMH systems and train others
- Ability to demonstrate resilience, empathy, diligence, care and integrity
- Confident user of digital technologies including Microsoft 365.
- Commitment to/strong awareness of Trauma-Informed Practice (ideally TPP)

Preferred Skills and Experience:

- Strategic leadership of mental health and wellbeing provision across multiple schools
- Experience of auditing current provision and creating improvement plans
- Experience supporting staff wellbeing and delivering guidance to colleagues
- Accreditations (ie. BACP, UKCP or NCS)
- Experience working in a multi-academy trust or other similar school-based context

The post-holder will participate in the Trust's performance management process as it is applied for all staff as well as deliver on our equity, diversity and inclusion aims.

Safeguarding:

The Trust's Child Safeguarding policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, third-party workers, contractors and visitors, working in or on behalf of the Trust.

Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in the education setting

The successful post holder will have a strong awareness of the Prevent Duty and other 'high-risk' safeguarding concerns relevant to working within schools and young people/families.

We expect all staff to share this commitment and to undergo appropriate checks, including online searches and an enhanced DBS check.

Candidates should be aware that all staff at HEARTS Academy Trust are responsible for safeguarding children and young people, although the extent of that responsibility will vary depending on the nature of the post.



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