

HEAD CHEF – JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Details

Job Title: Head Chef

Salary: £31,844.80 FTE. Actual Salary £29,456.44

Contracted Weeks Employment: 37 hours per week, 52 weeks

Department: Catering

Location: St Bede Academy / Baby Bede Nursery / Other Schools in the Trust

Responsible to: Operations Director

Purpose of the Role

To lead and deliver a high-quality, nutritious catering service based at St Bede Academy, supporting pupils, staff, and the wider school community.

The Head Chef will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the catering provision, including menu planning, preparation, cooking of meals, and team leadership.

The role also holds responsibility for allergen management across the Trust, ensuring safe, compliant, and consistent processes at all sites, including Baby Bede Private Nursery.

Main Areas of Responsibility

Catering Operations

- Plan, prepare, and cook meals, delivering breakfast, lunch, and snack services to a high standard
- Develop and create nutritious, balanced menus using fresh, seasonal ingredients
- Ensure all menus and recipes are maintained within the Allmanhall catering system
- Work with Headteachers to design appealing menus that meet the needs of each school community
- Ensure meals meet School Food Standards / EYFS standards and promote healthy eating
- Work to increase school meal uptake across the Trust
- Assist Head Cooks with stock control and ensure effective use of resources
- Maintain high standards of cleanliness, food hygiene, and food safety
- Ensure food is presented and served to a high and consistent standard

Allergen Management (Trust-Wide)

- Responsible for allergen management across the Trust
- Ensure all allergen information is accurate, up to date, and consistently applied
- Ensure all catering staff understand and follow allergen procedures
- Monitor compliance and carry out checks across Trust sites
- Ensure adherence to all food safety and allergen legislation

Staff Management

- Responsible for Head Cooks and catering teams across the Trust
- Provide leadership, training, support, and guidance to catering staff
- Support recruitment, training, and development of catering staff
- Ensure all staff complete mandatory training (food hygiene, allergens, health & safety, safeguarding)

Menu Development & Nursery Provision

- Work with the Baby Bede Manager to develop and deliver a nutritious, age-appropriate menu for nursery provision
- Ensure menus meet the needs of all pupils, including dietary and cultural requirements

Management Information

- Maintain accurate catering records, including menus, compliance documentation, and allergen information
- Complete relevant audits across the catering service
- Maintain HACCP systems, allergen compliance, and food safety documentation in accordance with current legislation and Natasha's Law
- Work to minimise food waste and promote sustainable practices
- Good understanding of Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) principles

Communication & Liaison

- Communicate effectively with Headteachers, staff, and wider stakeholders
- Work collaboratively across the Trust to ensure a consistent catering offer
- Adhere to Trust communication policies
- Seek feedback from Pupils and Parents to continuously improve menus and service.

Management of Resources

- Ensure effective and efficient use of catering resources and equipment
- Identify resource needs and report as appropriate
- Control food costs, labour, and waste to ensure financial sustainability

Health and Well-being

- Ensure compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures
- Promote a safe working environment for staff and pupils
- Adhere to all health and safety and food hygiene regulations

Trust Ethos

- Support and promote the ethos and values of the Trust
- Contribute positively to the school community
- Comply with all Trust policies

Additional Information

Whilst every effort has been made to outline the main duties and responsibilities of the role, the post holder may be required to undertake other appropriate duties commensurate with the grade of the post.

This job description will be reviewed annually and may be amended following consultation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Criteria

- Relevant catering qualification (e.g. NVQ Level 2/3 in Professional Cookery or equivalent)
- Level 3 Food Hygiene Certificate (or higher)
- Proven experience in preparing and cooking meals in a high-volume catering environment
- Experience of menu planning and delivering nutritious, balanced meals
- Knowledge and understanding of food allergens and food safety regulations
- Experience of supervising or leading a catering team
- Strong organisational skills and ability to manage multiple priorities
- Good communication skills and ability to engage with pupils and staff
- Ability to maintain accurate records and follow procedures
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Understanding of the importance of increasing meal uptake within a school setting

Desirable Criteria

- Experience working within a school, nursery, or Multi-Academy Trust setting
- Experience using the Allmanhall catering system (or similar catering management systems)
- Experience of managing allergen processes across multiple sites
- Experience of working with budgets and cost control
- Knowledge of School Food Standards and government guidelines
- Experience of supporting catering staff development and training
- Understanding of nutrition for early years (nursery provision)

What We Offer

- A supportive and collaborative working environment
- Opportunities for professional development and certification
- The chance to shape catering across a growing Multi-Academy Trust
- Flexible working and autonomy to make a real impact