



Job Description

Group Head of Primary Phase (School Improvement Officer)

Reporting to: Director of Education

Location: Across Serenity Education Group schools (multi-site)

Contract: Full-time permanent

Start date: Immediate start or as soon as possible

Salary: Competitive, commensurate with seniority and experience (leadership scale)

Role summary

Serenity Education Group is seeking an exceptional senior leader to take up the role of Head of Primary Phase (School Improvement Officer). This is a group-wide school improvement role, not a single-site phase leader post.

The postholder will be responsible for driving consistently high standards in primary education across SED, ensuring that pupils with Autism as their primary need (often with additional needs including SLCN, ADHD, SpLD, and SEMH) receive a high-quality, ambitious curriculum and excellent teaching that secures strong progress over time.

You will work directly with Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, Phase Leads, SENCOs and class teachers to strengthen curriculum implementation, teaching practice, assessment, and leadership capacity across all primary phases and pathways.

This role is designed to attract candidates at Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, or experienced Phase/Key Stage Leader level who can operate credibly at system level, challenge and support leaders, and deliver measurable improvements.

Key purpose and outcomes

Core purpose:

To improve the quality and consistency of Primary education across Serenity Education Group by strengthening curriculum implementation and teaching practice, ensuring strong progress, and building sustainable leadership capacity.

Key outcomes expected within 2 terms:

- Clear and consistent implementation of the agreed Primary curriculum model across all sites and pathways.
- Measurable improvement in teaching quality (with clear quality assurance evidence).
- Improved Primary pupil progress in literacy (phonics, reading, writing) and numeracy, with accurate and credible assessment systems.
- Improved consistency of planning expectations and classroom delivery across sites.
- Stronger leadership of Primary phase, with clear accountability and follow-through.
- Robust evidence base for Ofsted readiness across primary provision.

Main responsibilities

1) Group-wide Primary phase leadership and school improvement

- Act as the SED School Improvement Officer for Primary, providing a consistent improvement presence across all sites.
- Provide high support and high challenge to Headteachers and senior leaders to secure rapid improvements where required.
- Lead the development and delivery of a coherent Primary improvement plan aligned to SED priorities and the Director of Education's strategy.
- Identify strengths and gaps across sites and implement targeted improvement interventions.
- Ensure improvement work results in sustained, embedded change rather than short-term compliance.

2) Curriculum leadership and implementation

- Drive consistent implementation of the agreed SED Primary curriculum intent and sequencing, ensuring ambition for pupils with Autism and complex learning profiles.
- Ensure Primary curriculum implementation supports:
 - Communication and language development
 - Early reading and phonics
 - Reading fluency and comprehension
 - Writing (including sentence-level accuracy and extended writing where appropriate)
 - Maths mastery foundations and application
 - Wider curriculum breadth adapted appropriately (science, humanities, arts, PE, PSHE/RSE)
 - Personal Development, including emotional regulation, independence, social communication, self-awareness, and preparation for participation in school and wider society
- Ensure Personal Development is explicitly and systematically taught across the Primary phase, including:
 - Emotional regulation and co-regulation strategies
 - Development of independence in daily routines and learning behaviours
 - Social interaction and relationship skills appropriate to pupil communication profiles
 - Development of attention, engagement, and readiness for learning
 - Understanding of self, safety, and appropriate boundaries
 - Preparation for transitions within school and to the next stage of education
- Ensure curriculum adaptations are evidence-informed, and that learning is broken down effectively without diluting ambition.
- Ensure curriculum planning reflects the needs of pupils working significantly below age-related expectations, including those who are pre-verbal or minimally verbal.
- Secure consistency in medium-term planning and lesson structure expectations across sites (including SEND-specific strategies, explicit teaching, communication supports, and structured routines).

3) Teaching and learning improvement

- Evaluate and improve teaching quality across Primary through:
 - Lesson visits and learning walks
 - Work scrutiny and learning evidence reviews
 - Pupil progress and assessment reviews
 - Staff coaching and instructional feedback
- Establish clear expectations for Primary teaching practice in SEND classrooms including:
 - Structured routines and predictable learning sequences
 - High-quality adult modelling and scaffolding
 - Appropriate use of visual supports and communication systems
 - Explicit vocabulary teaching
 - Behaviour as communication, proactive regulation and de-escalation
 - Effective deployment of teaching assistants
 - High participation and engagement for all pupils
- Coach staff to ensure teaching leads to learning, not activity, and that pupils are enabled to retain and apply knowledge and skills over time.

4) Assessment, progress, and pupil outcomes

- Ensure Primary assessment systems are robust, meaningful, and credible across pathways.
- Support schools to align assessment to curriculum progression models and EHCP outcomes, ensuring clarity between:
 - Curriculum progress
 - Small-step progress where appropriate
 - Engagement and participation measures
 - Communication and developmental progress
- Analyse progress data across sites and translate findings into clear priorities and actions for leaders.
- Ensure leaders can demonstrate the impact of teaching and interventions with evidence beyond data alone, including work scrutiny, observation evidence, and pupil outcomes.

5) Quality assurance and accountability

- Implement a consistent Primary QA cycle across schools, including clear reporting, actions, follow-up and impact checks.
- Produce high-quality written evaluation reports for the Director of Education that:
 - Identify strengths and weaknesses precisely
 - Set clear actions with ownership and deadlines
 - Identify risks and non-negotiables
 - Track impact over time
- Ensure schools maintain high-quality evidence for Ofsted and commissioning, including:

- Curriculum plans and implementation evidence
- Assessment and progress evidence
- Teaching and learning evidence
- Safeguarding-related practice as it relates to learning, routines, and pupil needs

6) Leadership capacity building and professional development

- Build leadership capacity within Primary teams across sites, including mentoring Primary leaders and supporting succession planning.
- Design and deliver targeted professional development for teachers and support staff across sites, focused on:
 - Phonics and early reading
 - Autism-informed teaching strategies
 - Scaffolding and adaptive teaching
 - Effective TA deployment
 - Engagement, regulation and readiness to learn
 - Writing development for SEND learners
- Support schools to implement consistent induction for new Primary staff and ensure strong practice is replicated.

7) Stakeholder confidence and professional conduct

- Represent SED professionally in meetings and across sites, building confidence with Headteachers, leaders and staff through expertise, clarity and consistency.
- Contribute to group-wide strategic development work as directed by the Director of Education.
- Maintain high levels of professionalism, discretion, and consistency when operating across multiple schools.

Person Specification

Leadership experience and impact

- Successful leadership experience at Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher, Executive Leader level, or equivalent senior primary leadership with demonstrable impact.
- Proven track record of improving teaching quality and pupil outcomes, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- Experience of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and securing improvements through coaching and follow-up.
- Experience leading curriculum development and ensuring strong implementation.

SEND and Autism expertise

- Significant experience working in SEND provision, with strong understanding of Autism and associated learning and communication profiles.
- Strong understanding of adaptive teaching for pupils working below age-related expectations, including complex learning needs.

- Proven ability to support staff to deliver structured teaching using Autism-informed approaches.

Curriculum, assessment and pedagogy

- Deep knowledge of Primary curriculum design, including early reading/phonics and primary maths progression.
- Strong understanding of assessment systems appropriate for SEND contexts, including how to evidence progress robustly.
- Ability to translate curriculum intent into high-quality classroom implementation.

Influencing and operational skill

- Ability to work credibly with senior leaders across multiple sites and influence improvement without direct line management.
- Ability to set clear expectations, challenge underperformance professionally, and secure follow-through.
- Excellent written communication skills, including the ability to produce clear evaluation reports and action plans.
- Highly organised and able to manage competing priorities across multiple schools.

Values and behaviours

- Uncompromising commitment to safeguarding and pupil welfare.
- High expectations and ambition for pupils with SEND.
- Resilient, calm, and solutions-focused
- Able to build strong professional relationships and maintain standards consistently.

Desirable

- Experience working across more than one site or within a MAT or schools group improvement structure.
- Experience leading phonics strategy across a school or group.
- Experience supporting Ofsted preparation and inspection readiness.
- Experience of supporting staff CPD across multiple teams or sites.

How to apply / selection process

Candidates may be asked to complete a task or deliver a short improvement proposal as part of the selection process.

Safeguarding Statement:

Serenity Education Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. All appointments are subject to enhanced DBS and satisfactory references.