

Head of Department



No 'job description' can satisfactorily embrace the entire range of duties, activities and opportunities that exist in any school. The key responsibilities, as set out below, do not therefore form an exhaustive list but cover the principal areas for a Head of Department.

Purpose of Role:

To provide Leadership and management of all aspects of a subject area.

Directly responsible to:

1. The Deputy Head (Academic)
2. Ultimately responsible to the Headmaster

Purpose of Job

The Head of Department is the curriculum team manager who shares with the SMT the school's responsibility for delivering to the pupils the curriculum within a designated subject area, ensuring that each pupil receives positive encouragement to develop their potential to the full according to the stated aims of the school.

General Responsibilities

Heads of Departments should:

- Build and sustain personal credibility by teaching effectively, to a consistently high standard in all respects.
- Provide leadership and focus, setting the tone, ethos and, through close liaison with the Deputy Head (Academic), ensure that the highest standards of teaching and learning are consistently delivered.
- Create a climate which enables all staff to develop positive attitudes towards the subject and confidence in teaching it.
- Contribute to and support the shared strategic vision for the school.
- Represent the Department within the school, to parents, Governors, visitors and other schools. They should ensure enhancement and foster a positive image of the department and the school in terms of public relations.

Specific Responsibilities

Teaching and Learning

- Share best practice with and between all members of the department
- Monitor and evaluate teaching and learning across the department
- Be aware of academic and curricular changes affecting the subject and ensure that everyone in the Department is administratively and academically up-to-date
- Monitor pupils' work and assessment across the department and ensure the existence of resources which can be used for differentiated teaching.
- Organise or oversee the provision of examination papers for internal examinations and liaise with the Internal Examinations Officer.
- in consultation with the Deputy Head (Academic), select appropriate examinations and formulate an entry policy for public examinations
- Liaise with the Learning Support department over pupils with SEND, EAL and AGT.
- liaise with the Junior School to ensure coherency of curriculum from Junior School to Senior School

- Liaise with the Librarian over library and learning resources in the subject
- Analyse internal examination results and respond to findings where necessary
- Foster good relations with other departments and schools and establish cross-curricular links wherever possible

Pupils

- Track pupils' progress using a range of indicators and respond to findings
- Analyse external examination results and produce a report examination performance of the department and the individuals within it for the Headmaster
- Be contactable during the period of publication of examination results during August.
- Liaise with the Librarian (Careers) over University and Careers advice.
- Allocate pupils to sets and ensure that the Deputy Head (Academic) is informed of any inaccuracies.

Curriculum

- Determine and review the aims and objectives of the department, ensuring these are in line with those of the school's Development Plan.
- Maintain the department handbook to reflect current practise.
- ensure the production and update of schemes of work which are in line with curriculum objectives of the department and the school
- be available, where necessary, for consultation by the Headmaster, or Deputy Head (Academic), for a few days before the beginning and after the end of each term
- keep the Deputy Head (Academic) informed of matters concerning the department
- Help prepare pupils for university interviews.
- Seek out opportunities for curriculum enhancement.

Staff

- Play a major part in appointments to the department.
- Lead the induction of new subject specialist staff
- help with the induction of all new staff
- Contribute to the initial training of teachers.
- undertake lesson observations and review sessions with staff, in line with the school's policy on professional development and appraisal
- Provide support to members of the department in all aspects of their work including discipline. (This also applies to ancillary staff, where applicable)
- undertake and organise INSET and professional development within the department
- Assist in the provision of lesson cover.
- In consultation with the Deputy Head Academic allocate staff to teaching groups.
- Provide the Deputy Head Academic with information relating to the allocation of staff regarding the timetable.
- Allocate members of staff to teaching rooms.

Management and Administration

- Hold regular departmental meetings, record these on shared files and ensure that the appropriate staff respond to actions raised
- Seek out and organise teaching resources and ensure the sharing of these through distribution and demonstration

- Contribute to the overall curriculum planning of the School including attending Heads of Department meetings.
- Produce and update the Departmental Development Plan on an annual basis
- Produce and update the Departmental Handbook on an annual basis
- Organise the ordering of books and ensure that pupils have the opportunity to return them to the department at the end of the academic year
- Maintain links with universities, exam boards, subject associations and professional bodies
- Respond to complaints and enquiries promptly, efficiently, courteously and effectively
- Be responsible for maintaining the presentation and 'look' of the department as well as the fabric of the rooms (and/or premises) used by the Department, and liaising with the Bursar as necessary.
- Ensure that the department is compliant with Health and Safety legislation and that any concerns are communicated to the Bursar.
- If in a single subject department, manage and control the departmental budget efficiently and properly and liaise with the Bursar's Department when necessary

Reviewed March 2026