



DEPUTY HEADTEACHER APPLICATION PACK

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WELCOME FROM THE EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

Swanlea is a school with a genuinely special ethos. We are proud of what we have built together, and prouder still of the young people at the heart of it.

We serve one of the most deprived communities in the UK, and we make no apology for the high expectations we place on ourselves as a result. Our pupils arrive with enormous potential, and it is our privilege and our responsibility to help them realise it. That conviction, that disadvantage is no barrier to achievement, is not a slogan at Swanlea, it is the foundation of everything we do.

As Executive Headteacher of Weavers' Federation, I now lead three exceptional schools serving the Tower Hamlets community. Swanlea remains at the heart of that federation, and this appointment is one of the most important we will make. The Deputy Headteacher we appoint will work closely with Head of School, Paul Gardner and the senior leadership team to drive our continued improvement.

Our results speak for themselves. We are Outstanding in all categories, consistently among the highest-performing schools nationally for KS4 progress, and our sixth form is the strongest in Tower Hamlets for student progress. We also have some of the best behaviour and attendance in the country, as a hub school we support others. But we are not complacent. We believe we have the capacity to improve further, and we actively seek colleagues who share that ambition.

We are looking for a Deputy Headteacher who is genuinely exceptional, not just as a leader but as a person. Someone who is ambitious for young people, committed to their colleagues, and seeks to make a lasting difference. Someone who sees this role not as a destination but as a significant step in a leadership journey that we hope will take them, in time, to headship.

In return, you will join a high-performing and deeply supportive senior leadership team. You will have access to outstanding professional development, a vibrant and engaged school community, and the satisfaction of working in a place where the impact of great leadership is visible every single day.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kabir Miah
Executive Headteacher



INTRODUCTION FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Swanlea School is a truly unique place to lead and to work. We are proud of the school's achievements, our dedicated and talented staff, and the fantastic young people who come here. At the same time, we know there is much more we will achieve together. Grounded in our values of Respect, Aspire and Achieve, I hope this brochure gives you a genuine sense of what makes our school such a special community.

We are seeking a Deputy Headteacher who will play a pivotal role in the next chapter of Swanlea's journey. We know that exceptional outcomes and developing social confidence are central to improving the life chances of young people from a high deprivation community. You will lead our Key Stage 4 standards-raising work and hold whole-school strategic responsibility for personal development, wellbeing, ethos and culture. It is a broad and challenging brief, one that will stretch and develop you as a leader.

You will join a senior leadership team that is collaborative, ambitious and deeply committed to the young people we serve. You will be supported and challenged in equal measure, with the space to lead with confidence, creativity and clarity, and to further embed our shared values in all aspects of school life.

The pupils at Swanlea are remarkable—kind, determined and ambitious for their futures. They embody our values of respect for one another, aspiration for what they can become, and a strong commitment to achieving their goals. Working alongside them each day is both a privilege and a responsibility that we value deeply.

If you are an exceptional leader with the drive, integrity and moral purpose to make a real and lasting difference, I would welcome your application. I very much hope to meet you at our visit day in April.

Paul Gardner
Head of School



ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Swanlea School is a large, vibrant and thriving secondary school in the heart of Tower Hamlets, one of London's most diverse and dynamic boroughs. With approximately 1,000 pupils on roll and a further 210 in the sixth form, Swanlea offers staff the opportunity to work alongside exceptional colleagues in a school that is genuinely ambitious for every young person it serves.

Swanlea is part of Weavers' Federation, a values-driven partnership of three schools in Tower Hamlets comprising Swanlea Secondary School, Hague Primary and Stewart Headlam Primary. The federation is led by Executive Headteacher Kabir Miah, who brings deep knowledge of Swanlea and the wider community to his leadership of the partnership. Underpinned by the vision that schools are "Stronger Together in Partnership," the federation has a strong track record of achievement in curriculum development, teaching and learning, leadership development and cultural enrichment.



“ Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils at the school. ”

- Ofsted, April 2024

The name Weavers reflects the deep roots of these schools in the local community. From the Huguenot silk weavers who shaped the East End in the 18th and 19th centuries to the diverse and vibrant Bangladeshi community at the heart of Tower Hamlets today, the federation's schools have served this remarkable community for generations. Joining Swanlea means becoming part of that story.



“ I would not have been able to achieve my grades without my teachers. ”

- Year 13 Student

In April 2024, Ofsted graded Swanlea as Outstanding in all categories for the third time, a remarkable achievement that reflects the school's sustained commitment to excellence across teaching, leadership, personal development and outcomes.

Swanlea is located in one of the most deprived areas in the UK, with over 50% of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium. Our pupils may come from disadvantaged backgrounds, but they do not lack ambition and neither do we. Staff at Swanlea are driven by a shared moral imperative: that disadvantage is no barrier to achievement, and that every young person deserves the opportunity to succeed.

That commitment is reflected in our results. At GCSE, 81% of pupils achieved a standard pass in English and Maths, with 64% achieving the stronger pass. 37% of all grades were awarded at 7 to 9. At sixth form, 100% of students passed their A Level and BTEC qualifications, with 58% progressing to Russell Group universities.

We are consistently ranked among the top schools nationally for KS4 progress, and we have the best attendance and behaviour figures in the local authority. Despite our successes, we are not complacent. We believe we have the capacity to improve further, and we actively seek colleagues who share that conviction.

Our staff are our greatest asset. We are deeply committed to professional learning and development, fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation and reflective practice. Many of our current middle and senior leaders have progressed through internal promotion, a reflection of the investment we make in developing talent at every level. We expect the same of this appointment: someone who will grow with us, make a significant and lasting impact, and go on to lead a school of their own.





“ Behaviour across the school is exceptional. Pupils enjoy extremely positive working relationships with all staff, based on mutual respect. ”
- Ofsted, April 2024

VISION AND SWANLEA VALUES

Our Mission

To be exceptional in teaching, leading and learning.

Our Values

At the heart of everything we do at Swanlea are our three core values:

Respect | Aspire | Achieve

These values are not simply words on a wall. They define the way we work, the relationships we build and the standards we set for our pupils, our staff and our wider community. They underpin every decision we make as a school and every interaction that takes place within it.



Our Vision

At Swanlea, we are committed to:

- Developing socially confident, responsible, resilient and independent learners
- Creating respectful, empathetic and active citizens who value democracy, liberty and the rule of law
- Developing highly numerate, literate and articulate young people with a life-long love of learning
- Promoting cultural capital and celebrating difference, instilling an understanding and appreciation of diversity
- Nurturing aspiration and ambition, challenging all pupils to achieve and preparing them for the global workplace
- Promoting pupil wellbeing, safety and healthy lifestyles, supporting them to manage their academic, personal and social lives positively



“ *Don't lose hope, always remain ambitious.* ”

- Year 11 Student



The Swanlea Way

Swanlea has a truly distinctive ethos, one that is felt from the moment you walk through the door. Outstanding relationships underpin all of our work. We are a community that demands the very best from itself, supports one another to get there, and takes genuine pride in what our young people achieve.

We call this the Swanlea Way, a shared commitment to excellence, care and ambition that runs through every aspect of school life. For the right candidate, joining Swanlea means becoming part of something genuinely special.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Swanlea School's priorities for 2025-26 reflect a school that is ambitious, self-aware and committed to continuous improvement across every aspect of its work.

Student Outcomes

Swanlea sets high expectations for outcomes at every key stage. Current priorities include sustaining and improving attendance towards a target of 97%, accelerating student progress in Year 9 and 10 across a range of subjects, and continuing to strengthen sixth form outcomes. At KS4, the school is targeting 88% of pupils achieving grades 9-4 in English and Maths, with 80% achieving the stronger grade 9-5.



Leadership Development

The school is investing in a structured leadership development programme at all levels, and is actively clarifying the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of senior and middle leaders. This appointment is central to that work.

Student Development

The school is reviewing and revising its behaviour systems and developing stronger student voice across the school community.

Weavers' Federation

As part of Weavers' Federation, Swanlea is developing leadership capacity across all phases, building cross-phase partnerships with its partner primary schools and strengthening federation governance.

Developing Classroom Practice

The school is embedding the Swanlea Learning Cycle across all classrooms, developing an instructional coaching model to support teacher development, and reviewing the KS3 curriculum across both academic subjects and personal development. Strengthening SEND provision in mainstream classrooms is also a key focus.

“ Leaders take the workload and well-being of staff into account. ”

- Ofsted, April 2024



KEY INFORMATION

Status	Comprehensive Community School
Location	Whitechapel, Tower Hamlets, London
Federation	Weavers' Federation
Last Ofsted	April 2024
Ofsted Judgement	Outstanding in all areas
Admission Policy	Non-selective
Gender of Students	Mixed
Appropriate Authority	Tower Hamlets
Age Range	11 to 18
Number of Students on Roll	1281
Proportion of students with SEND	10.6%
Proportion of students with EHCP	6.7%
Proportion of students eligible for Pupil Premium	54.3%
Proportion with EAL	28.3%
Teaching School	Awarded Teaching School status 2015
School Website	swanlea.co.uk



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Deputy Headteacher – Key Stage 4 Raising Standards
Reporting to:	Head of School
Responsible for:	Key Stage 4 outcomes; whole-school strategic leadership of personal development, wellbeing, ethos and culture
Salary/Grade:	L25–29 (£103,211–£112,822) plus R&R £581
Disclosure:	Enhanced

Please note: this job description must be read in conjunction with the current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, particularly Part XII – Conditions of Employment of Teachers other than Head Teachers, which itemises the general conditions of employment governing this post.

Purpose of the Role

The Deputy Headteacher will provide strategic and operational leadership for Key Stage 4, with particular responsibility for sustaining exceptionally high standards in achievement, curriculum implementation and public examinations. The postholder will hold whole-school strategic responsibility for personal development, wellbeing, ethos and culture. Working alongside a Deputy Headteacher colleague with responsibility for teaching and learning, the postholder will contribute to the overall leadership and day-to-day running of the school and deputise for the Head of School as required.

Core Strategic Leadership Responsibilities

- To share collective responsibility for furthering the vision, values and mission of the school.
- To contribute to the strategic leadership and smooth operational day-to-day running of the school.
- To deputise in the absence of the Head of School.
- To contribute to the development, implementation and review of whole-school policies.
- To liaise effectively with governors and other stakeholders as required.

Key Stage 4 Standards and Outcomes

- To sustain exceptionally high standards of achievement across Key Stage 4.
- To sustain exceptionally high outcomes for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- To lead the strategic direction of the school's Key Stage 4 raising standards work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of raising standards strategies and ensure that actions are responsive and impactful.
- To lead raising standards meetings for all subjects within the key stage.
- To lead all aspects of public examinations.

Personal Development and Wellbeing

- To lead the whole-school strategic direction for personal development and wellbeing.
- To ensure that pupils feel well supported, develop strong knowledge and skills, and make a positive contribution to the school's inclusive culture.
- To ensure that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps and for life beyond school.
- To secure strong personal development and wellbeing for disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND and other vulnerable groups, across Key Stage 4.

Curriculum – Implementation and Impact

- To lead the design of a high-quality, ambitious Key Stage 4 curriculum for all pupils.
- To lead the development and ongoing review of the curriculum within the key stage.
- To ensure the effective delivery of the Key Stage 4 curriculum across all subjects.
- To lead and evaluate the impact of pupil intervention programmes within the key stage.
- To review the effectiveness of 14–19 curriculum pathways.

Ethos and Culture

- To lead the whole-school strategic direction for ethos and culture.
- To ensure that the Swanlea Values and Fundamental British Values are embedded across the key stage.
- To ensure consistently high standards of ethos and culture in all aspects of Key Stage 4.
- To ensure that the Swanlea Way is actively and consistently embedded across the key stage.
- To ensure that the school's social confidence strategy is reflected in all aspects of the key stage's work.
- To be accountable for behaviour, attendance and punctuality across the key stage.
- To ensure rigorous monitoring of all aspects of the key stage, including securing the school's expectations and targets for attendance and punctuality.

Line Management and Staff Development

- Working with Deputy Headteacher colleagues, to contribute to the development of a highly effective training and development programme for Heads of Faculty.
- To line manage Assistant Heads.
- To line manage Heads of Faculty and Learning Coordinators.
- To chair appropriate middle leader and student progress meetings.
- To participate in the selection of teaching and support staff.

Whole-School Leadership Contribution

- To contribute actively to whole-school improvement priorities as a member of the senior leadership team.
- To attend Governing Body meetings as required.
- To model and uphold the school's values at all times with all members of the school community.
- To act as a visible, professional and positive senior leader across the school.
- To fulfil the statutory responsibilities of a senior leader with regard to safeguarding and child protection, in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy and current statutory guidance.

Leadership Behaviours

- To model high standards of professionalism, visibility and accountability at all times.
- To demonstrate respect, positivity and integrity in all aspects of the role.
- To contribute to a culture of continuous improvement and professional learning.
- To support and develop colleagues through effective leadership, challenge and encouragement.

Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of this post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified.

Employees will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from a manager to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in this job description.

Employees are expected to present themselves and to act in a professional manner at all times.

The school will endeavour to make any necessary reasonable adjustments to the job and the working environment to enable access to employment opportunities for disabled applicants or continued employment for any employee who develops a disabling condition.



“ Swanlea is an amazing school. The level of education provided has led to an Outstanding Ofsted grade. I am incredibly proud of the Swanlea team. ”

- Shamsul Hoque,
Co-opted Governor

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E) DESIRABLE (D)		SHORTLIST CRITERIA
		E	D	
A	QUALIFICATIONS			
1	Qualified Teacher Status	✓		✓
2	A degree	✓		✓
3	Evidence of sustained professional learning relevant to school leadership over recent years	✓		
4	An accredited or postgraduate qualification in educational leadership, curriculum or school improvement		✓	
B	EXPERIENCE			
5	Successful substantial leadership experience in a secondary school setting at Assistant Headteacher level or equivalent	✓		✓
6	Experience of working in a school serving a diverse community, including securing strong outcomes for disadvantaged pupils	✓		✓
7	A strong track record of sustaining high standards of pupil achievement, particularly at Key Stage 4	✓		✓
8	Evidence of being a strong classroom practitioner and role model for high-quality teaching	✓		✓
9	Experience of successfully leading improvement work across a department, key stage or whole-school area, including the use of data, assessment and quality assurance processes to secure strong outcomes	✓		✓
10	Experience of leading, managing and developing staff and/or middle leaders	✓		✓
11	Experience of holding others to account, addressing underperformance and driving improvement in pupil outcomes	✓		✓
12	Experience of fulfilling safeguarding responsibilities at a senior level, including contributing to a school's safeguarding culture and procedures	✓		
13	Experience relevant to one or more of the following: behaviour, attendance, personal development, ethos and culture, curriculum implementation or public examinations	✓		✓
14	Experience of leading whole-school professional development		✓	

	CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E) DESIRABLE (D)		SHORTLIST CRITERIA
		E	D	
C	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS			
15	Strong knowledge of and ability to teach their own subject to a high standard	✓		
16	A secure understanding of 14–19 curriculum pathways, qualifications and destinations	✓		
17	Ability to secure high standards of curriculum implementation and pupil outcomes, and to lead and develop high-performing teams and middle leaders	✓		✓
18	Strong written and oral communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences including staff, pupils, parents, governors and external partners	✓		✓
19	Ability to lead change successfully, combining strategic thinking with effective implementation, and to identify risks and respond to emerging priorities	✓		✓
20	Strong understanding of current developments in secondary education, school leadership and public examinations	✓		
D	PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES			
21	Commitment to the highest standards of child protection and safeguarding	✓		
22	Commitment to Swanlea School values, inclusion, equality of opportunity and securing strong outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and vulnerable groups including those with SEND	✓		✓
23	Professional integrity, sound judgement, discretion and the ability to build and sustain strong relationships across the school community	✓		
24	Ability to work collaboratively and positively as part of a Senior Leadership Team	✓		
25	Resilience, composure, strong organisational skills and the ability to prioritise effectively under pressure	✓		
26	Commitment to continuous professional learning and development	✓		



HOW TO APPLY

Thank you for your interest in this post. The school looks forward to receiving your application.

Please apply by completing the school's application form via the TES platform. A direct link to the [vacancy](#) can be found on the school's website at swanlea.co.uk. As part of the application, you are requested to submit a personal statement of no more than 1,000 words stating clearly how your knowledge, skills and experience meet the shortlisting criteria set out in the person specification. Applicants must complete all sections of the application form in full and include a personal statement. Incomplete applications will not be considered for shortlisting.

Candidates are warmly encouraged to visit the school prior to applying. **Visits will take place on Wednesday 15th April and Monday 20th April at 4pm.** Please email Naviya Azmin at recruitment@swanlea.co.uk to register your interest.

The deadline for applications is midday on Monday 27 April 2026.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed by Thursday 30 April 2026.

The final selection process will take place on Wednesday 6 and Thursday 7 May 2026.

References for shortlisted candidates will be taken up prior to interview using the contact details supplied on your application form.

Further information about Swanlea School and Weavers' Federation can be found at swanlea.co.uk.

Sam White of ASCL's Leadership Appointment Service is providing professional support to the school throughout the selection and appointment process. Please copy him into any correspondence with the school. If you would like to find out more about this opportunity, please email sam.white@ascl.org.uk to arrange an informal conversation.

We welcome applications regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity or religion.

Swanlea School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service. Any online searches will be limited to publicly available professional information and carried out in accordance with data protection legislation.

