

RECRUITMENT PACK

# Headteacher

John Spence Community  
High School

---

*A flagship secondary school.  
A defining leadership opportunity.*

  
**John Spence**  
COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

# Welcome to John Spence Community High School

*This is a rare and significant headship.*

*Fit for Life is not a slogan. It shapes expectations, relationships and daily practice.*

## SCHOOL ETHOS



John Spence Community High School is a proud, well-established school with a strong sense of community and identity, clear values and high expectations for its young people. The school is a values-led school with a clear and lived ethos. At its heart sits the principle that every young person should leave school Fit for Life — resilient, skilled and considerate.

The school now seeks a Headteacher who will lead the next phase of its journey. The task ahead is to build on these foundations with clarity and confidence: securing stronger outcomes, sustaining a broad and ambitious curriculum, and ensuring that John Spence continues to be a school where pupils are known, challenged and supported to succeed.

This is a leadership position that requires moral purpose and rigour; someone who understands that improvement is driven through culture as much as strategy, and that consistency, visibility and relationships matter every day. This is a unique opportunity to shape a compelling future for a flagship secondary school in North Tyneside.



## Kieran McGrane

Chief Executive Officer, Pele Trust

*This is an outstanding leadership opportunity at an exciting point in the school's journey.*

Dear prospective candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the post of Headteacher at John Spence Community High School. This is a school with a strong culture, a clear sense of togetherness, and high expectations for its young people.

You would build on the excellent foundations and legacy established by the current Headteacher, Jonathan Heath, who leaves after eight years of highly effective leadership. You will work with wonderful students, be supported by a talented and committed staff team, and benefit from the challenge and guidance of a knowledgeable Academy Committee.

As part of Pele Trust, you will also join a highly collaborative network where school leaders work together to strengthen provision and improve outcomes across our schools. You will work closely with Executive Leaders and fellow Headteachers to share best practice, innovate, and deliver trust-wide priorities, while retaining the distinct identity and strengths of John Spence Community High School.

Pele Trust is committed to professional growth. As Headteacher, you will be supported to develop your leadership, bring ambitious ideas to life, and contribute to trust-wide initiatives aligned to our shared values.

We are seeking a leader who will set an ambitious vision for the next phase of the school's development: balancing the education of the whole child with strong academic outcomes, and ensuring pupils are well-prepared for their post-16 pathways.

I strongly encourage you to visit the school to see our school community in action.

Yours faithfully,

**Kieran McGrane**

CEO, Pele Trust



## Dr Adam Langman

Chair of the Academy Committee

*You will be joining an exceptional team with strong support and clear ambition.*

Dear prospective candidate,

On behalf of the Academy Committee I would like to thank you for your interest in the post of Headteacher at John Spence Community High School.

We are looking for a talented individual to lead and set the vision for our next phase. You will be joining an exceptional team of staff who are committed to the school and, as part of the Pele Trust, you will have a network of like-minded school leaders to support you and enable you to implement improvements, share best practice and develop your own leadership skills.

Our school has a vision to ensure young people are Fit for Life — resilient, skilled and considerate. As a Community High School we have a strong culture of inclusion with positive outcomes for all our pupils at the core of our priorities. Our pupils are engaged, keen to learn and grasp the opportunities that are on offer — which I'm sure will be apparent when you visit the school.

Yours faithfully,

**Dr Adam Langman**

Chair of the Academy Committee

# Job Advert

Required from September 2026 · Headteacher Group 6



## LEADERSHIP

Set and deliver an ambitious vision for school improvement



## OUTCOMES

Drive improvements in standards, outcomes and attendance



## COMMUNITY

Lead a diverse school community with clarity and moral purpose

### LEADERSHIP PAY RANGE

**L25 – L31**

£93,424 – £108,202

## As Headteacher, you will:

- Set and deliver an ambitious vision for school improvement, securing strong outcomes for all pupils.
- Drive improvements in standards, outcomes and attendance, with a clear focus on impact.
- Lead a complex and diverse school community with clarity, resilience and moral purpose.
- Balance academic rigour with a deep commitment to pupil wellbeing, character and personal development.
- Work with a supportive, experienced Academy Committee that offers both challenge and encouragement.
- Play a leading role within Pele Trust, contributing to trust-wide strategy, collaboration and growth.

John Spence serves a richly diverse community. Around half of our pupils are disadvantaged, and many bring complex needs, experiences and strengths. This is a school where leadership matters, consistency matters, and belief in young people matters. The successful candidate will see this not as a barrier, but as a responsibility and an opportunity.



## The Person

This role will suit an established Headteacher, or an exceptional Deputy ready for headship, who:

- Has a strong track record of school improvement and raising standards in challenging contexts.
- Is confident leading a complex secondary school with clarity, credibility and calm authority.
- Understands how to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils through intelligent, evidence-led practice.
- Is visible, values-driven and relational, with high expectations for staff and pupils alike.
- Is ambitious for the school and for themselves, with the capacity to contribute beyond one setting.

The successful candidate will be highly visible, present and engaged with pupils, staff and families. Culture at John Spence is built daily: through clear expectations, professional trust, and calm, consistent leadership that earns respect over time.

You will lead a diverse and energetic school community, where many pupils bring complex experiences and high levels of need alongside considerable potential. This is a school that believes in structure, clarity and fairness, not because they are easy, but because they enable young people to thrive. The Headteacher must be comfortable holding firm expectations while remaining deeply human, compassionate and outward-looking.

This is a hands-on headship. It will suit a leader who values the craft of headship: shaping behaviour and culture, developing staff, and leading through daily presence, strong professional relationships and sustained engagement with the life of the school.

## Why This Role Matters

---

John Spence is a key school within Pele Trust. It is central to our presence in North Tyneside and to our longer-term ambitions, including the potential development of post-16 provision and the strengthening of local primary-secondary pathways.

The Headteacher of John Spence is therefore not only a school leader, but a system leader: someone whose work will shape pupils' lives, influence trust strategy and help define what Pele Trust stands for in this community.

## What Success Looks Like

---

Success in this role will be measured not only through outcomes, but through the shape and confidence of the school. Over time, this will include a stable and growing roll, stronger academic results, and a continued commitment to a broad, inclusive curriculum that prepares pupils well for life beyond 16.

Just as importantly, John Spence will remain a school that families actively choose, where pupils feel a sense of belonging and pride, and where staff are motivated to contribute to a shared endeavour. The next Headteacher will protect what makes the school distinctive, while leading purposeful improvement that strengthens its reputation and future.

## Visit Us

---

We strongly encourage prospective candidates to visit the school. John Spence is best understood by seeing it in action: the students, the staff, the culture and the ambition.

This is a demanding role in a school that deserves exceptional leadership. For the right person, it is also an outstanding professional opportunity.

Please contact the Head's PA, Emma Rutter, via email to [emma.rutter@johnspence.org.uk](mailto:emma.rutter@johnspence.org.uk) to book a visit. Contact the CEO, Kieran McGrane, for an informal discussion about the role at [k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk](mailto:k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk)

## How to Apply

Please submit your application and a covering letter of no more than 2 A4 pages (properly formatted and in Arial 11) to Claire Leightley at [c.leightley@peletrust.org.uk](mailto:c.leightley@peletrust.org.uk)

This post is subject to enhanced DBS and other pre-application checks as determined by KCSIE 2025.

---

### CLOSING DATE

**Friday 27 February 2026, 12:00pm**

### INTERVIEWS

**12 & 13 March 2026**

# Job Description

Headteacher — John Spence Community High School

## JOB TITLE

**Headteacher**

## GRADE

**L25 – L31**

## RESPONSIBLE TO

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**

## RESPONSIBLE FOR

**Teachers and Professional Support Staff**

### Main Purpose of Role

To provide highly effective strategic and operational leadership to secure high standards of teaching and learning leading to exceptional outcomes for all students.

To actively contribute to the strategic leadership of Pele Trust.

### General Duties & Responsibilities

These are covered under the domains as set out in the Headteachers Standards 2020, namely:

- 1. Culture and ethos** — school culture, behaviour, professional development
- 2. Curriculum and teaching** — teaching, curriculum and assessment, additional and special educational needs
- 3. Organisational effectiveness** — organisational management, school improvement, working in partnership

These are underpinned by demonstrating consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct as outlined in the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles). Both within and outside school, the headteacher must:

- Build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position
- Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit their position, pupils' vulnerability or might lead pupils to break the law

## As Leader of Our School Community

The headteacher must:

- Serve in the best interests of the school's pupils
- Conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their influential position in society by behaving ethically, fulfilling their professional responsibilities and modelling the behaviour of a good citizen
- Uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- Know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- Take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research
- Make a positive contribution to the wider education system

## Specific Duties & Responsibilities

### 1 School Culture

- Sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction in partnership with the Academy Committee and CEO, and through consultation with the school community
- Create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- Uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare pupils from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- Promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment
- Ensure a culture of high staff professionalism

### 2 Teaching

- Establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains
- Ensure effective use is made of all forms of assessment

### 3 Curriculum and Assessment

- Ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement that sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills that will be taught
- Establish and sustain effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities
- Ensure that all pupils are taught to read through the provision of evidence-informed approaches to reading, particularly supporting weak readers so that they can catch up and keep up with their peers
- Ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

## 4 Behaviour

- Establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all pupils, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and pupils
- Ensure high standards of pupil behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- Implement consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour
- Ensure those adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a responsible and respectful citizen

## 5 Additional and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice

## 6 Professional Development

- Ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, team and individual needs
- Prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development
- Ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning

## 7 Organisational Management

- Ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of the duty of care
- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- Ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk

## 8 Continuous School Improvement

- Make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers that limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- Develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context
- Ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time

## 9 Working in Partnership

- Forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community
- Commit the school to work successfully with other schools in Pele Trust and those organisations outside of the Trust in a climate of mutual challenge and support
- Establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils

## 10 Governance and Accountability

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding your obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- Establish and sustain a professional working relationship with those responsible for governance
- Ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties

Please note that successful applicants will be required to comply with all trust policies. The successful applicant will be subject to full enhanced disclosure checks and these will be subject to rechecking as appropriate.