

## **Job Description and Person Specification Profile**

<b>Job Title</b>	Virtual School Academic Lead
<b>Job ID</b>	E15
<b>Service</b>	Children's Services
<b>Grade</b>	H
<b>Reporting to</b>	Head of Virtual School

### **The Role**

The Virtual School Academic Lead will have strategic oversight of academic outcomes for cared for children, previously looked-after children, and children with a social worker across all key stages. The postholder will lead on raising attainment, improving academic progress, and narrowing the gap between these cohorts and their peers. The Academic Lead will drive high expectations, evidence-based interventions, and collaborative accountability across schools and partners to ensure every child receives equitable access to high-quality education.

### **Main Duties and Responsibilities include:**

- Provide strategic leadership for academic standards across the Virtual School, ensuring improved outcomes at Key Stages 2, 4 and 5.
- Lead the analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of cohort-wide and individual pupil data to identify priorities and inform interventions.
- Advise and challenge schools, designated teachers, and senior leaders to secure high-quality provision and equitable outcomes for cared for children.
- Support Virtual School caseworkers with academic advice to inform personal education plans (PEPs) and targeted support.
- Develop and oversee strategic academic interventions, ensuring they are evidence-based, measurable, and impactful.
- Work in partnership with children's social care, SEND services, and education providers to ensure academic achievement remains central to care planning.

The duties may vary from time to time without changing the nature of the post or the level of responsibility, and the post holder may also be required to carry out any other duties appropriate to the grading of the post.

### **About You**

#### **Your essential qualifications**

- Educated to degree level (or equivalent).
- GCSE (or equivalent) in English and Mathematics at Grade 4/C or above.
- Evidence of ongoing professional development in education, safeguarding, or data-led improvement (e.g., NPQLT, NPQLTD, or equivalent).

#### **Your essential skills, knowledge and experience**

- Proven experience as a middle or senior leader responsible for improving academic standards.
- Demonstrated impact of driving school improvement or educational outcomes at a strategic level.
- Experience holding schools or partners accountable for pupil performance.

- Experience using academic data to inform strategic decisions and interventions.
- Experience reporting to governance bodies, local authorities, or equivalent oversight boards.
- In-depth understanding of education legislation and statutory guidance, including *Promoting the Education of Looked-After Children*, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and the *National Curriculum*.
- Strong understanding of the Education Inspection Framework (EIF).
- Knowledge of assessment frameworks from Early Years to Key Stage 5.
- Understanding of the local and national challenges faced by cared for and previously looked-after children.
- Awareness of funding streams relevant to vulnerable learners, such as Pupil Premium Plus.
- Excellent analytical and data interpretation skills, with the ability to translate evidence into strategic action.
- Strong communication, influencing, and negotiation skills with credibility across senior leaders and external partners.
- Ability to prioritise effectively and make evidence-based decisions under pressure.
- Strategic thinker capable of balancing individual and cohort priorities.
- Confident in challenging underperformance and managing sensitive discussions professionally.
- Competent in using digital systems for data analysis and reporting.
- Sound understanding of GDPR and data protection principles.

**If you have the following experience or qualifications – then that’s great!**

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
- Experience working within a Virtual School or local authority context.
- Familiarity with education data systems (e.g., Capita, Power BI, or similar).
- Knowledge of post-16 pathways, including apprenticeships and higher education transitions.
- Experience contributing to policy development and strategic planning at local authority or trust level.
- Evidence of leading or contributing to multi-agency improvement projects.

**Our employees’ skills, experience and knowledge are essential to our success along with their happiness, commitment, enthusiasm and motivation to be the best they can be.**

**What can you expect from us?**

- A fair salary and benefits
- Opportunities for good health and wellbeing
- Help you to grow, develop and to do your best
- Enable you to be creative and innovative
- Fully involve you in changes that affect you and your work
- Listen, and act on your ideas and feedback

**Working together, we are proud to work for Tameside**

Our **STRIVE** values underpin our practice and behaviours and are at the heart of everything that we do:

