

NORTHFIELDS
INFANTS AND NURSERY SCHOOL



School Secretary / Senior Administrator

Job Description & Person Specification

30 hours per week | January 2027

POST TITLE	School Secretary / Senior Administrator
GRADE	H4 – subject to formal grading confirmation
HOURS	30 hours per week, term time plus INSET days
RESPONSIBLE TO	Headteacher
START DATE	January 2027

REACH

Respect • Expression • Achievement • Creative • Hearts full of fun

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. Main Purpose of the Role

The School Secretary / Senior Administrator plays a central role in the effective day-to-day administration of Northfields Infants and Nursery School.

The postholder will provide high-quality administrative and organisational support to the Headteacher and wider school team, while acting as a key point of contact for parents, carers, visitors, professionals and external agencies.

The role carries particular responsibility for school information systems, pupil and staff records, attendance administration, admissions, statutory returns, safer recruitment administration, the Single Central Record, HR processes and payroll administration.

The successful candidate will need to be highly organised, accurate, approachable and able to exercise sound judgement. They will be expected to manage competing priorities, maintain confidentiality and work independently within established school procedures.

This is a role at the heart of the school. The postholder will be expected to build strong professional relationships with pupils, families, staff and external partners and to contribute positively to the culture and ethos of Northfields.

2. School Office Administration

- Provide an efficient, professional and welcoming administrative service for the school.
- Act as a first point of contact for parents, carers, visitors, contractors, professionals and other callers.
- Manage telephone calls, emails, correspondence and routine enquiries, referring sensitive or complex matters to the appropriate member of staff.
- Prepare letters, forms, reports, registers, certificates, meeting papers and other documentation.
- Maintain effective electronic and paper filing systems.
- Support the Headteacher and senior staff with correspondence, documentation, meetings and administrative tasks.
- Support the organisation of school events, visits, clubs, parent meetings and other activities.
- Maintain accurate calendars, deadlines and administrative schedules relevant to the role.
- Ensure office procedures are followed consistently and contribute to keeping procedures clear and up to date.
- Work collaboratively with other members of the administrative team and provide reasonable cover across office functions where required.

3. Arbor and School Information Systems

- Maintain accurate pupil and staff information within Arbor and other relevant school systems.
- Process pupil admissions, leavers, transfers and changes to pupil information.
- Maintain accurate parental contact details, consents and communication information.
- Maintain class lists, registers and pupil records.
- Support the administration of Nursery, Reception and in-year admissions.
- Process pupil transfers and ensure required records are sent and received appropriately.
- Support statutory school census returns and other Department for Education or local authority data collections.
- Carry out routine data-quality checks and ensure information held by the school is complete and accurate.
- Produce reports and information from Arbor for school leaders and staff where required.
- Support colleagues with routine use of Arbor where appropriate.
- Ensure school information systems are used securely and in accordance with data protection requirements.

4. Attendance Administration

- Maintain accurate attendance and absence information within Arbor.
- Process absence notifications and update registers appropriately.
- Follow up unexplained absences in accordance with school procedures.
- Support first-day response procedures.

- Produce routine attendance reports for the Headteacher and relevant staff.
- Support communication with parents and carers regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Maintain appropriate attendance records and supporting documentation.
- Support statutory attendance returns and requests for information.
- Escalate concerns relating to unexplained absence, patterns of absence or safeguarding promptly to the Headteacher or a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. Admissions and Pupil Administration

- Support the administration of school admissions, including Nursery and Reception admissions and in-year applications.
- Maintain accurate records of pupils joining and leaving the school.
- Liaise with parents, previous schools, receiving schools, Hertfordshire County Council and other agencies as required.
- Ensure pupil records are transferred securely and promptly.
- Support transition arrangements and the administrative organisation of new-pupil admissions.
- Maintain accurate records relating to pupil permissions, contacts, medical information and other core administrative data.

6. Single Central Record and Safer Recruitment

- Maintain the school's Single Central Record (SCR) accurately and securely under the oversight of the Headteacher.
- Ensure required recruitment and pre-employment checks are recorded correctly.
- Support safer recruitment processes, including preparation of recruitment documentation; administration of applications; organisation of interview arrangements; requesting and recording references; identity checks; right-to-work checks; DBS administration; recording qualification information; recording prohibition and other required checks; and maintaining recruitment and appointment records.
- Monitor the SCR regularly and draw missing, incomplete or expiring information to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Maintain appropriate records for staff, governors, volunteers, agency staff, contractors and other adults where required.
- Support safeguarding audits, reviews and inspections by ensuring relevant documentation is accurate, accessible and up to date.
- The postholder will administer safer recruitment processes but will not make recruitment or safeguarding decisions that properly sit with the Headteacher, DSL or recruitment panel.

7. HR and Personnel Administration

- Maintain accurate and confidential staff personnel records.
- Process documentation relating to staff starters, leavers and contractual changes.
- Prepare and submit relevant HR documentation.
- Maintain records relating to staff absence, sickness, maternity leave, parental leave and other authorised absence.
- Support the administration of Occupational Health referrals and other personnel processes as directed by the Headteacher.
- Maintain records of staff training and statutory requirements where required.
- Support recruitment from advertisement through to appointment and onboarding.
- Liaise with Hertfordshire County Council, HFL Education and other HR providers where appropriate.
- Monitor relevant HR deadlines and ensure required documentation is submitted promptly.
- Handle all personnel information sensitively and confidentially.

8. Payroll Administration

- Prepare and submit accurate payroll information within required deadlines.
- Process and record payroll information relating to new starters; leavers; contractual changes; additional hours; overtime; absence; maternity and parental leave; casual and supply staff; and other agreed payroll adjustments.
- Check payroll documentation for accuracy and raise discrepancies promptly.
- Liaise with payroll services and the Headteacher regarding queries.

- Maintain accurate payroll records and supporting audit trails.
- Ensure payroll information is processed confidentially and securely.
- The postholder will administer payroll information but will not authorise staffing changes or expenditure outside their delegated responsibilities.

9. Liaison with the Finance Assistant

- Work closely with the school's Finance Assistant to ensure that administrative information relating to finance is passed on accurately and promptly.
- Forward invoices, orders, payment information and other relevant documentation to the Finance Assistant.
- Liaise with the Finance Assistant regarding school trips, clubs, parent payments, suppliers and other areas where school-office administration overlaps with finance.
- Provide pupil, staffing or administrative information required by the Finance Assistant where appropriate.
- Pass financial queries to the Finance Assistant or Headteacher as required.
- Maintain clear communication between the school office and Finance Assistant so that deadlines, changes and queries are managed efficiently.
- The postholder is not responsible for the school's financial management, accounting, budget monitoring or routine processing of the school's accounts, which sit with the Finance Assistant and Headteacher.

10. Hertfordshire Systems, The Grid and External Services

- Use The Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (The Grid) confidently to access relevant school guidance, procedures, forms and information.
- Use appropriate Hertfordshire County Council and HFL Education systems linked to HR, payroll, admissions, pupil information, attendance, safeguarding administration, statutory returns and school administration.
- Maintain awareness of administrative updates, deadlines and changes relevant to the role.
- Draw significant changes, actions or deadlines to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Liaise professionally with external providers and local authority services where required.

11. Communications and Parental Contact

- Provide a professional, helpful and welcoming service to parents and carers.
- Communicate sensitively with families, recognising that some conversations may involve confidential, complex or difficult circumstances.
- Prepare and distribute school communications.
- Support the maintenance of parent contact information and communication systems.
- Respond to routine enquiries within the scope of the role and refer more complex matters appropriately.
- Ensure significant concerns or sensitive issues are passed promptly to the relevant member of staff.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

12. Visitors and Contractors

- Support school visitor procedures.
- Ensure visitors are appropriately welcomed, signed in and directed in accordance with school safeguarding procedures.
- Maintain visitor and contractor records where required.
- Check relevant documentation in line with school procedures.
- Refer safeguarding, security or site concerns immediately to the appropriate senior member of staff.

13. Safeguarding

Northfields Infants and Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

- Understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly to a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.
- Complete statutory and school-required safeguarding training.
- Understand their role in safer recruitment and visitor procedures.
- Recognise that administrative accuracy is an important part of safeguarding.
- Contribute to a culture in which the welfare of pupils remains paramount.

The postholder may encounter highly sensitive safeguarding information and must handle such information with discretion and professionalism.

14. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- Handle personal, sensitive and special-category data in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and school policies.
- Maintain confidentiality in relation to pupils, families, staff and school business.
- Ensure confidential records are stored securely.
- Follow appropriate procedures when sharing information.
- Report potential data breaches, security concerns or inappropriate disclosure promptly.
- Maintain good information-management practices, including accurate filing, retention and secure disposal of records.

15. Health and Safety

- Comply with the school's Health and Safety Policy and associated procedures.
- Report hazards, defects and concerns promptly.
- Support relevant administrative processes relating to health and safety where required.
- Contribute to maintaining a safe and secure school environment.

16. Professional Responsibilities

- Promote the aims, ethos and values of Northfields Infants and Nursery School.
- Demonstrate the school's REACH values: Respect, Expression, Achievement, Creative and Hearts full of fun.
- Maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- Treat pupils, parents, colleagues and visitors with dignity and respect.
- Attend relevant training and professional development.
- Participate in meetings relevant to the role.
- Maintain professional knowledge of systems and procedures relevant to the post.
- Work flexibly within the reasonable requirements of the role.
- Undertake other duties reasonably requested by the Headteacher that are commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Applicants will be assessed through the application form, references, interview and, where appropriate, a practical task.

Experience

Criterion	Essential	Desirable
Previous administrative experience in a school or education setting	✓	
Experience of working in a busy school office	✓	
Experience of dealing directly with parents, carers and professionals	✓	
Practical experience of using Arbor or another school management information system	✓	
Strong practical experience of Arbor		✓
Experience maintaining pupil records	✓	
Experience maintaining staff records	✓	
Experience of attendance administration	✓	
Experience of pupil admissions, transfers or leavers		✓
Experience of school census or statutory data returns		✓
Experience maintaining or contributing to a school Single Central Record	✓	
Experience of safer recruitment administration	✓	
Experience of DBS and pre-employment checks		✓
Experience of HR or personnel administration	✓	
Experience of school payroll administration	✓	
Experience of Hertfordshire payroll or HR systems		✓
Familiarity with The Hertfordshire Grid for Learning		✓
Experience of working in a Hertfordshire maintained school		✓
Experience of liaising with finance staff and handling routine financial documentation		✓

Knowledge

Criterion	Essential	Desirable
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Criterion	Essential	Desirable
Understanding of school administration processes	✓	
Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities within a school	✓	
Understanding of safer recruitment requirements	✓	
Understanding of confidentiality and data protection	✓	
Understanding of the importance of accurate pupil and staff records	✓	
Knowledge of attendance procedures in schools	✓	
Knowledge of statutory school census requirements		✓
Knowledge of Hertfordshire school systems and procedures		✓

Skills and Abilities

Criterion	Essential	Desirable
Excellent organisational skills	✓	
Ability to manage competing priorities	✓	
Ability to work accurately under pressure	✓	
Strong attention to detail	✓	
Ability to work independently and use initiative	✓	
Ability to recognise when a matter requires escalation	✓	
Excellent written communication skills	✓	
Excellent verbal communication skills	✓	
Strong literacy skills	✓	
Strong numeracy skills	✓	
Confident use of Microsoft Word	✓	
Confident use of Microsoft Excel	✓	
Confident use of email and online systems	✓	
Ability to learn and use new systems effectively	✓	

Criterion	Essential	Desirable
Ability to produce accurate reports and records	✓	
Ability to meet deadlines	✓	
Ability to handle confidential information appropriately	✓	
Ability to communicate sensitively with families	✓	
Ability to remain calm when dealing with difficult or unexpected situations	✓	
Ability to work effectively as part of a team	✓	

Personal Qualities

Criterion	Essential	Desirable
Professional and approachable manner	✓	
Reliable and conscientious	✓	
Trustworthy and discreet	✓	
Calm under pressure	✓	
Flexible and adaptable	✓	
Proactive and solution-focused	✓	
Able to build positive working relationships	✓	
Committed to high standards	✓	
Committed to equality and inclusion	✓	
Committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	✓	
Able to demonstrate the values and ethos of Northfields Infants and Nursery School	✓	

Qualifications

Essential

- A good standard of general education, including literacy and numeracy skills sufficient to undertake the duties of the role.

Desirable

- GCSE or equivalent qualifications in English and Mathematics.
- A relevant qualification in business administration, school administration, HR, payroll or a related area.
- Relevant training in safer recruitment, school information systems or school administration.

Key Attributes for Success in the Role

Knows how a school office works. They will understand that priorities can change rapidly and that the office needs to remain calm, professional and organised.

Gets the detail right. Whether dealing with payroll, pupil records, attendance or the Single Central Record, accuracy matters.

Uses sound judgement. They will know what they can deal with themselves and when something needs to be passed to the Headteacher, DSL or another colleague.

Builds relationships. They will become a familiar and trusted point of contact for families, staff, pupils and professionals.

Understands confidentiality. They will handle sensitive information with discretion and professionalism.

Takes ownership. They will keep track of deadlines, processes and actions and will not need to be reminded repeatedly about routine responsibilities.

Works as part of the wider team. They will communicate well with the Headteacher, Finance Assistant, staff and external services and understand how their work connects with other school functions.

Safeguarding Statement

Northfields Infants and Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Appointment will be subject to satisfactory completion of all appropriate pre-employment checks, including references, identity and right-to-work checks, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and all other checks required under current statutory safeguarding guidance.

References will include questions relating to the candidate's suitability to work with children.

An online search may be undertaken for shortlisted candidates as part of the school's due diligence checks.

Equality and Inclusion

Northfields Infants and Nursery School is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from suitably qualified candidates regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

Review of the Job Description

This job description describes the principal duties and responsibilities of the post and is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

The duties may be reviewed periodically in consultation with the postholder to reflect the changing needs of the school, provided that any changes remain commensurate with the grade and overall level of responsibility of the post.