



Kensington
Aldridge Academy



PCA Technician
Candidate Information Pack
June 2024



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA). This pack is intended to give you information about this role and our school's vision and ethos. Further background information is available at kaa.org.uk, including in the parent prospectuses and recruitment pages you can find there.

KAA is an 11 – 18 academy situated in the heart of Notting Hill. We opened in brand new buildings in 2014 with just Year 7 and our facilities are second to none. This is our tenth year of operation, and we are now a full school with 1,300 students in Years 7 to 13.

KAA is a high-performing academy with a strong local and national reputation. DfE performance tables consistently place us amongst the top schools nationally for student progress. Ofsted have judged the school to be “outstanding” in all categories and describe standards as “exceptional”. In 2018 we were named the TES “Secondary School of the Year”, and our 2022 Good Schools Guide review praises the “phenomenal” education students receive.

Any success we have comes from the talent and dedication of our staff.

KAA staff members are reflective, committed professionals, willing to do whatever it takes for our students to achieve the best results. This role is an opportunity to join a great staff team and make a significant contribution to our ongoing work.

As Principal, there is no higher priority for me than the recruitment and development of staff. **Like any school, we are a “people business” first and foremost.** We understand that we ask a lot from staff, but in return we provide extensive support and development opportunities and the space to extend your skills more than you would find elsewhere.

If, after reading the enclosed information, you would like to apply, please complete the application form that can be found online at www.kaa.org.uk or the TES advert and return it via e-mail to Shola Ope, HR Manager, at recruitment@kaa.org.uk. If you have any queries, please contact Alice and it may be possible to arrange a conversation with myself or one of the leadership team here at KAA.

With best wishes,

Anna Jordan
Principal

Performance and Creative Arts (PCA) Technician - Job Description

Reports to: Director of Performing Arts

Application Deadline: Wednesday 3rd July 2024

Start date: September 2024

Contract: Full time / 42 weeks per year (39 term time plus 3 weeks in school holidays)

Salary: S19 (£25,317) – S21 (£26,932)

PCA at KAA

Kensington Aldridge Academy is a Performing & Creative Arts ‘specialist’ school. This means PCA is the heartbeat of our academy - a central part of our curriculum and culture which is relevant to all students. We invest heavily in PCA subjects in a way that is uncommon in mainstream secondary schools. Some examples;

- We have state of the art facilities in Music, Drama, Dance, Art & DT.
- We offer a generous curriculum allocation for these subjects at Key Stage 3 – students have one or two hours of each subject per week, and this carries on all year round (we do not use carousels). Lessons are all delivered by subject specialists.
- We have a PCA aptitude test for incoming Year 7s, ensuring that 10% of all students admitted have demonstrated raw talent and enthusiasm for PCA.
- There is a high take up of PCA subjects at GCSE and A Level. We protect these subjects within the KS5 curriculum, so they can run even with small numbers.
- We offer a rich and extensive programme of after school enrichment clubs for PCA, and a vibrant calendar of PCA school events and competitions.
- KAA has formal partnerships with the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA), as well as other local arts organisations. The partnerships bring a range of extra opportunities for students and staff.

The Role

We are like delighted to be advertising for a PCA Technician to join our large team of PCA staff here at KAA. This role will be perfect for someone with a passion for PCA and a practical, ‘can-do’ attitude. They will have experience in performance and productions, including lighting, sound, costume and set design.

The PCA Technician will work closely with our fantastic PCA staff to deliver productions (assuming the role of Set Designer, Props Master, Lighting Designer etc); provide in-lesson support across all PCA subjects (Music, Dance, Drama, Art, DT); and help with enrichment activities and holiday camps. No previous school experience is essential, but candidates who have previously worked in theatres, production companies, galleries, schools or colleges would be in a stronger position to assume the role.

An exciting aspect of this vacancy is that within our PCA department, you will have the opportunity to make your mark on the role and bring an influence that can enrich the PCA experience our students receive here at KAA.

The PCA Technician will also join a wider community of 4 other curriculum technicians who have comparable responsibilities within other departments.

Above all else, we are looking for a person who is reliable, flexible and creative and is willing to work as part of a dedicated team.

For further details about our PCA provision please take a look at our website:

<https://kaa.org.uk/performing-creative-arts/>

Key Responsibilities

- To provide high quality technical support to staff and students within Performing and Creative Arts Departments.
- To oversee the general running and events management of the KAA Theatre and Performing Arts Spaces for internal and external use.
- Preparation of apparatus/resources for practical lessons; general maintenance of equipment; general administration for the Performing and Creative Arts Team.
- To assist with the running of the Performing and Creative Arts enrichment programme and holiday provision.

Responsible for:

- The theatre, recording studio, tech box, scenery store/costume cupboard, dance studio, music, drama and dance classrooms.

General Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assume the roles of Technical Stage Manager and Production Manager, LX (electrician), Set Designer, Props Master, Lighting Designer, ASM, and DSM as appropriate to the requirements of the KAA Theatre.
- Support students when using specialist performing arts technical resources and equipment, such as sound and lighting, during lessons and rehearsals, enhancing their use of technical resources and equipment.
- Provide technical support during day/evening/weekend (where appropriate) for internal performances, practical exam performances, mobilising set conception and theatre preparation, pre-show rigging, lighting, sound and operation, and postproduction de-rigging, by prior negotiation and agreement.
- Support the administration of the academy productions, including launching ticket sales and marketing through communicating with the finance team to ensure marketing is of high quality.
- Liaise with relevant departments around the logistics of the show, including marketing, show rights, finance.
- Support the Performing and Creative Arts team with the school Enrichment Programme and holiday provision, offering a club or supporting existing clubs.
- Contribute to the creative design of productions in Performing and Creative Arts; work alongside students and staff in the creation of student productions including the preparation of lighting, sound effects, projection, audio, staging and video.
- Maintenance and operation of Recording Studio, including multi-track recording and application of DJ equipment.
- Assist with the management of the whole school peripatetic music provision, including timetabling.
- Preparation and setup in Drama, Dance and preparation and set up of instruments for practical lessons in Music as required.
- Provide technical support in the academy theatre during school assemblies, staff training and other school events.
- Production of teaching materials/resources and displays as directed.
- Preparation, ordering, storing of materials for the Performing and Creative Arts Department.

- To support/cover other technicians in the area due to training/sickness or busy periods.

Other

- To undertake training and development relevant to the post and in line with the Academy's priorities.
- To maintain a presence around the school to ensure that the highest standards of behaviour and site-usage are upheld.
- To undertake other related duties which may be required from time to time within a reasonable workload.
- There will be a requirement for the successful candidate to undertake video editing in relevance to the responsibility of the role.

No job description can be fully comprehensive, and from time to time the successful candidate may have to undertake other professional duties as directed by the Principal.

Person Specification

Education/Qualifications (* indicates desirable not essential)

- Educated to degree level (or FE equivalent)
- Qualified to work in the UK
- *Further professional qualifications relating to the above job description.

Experience

- Previous experience or knowledge of the work of an PCA Technician (or similar) such as experience working within a theatre or performing arts venue / school
- *Experience of working in a school setting and liaising with pupils, staff members and external stakeholders

Skills & Knowledge

- Up to date knowledge of the set design & production set up Excellent administrative and organisational skills
- Attention to detail and ability to pre-empt problems
- Able to demonstrate flexibility and deal with new / changing priorities
- Able to problem-solve and be creative
- Able to take initiative and ownership of tasks as well as working with minimal supervision
- Able to multi-task, prioritise workload and meet tight deadlines
- Strong IT skills with experience using MS Office (including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook) and / or Google Workspace (including Docs, Sheets, Slides, Meets, Mail and Forms)
- *Good working knowledge of SIMS
- Committed to the personal professional development of themselves and of others
- Committed to team work and working collaboratively with colleagues
- A commitment to the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils
- Genuine belief in the potential of every student

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure and the post holder must be committed to safeguarding the welfare of children.

About Kensington Aldridge Academy

Culture & Ethos

One of the distinctive aspects of being a start-up school is that you can define your culture from day one and set the bar sky high. When we opened KAA we had no existing population of students and teachers who were set in their ways – instead we set out our expectations clearly at the start and, because they were followed up with a consistently great ‘offer’, these expectations have been met.

The opportunity we had to start from scratch and grow carefully is still a defining feature of our school, all these years on.

Our culture remains strong and students and staff alike feel very proud to be part of KAA. Students and their immense potential are at the heart of the work we do.

We believe:

- Every child has the potential to excel
- It is through hard work and discipline that success is achieved
- Outstanding teachers, willing to do whatever it takes, can transform students’ lives
- We are all learners, and as teachers we must model the learning behaviour we ask of students
- School should be a caring, safe place where students are happy
- Parents are our most important partners

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning is the core business of any school. All aspects of school life - attainment, progress, behaviour, ethos, attendance - flow from outstanding classroom teaching and, because of this, the classroom experience of students is our main concern. Our top priority is to ensure that students have a consistent diet of excellent lessons each day.

At KAA we have a model for teaching and learning that is of a national standard, and which is constantly evolving. Our approach is to treat **all** learners as intelligent individuals, irrespective of their prior attainment, and to support them all to go on to achieve the very best results. We work hard to ensure this model of teaching is widely understood and consistently implemented across the academy, and that is continually refined and improved as the school develops.

There are **three main aspects** to our approach to **teaching and learning**:

The Teaching and Learning Handbook: This is more than just a teaching and learning policy that sits on the shelf, or, even worse, a few pages in the staff handbook that sets out expectations for lesson planning and offers a few templates. This is a developmental document; a research based handbook that provides clear guidelines on how to plan and deliver lessons. Our teaching and learning handbook is the central policy of the school – our ‘bible’ – and the basis of our on-going programmes of staff training and lesson observation. Candidates can review a copy in advance here: <https://kaa.org.uk/teaching-learning/teaching-learning-handbook/>

Our handbook is not overly prescriptive; instead it provides teachers with a helpful framework to guide their thinking about short, medium and long-term planning; questioning; discussion; group work; literacy; extended writing; and many other aspects of classroom practice. Within this framework they can develop their own lessons and activities to suit their style and subject.

High-quality staff training: One of our mantras at KAA is, *'we learn best when we learn together'*. For us, staff training is something which is relevant to all, not just new staff and ECT's. We don't just reserve training for INSET days – we have an on-going programme of twilight sessions that take place during most weeks of the year. The majority of our training sees our own staff training each other on their areas of expertise. It is grounded in the T&L model – we take ideas from the handbook and illustrate them through training.

Where appropriate, we partner with external training providers. In-house training draws heavily on our archive of video recordings of lessons - we have invested in technology to allow teachers to record 'model' lessons (although it's often even more useful to show colleagues less successful lessons, assuming you are brave enough!). Most importantly, our training is mapped out well in advance, and linked to the overall academy improvement plan. We never make up sessions on the hoof, but always use lesson observation and other monitoring and evaluative tools to establish which aspect of the model needs refinement, and then use training to address this. In short, our on-going, high quality staff training programme inspires and motivates staff, and in time we expect to gain teaching school status and conduct school improvement work with other schools in the borough and beyond.

Lesson observation: We adopt a radically different approach to lesson observation that places observing to learn at the heart of staff development. For us, observation is a formative tool and part of a teacher's entitlement to professional development; it is not a performance management exercise. It is expected that all our teachers will be involved in the academy lesson observation cycle, viewing the process as a powerful form of training. As part of their induction into the academy, all teachers will be trained in lesson observation and giving constructive feedback. We operate an open, non-hierarchical approach to lesson observation, in which people request to observe and be observed. It is expected that as lead professionals, members of SLT will be observed just as much as the rest of the teaching staff.

This extensive lesson observation process helps in two ways:

- i. Good ideas will spread quickly around the system, as teachers replicate the best techniques that they see in each other's classrooms
- ii. A culture will be created in which teachers are open to feedback and not defensive about their practice. They will understand that we are all still learning and no one has ever 'arrived' as a teacher

As staff we understand how central teaching and learning is to the work of the school.

As such, there are three questions which are the hallmark of a KAA teacher:

- **How do my students feel when they arrive at my classroom?**
- **Is my lesson worth behaving for?**
- **How could I have taught that lesson better?**

Facilities

Distinctive features of our building include:

- A professional theatre
- Our own sports hall and dance studio
- A safe, enclosed rooftop football / sports pitch
- Specialist performing and creative arts classrooms for drama, art and performing arts
- Two music rooms and a professional recording studio
- State of the art design technology rooms, including Graphics, Resistant Materials, Food Technology and Textiles
- Flexible IT spaces – giving students safe access to the right technologies
- Three libraries
- Access to the brand new Kensington Leisure Centre and swimming pool next door to the academy

We are extremely fortunate to have these facilities and will put them to the service of our students. However, we know the building alone is not the answer; it is the school's values, our strong ethos, and our focus on curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning that will be the keys to our success.

Our location

Situated in the heart of Notting Hill, Kensington Aldridge Academy is positioned in one of the most exciting and sought after parts of London. With Portobello Road, home to the famous Portobello Road Market, close by, there are plenty of bars, restaurants, shops and pubs to choose from. We have excellent transport links: just three minutes from Ladbroke Grove tube station, and within easy walking distance of Holland Park and Notting Hill stations, and many local bus routes.

A commitment to equal opportunities

KAA is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our employees. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and the community and that each employee feels respected and able to give their best. To that end we are committed to provide equality and fairness for all in our recruitment and employment practices and not to discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

Staff benefits

- Professional development that is of a national standard. In Ofsted's words: *"Staff morale is exceptionally high. They enjoy working at the school and benefit from high-quality training. Teachers new to the profession feel very well supported in settling into the school quickly and developing their practice."*
- Discounted membership of the new Kensington Leisure Centre.
- Two week half term in October.
- 180 school days, 10 training days (not 5 as you find in most schools) & 5 planning days per year, which include the opportunity for teachers to work from home.

- Free breakfast and lunch for any staff who eat with students in the Dining Hall.
- Free weekly staff wellbeing activities; yoga, circuits, staff choir and art classes.

Terms and conditions

The school governors are keen to ensure that staff remuneration is always competitive and that staff are fairly rewarded for their commitment and excellent performance in line with the academy's pay policy. We want to compete for the best staff and offer attractive pay and conditions and career development opportunities to do so. Salaries will be based on experience, qualifications, and the scope of job and the level of responsibilities. We operate our own terms and conditions, which broadly mirror national pay and conditions. Some key differences are:

- 180 not 190 school days and 10 not 5 training days with a further 5 planning days on top. This means we operate a 39 week year: 37 teaching weeks and 2 weeks planning and preparation with significant focus on CPD.
- The two week October half term.
- The school day will be from 8am to 5pm Monday to Thursday (with co-planning, mentoring, observation, marking & moderation etc built into the school day wherever possible).
- On Friday the working day finishes at 4pm

Response

We very much regret that we are only able to inform short listed candidates of the outcome of their application. If you do not hear from us within four weeks of the closing date, please assume that you have been unsuccessful on this occasion. We would like to assure you, however, that every application we receive is considered in detail and a shortlist only drawn up after careful reference to a detailed person specification.

Recruitment Privacy Notice

As part of your application to join us, we will gather and use information relating to you. For full details on our Recruitment Privacy notice please visit <https://kaa.org.uk/recruitment/>.

Biographies of Senior Team

Anna Jordan – Principal



Anna is Principal at KAA. She was appointed in 2013 as Senior Vice Principal and took up headship in November 2023. She has been central to the growth and success of KAA since the school's inception ten years ago.

Prior to this role, Anna was Assistant Headteacher at Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College (BTHCC), an 11-18 school in South Manchester. Before taking on this role she was Head of Maths at the same school. BTHCC has been judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted in three consecutive inspections, most recently in 2013. It is a nationally recognised as a centre of excellence and has Teaching School status.

At BTHCC role she was responsible for leadership training and the coordination and development of the middle leaders within the school. Through the school improvement work BTHCC engaged in, Anna designed and delivered leadership and coaching programmes for school leaders across the North West. As a Future Leaders participant she has also supported other schools nationally in developing the quality of their teaching and the structure of their curriculum.

Ryan Bernard - Vice Principal - Pastoral



Ryan is Vice Principal – Pastoral at KAA. He joined the academy in 2014 as Lead Teacher of Physical Education. Ryan founded a dynamic PE department, led Pankhurst as Head of House for 2 years, and was Director of Learning for Year 7 before joining the Senior Leadership Team. He was appointed as Assistant Principal in February 2017 and promoted to Vice Principal in July 2019.

Ryan graduated from the University of East London with a BSc (Hons) in Sports Coaching. He then completed his PGCE in Physical Education at Middlesex University and a Master's degree in Teaching & Learning at the Institute of Education. Before joining KAA, Ryan was Head of Boys PE at Phoenix Academy, an 11 – 19 school in Shepherds Bush, London.

Jamie Clayton – Vice Principal – Teaching & Learning



Jamie is Vice Principal for Teaching & Learning at KAA. He joined the academy as Director of English in 2016 and was promoted to SLT in September 2018.

Jamie studied English Literature at the University of York before training with Teach First. He then completed a Masters degree in Education and Leadership at the University of Manchester. Jamie was Second in Charge of English at Walthamstow Academy and Key Stage 5 coordinator at City of London School before joining KAA in April 2016.

QUOTES ABOUT KAA

“I have visited many schools in my time and KAA is one of the most impressive. It is an amazing school with amazing students.”

Dr Lee Elliot Major, CEO of The Sutton Trust

“I was inspired by my visit to KAA. Talking to the students about their hopes and aspirations for the future and hearing them speak in such an articulate manner is clearly the product of a culture of high expectation and a belief that they can and will achieve. The team at KAA have made a fantastic start and well on the road to establishing a truly great school.”

Sir David Carter, National Schools Commissioner

“Staff and pupils are proud of their school. The school has fostered a strong community that is welcoming and warm. The school is led with both sensitivity and determination, building a vibrant school in which pupils excel.” - Ofsted, 2024

“Leaders, governors and staff have the highest ambitions for pupils. Together, they have created a school where pupils are happy, safe and making excellent progress. What the school has achieved and sustained is remarkable.” - Ofsted, 2017

“Bring an appetite for learning and hard work and the school will provide a banquet of opportunities – academic, cultural and sporting. Every community should have one.”

Good Schools Guide

VISITORS & SUPPORTERS OF KAA



Gareth Malone



Justine Greening



Princess of Wales



David Carter



Gillian Anderson



Sadiq Khan



Prince Harry



Damian Hinds



King Charles



David Cameron