



Kensington
Aldridge Academy



**Learning Support Assistant
Candidate Information Pack**

July 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 Shola 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

Learning Support Assistant - Job Description

Reports to: HLTA

Start date: 27th August 2024

Salary: Point S18 (£24,695) – S20 (£26,252) - *subject to relevant experience*

Working Hours: Monday-Thursday (8am-4.30pm), Friday (8am-4pm)

Contract: Permanent and Full Time (term time only, 39 weeks)

The Role

This is a fantastic opportunity for a candidate to join one of the UK's best academies as a Learning Support Assistant. The successful candidate will also be part of a large, dynamic and friendly inclusion team that spans the mainstream learning support hub and The Grandin Centre, a resource base for autism. The school currently has 78 students with Educational Health Care Plans. The successful candidate will support a range of students in lessons but will be assigned, based on skills, to either the Grandin Centre or Learning Support. They will be responsible for enabling a range of students who are neurodiverse to be successful in the mainstream school, providing knowledgeable and well-planned support to students in order that they thrive academically and emotionally. The successful candidate will be providing timetabled support in lessons across the school and working with teachers to support learning. There will also be a number of withdrawal sessions with their key students where Learning Support Assistants provide high quality planned lessons on either academic work or social and emotional development. This could also include specific interventions in specific subject areas where the Learning Support Assistant's academic background gives them strength in these areas. This could include GCSE preparation or at A Level if appropriate. The successful candidate will be working with a number of professionals and parents in order to get the best outcome for the students they work with. The successful candidate would need a strong academic background as well as the ability to support social and emotional development of complex students.

This role is a great springboard for any aspiring classroom teachers or learning mentors. Learning Support Assistants working in Grandin and Learning Support receive regular and detailed training on the range of barriers to learning and we are happy to support and develop staff who are new to this area of education. We also welcome experienced staff who want to progress their career.

Key Responsibilities

Supporting student progress and outcomes

- To work with Senior HLTAs and SENCOs to develop strong mid-term plans for their key students. Mid-term plans provide clear plans for regular one to one sessions where students come out of lessons.
- To work with the SEN team, teachers, and parents, to implement and develop resources for students who have a range of co-morbid difficulties such as ADHD, Language Disorder and additional social and emotional difficulties above and beyond their autism.
- To understand and apply professional guidance as outlined in students' EHCPs.
- To contribute to multi-professional meetings, including Annual Reviews of EHCPs.
- To use a range of strategies and resources in lessons to support the academic progress and engagement of EHCP and SEN Support students.
- To liaise closely with parents of key students.
- To observe, record, and feedback information on student performance.

Supporting learning and inclusion

- To support inclusive learning culture in the school and an understanding of neurodiversity.
- To support students' successful transfer between educational establishments and at key stages in their learning.
- To provide proactive and effective in-class support, liaising closely with teachers to support students across a range of curriculum areas and assisting with whole class teaching as necessary.

- To plan, deliver and review small-group and one-to-one teaching and interventions.
- To monitor the 'whole child', including the social and emotional well-being of vulnerable students.
- To assist in creating materials for curriculum delivery and display boards.
- To reinforce Academy expectations at all times and intervene proactively to prevent escalating behaviour and to challenge poor behaviour within and outside the classroom.
- To support students proactively when on duty at break and lunchtimes to develop their inclusion in the school and their ability to socialise and interact positively.
- To assist students' achievement outside of the classroom, e.g. in house competitions.
- To support extracurricular activities including homework support and after-school enrichment activities.

Working in partnership

- To work with teachers to assess the needs and progress of individual children.
- To develop and maintain regular contact with the families and carers of students you key-work and to keep them informed about their child's progress.
- To work with all staff to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people.
- To meet regularly with the SEN management team to discuss key students and make use of advice and supervision to develop competencies.
- To maintain and update student profiles and individual behaviour plans so that all relevant staff are informed of a student's strengths, needs, and support strategies.
- To keep other professionals accurately informed of progress or concerns they may have about the pupils they work with.
- Attending training and making use of new resources and implementing professional advice through their planning.

Other support

- To supervise students in playgrounds, lunch rooms, and around the school building.
- To work collaboratively with professionals such as Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist and implement plans as advised.
- To maintain records and other relevant paperwork, as directed.
- To maintain student and family confidentiality at all times.
- To attend regular meetings, training and briefings, as required, and contribute to the identification and sharing of good practice between individuals.
- Where required, to cover for absent colleagues.
- First Aid and Invigilation as required (and support with Exam Access Arrangements)
- To undertake other reasonable duties as directed by Line Manager/SLT.

Academy Culture

- Support the academy's values and ethos by contributing to the wider culture of the school and upholding the KAA core values.
- Help create a strong academy community, characterised by consistent, orderly behaviour and caring, respectful relationships.
- Help foster an academy culture and ethos that is utterly committed to achievement.

Person Specification

**The asterisked skills and experience are desirable but not essential*

Qualifications

- Qualified to at least degree level
- Qualified to work in the UK
- GCSE maths and English at grade C or above (or equivalent)

General - experience of

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Excellent communication skills and the ability to establish positive, effect working relationships with students, staff and parents.
- Ability to support classroom teaching across a range of subjects and age ranges
- Ability to plan, monitor and evaluate 1:1 or small group interventions with students
- Ability to analyse attainment and progress data in order to inform planning and support
- Ability to be resilient and flexible and to try different approaches with students with a wider range of additional needs, based on professional advice.
- Empathy and a willingness to understand the needs and motivation of students.
- Further professional qualifications relating to the above job description
- Experience of working with students with SEN
- Experience of working in an educational setting
- Experience or knowledge of the National Curriculum
- Experience or knowledge of evidence-based interventions or 'catch up' programmes.

Skills

- Excellent written communication skills.
- Highly developed ICT skills: the ability to use Outlook, Excel, Word, google slides with a high level of proficiency.
- Well-developed planning and organisational skills including time management and the ability to meet deadlines.
- Sound judgement and problem-solving skills.
- An understanding and empathy towards individuals with autism and wider SEN needs.

Motivation

- Willing to be fully engaged in the whole life of the school including extra-curricular activities.
- Committed to personal professional development.
- Committed to team work and working collaboratively with colleagues.
- A clear vision of what you want your students to achieve, which is aligned to KAA's core vision and values.
- A commitment to the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils.

Attributes

- Passion, resilience, maturity and optimism to lead through day-to-day challenges while maintaining a clear strategic vision and direction.
- Confidence and self-motivation to work well and be decisive under pressure.
- An entrepreneurial attitude.
- A role model to staff and students, with high standards of professionalism. 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. 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.

Kensington Aldridge Academy



The Grandin Centre

The Grandin Centre is a resource base within KAA for students with autism. The name comes from the autistic entrepreneur, Temple Grandin who has lectured widely on Autism and is the author of the Autistic Brain. She has been instrumental in our understanding of autism.

The Centre enables students to fully participate, progress and achieve alongside their peers in mainstream lessons. They are supported to do this through targeted interventions at the Centre and Learning Support Assistant work with in lesson. The Grandin centre is generously resourced and is situated in a quiet and spacious location comprising of social, academic and breakout spaces. Grandin students have their own private garden and play area, although many opt to spend their leisure time in the mainstream school.

Students at the Grandin centre also benefit from regular Occupational Therapist and Speech and Language Therapists input from outside professionals who are part of our team. The Grandin Centre is recognised both locally and nationally as a centre of excellence in supporting students with autism to access a mainstream education and is heavily oversubscribed. We have capacity for 20 students in total at the centre and unfortunately must turn away many applications each year (we currently have 26 students).

Outcomes for the Grandin Centre have been outstanding in recent years, within the top 2% nationally. All of our students play a full role in the life of the school and are supported to progress to appropriate and high-quality post 16 provision elsewhere. Future plans for the centre include expanding the provision into our sixth form and developing an outreach service to share expertise and training with other providers. As a school we celebrate neurodiversity with a particular emphasis on autism awareness. All students and staff at the academy receive annual training on autism and the school enthusiastically celebrates autism awareness week each April. Whilst not all LSAs will exclusively work in the Grandin Centre, the flexibility our team structure provides means that where possible, colleagues who have a particular interest or skillset that lends itself to work in the Grandin Centre can become involved in key work with students diagnosed with Autism or related conditions. We are extremely proud of the work that our staff achieve working in the Grandin Centre and will be delighted to welcome newcomers to this experience.



Learning Support

Learning Support currently supports 50 students who have Educational Health Care Plans. We also provide support for key students who come under SEN Support. We provide information for teaching staff for all students that come under SEN Support, which is over 200 students and provide advice on behaviour management and teaching strategies to meet these students' needs under Quality First Teaching.

Our EHCP students have a range of needs – in addition to the Grandin Centre we also support students with autism. We also support students with ADHD, language disorders, students with high levels of mental health challenges, students who are working at a lower level than their peers either through social and emotional issues or due to impairment of the executive functioning, dyslexia, dyscalculia or a combination of a variety of factors that lead to students needing significant support. In some year groups we have had students with physical disabilities and health needs.

Learning Support run an ADHD programme of workshops and behaviour management support to ensure students' needs supported within the classroom and wider school. Some students are

working on reduced timetables and need a significant amount of adult support while other students are more independent and more able to manage in the mainstream environment.

We work closely with parents, professionals and the community to ensure that students receive the best support possible but also feel included and valued in the school.

The relationships with staff is paramount and the role of the keyworker is often pivotal to the success of a young person.

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 stuck to them. The opportunity we had to start from scratch and grow carefully is still a defining feature of our school.

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. Our top priority is to ensure 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 and improving. Our approach is to treat all learners as intelligent individuals and to support them to achieve the best results. We work hard to ensure our model of teaching is widely understood and consistently implemented, and that it is continually refined 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 a few pages in the staff handbook that are of little importance to daily practice. It is a research-based handbook that provides ambitious 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 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 ECTs. 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 also 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!). Training is mapped out well in advance, and linked to the overall academy improvement plan.

Lesson observation: We adopt an open approach to lesson observation which 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. All KAA teachers are involved in our 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, in which people request to observe and be observed. Members of SLT are 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.

KAA staff know T&L is the “main thing” in any school. There are three questions KAA teachers ask themselves each day:

- 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

The wonderful KAA building has a range of distinctive features;

- 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 fortunate to have these facilities, and they bring real benefits to our staff and students. However, we know the building alone is not the answer; it is the school's values, our strong ethos, and our focus on teaching and learning which are the keys to our success.

Our location

Situated in the heart of Notting Hill, KAA is located in one of the most exciting and sought-after parts of London. With Portobello Road, home to the famous Portobello Road Market, as well as Westfield 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 representative of the community we serve 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."*
- Two-week half term in October.
- Discounted membership of the new Kensington Leisure Centre.
- 180 school days each year - as opposed to 190 in most schools - with 10 training days and 5 planning days, during which school is closed to students. On our 5 planning days teachers can work from home.
- We provide all staff with a free breakfast and lunch every day.
- We offer a range of weekly staff wellbeing activities; yoga, circuits, salsa, book club and more.

Terms and conditions

Our trustees are keen to ensure that staff remuneration is competitive and that staff are fairly rewarded for 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. 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, with 15 not 5 days for staff development (see above). This means we operate a 39-week year: 37 teaching weeks and 3 weeks training and planning, with a 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 and moderation all built into the school day. Students leave at 3.50 pm, unless they are staying for enrichment or intervention. On Friday we have an early finish - 3 pm for students and 4 pm for staff.

Response

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