

Capel Manor College

Head Keeper

Job Description & Person Specification



JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post	Head Keeper
Scale	Business and Learning Support
Grade	Scale 5 Points 19-22
Responsible to	Animal Collections Manager
Location	Crystal Palace
Contract	Full-time, Permanent

Key Responsibilities:

The key responsibility of the Head Keeper is to ensure the highest level of self and team performance, overseeing budgets, and developing animal-related projects. They will be responsible for supervising staff, learner, and volunteer development, ensuring training in both animal management and customer service. Additionally, they will manage the provision of equipment and facilities for learning sessions, communicate effectively with various stakeholders, and actively engage the public to recruit learners. Collaborating with the Collections Manager, they will establish protocols for the safe and legal functioning of the department, adhering to welfare standards and regulatory requirements. They will be carrying out hands-on husbandry as needed, including over weekends and holidays, where required.

Responsibilities:

1. Coordinating and assisting the supervision of students allocated to practical projects and providing technical assistance and advice.
2. Designing and running interactive education sessions with schools and groups during weekdays and public animal encounters during weekends and holidays.
3. Liaising internally with team members, including Team Leaders, regarding animal activities and co-operating with them to maintain continuity of care during weekends and holidays.
4. Maintaining and involving team with planning, developing, and implementing day-to-day routine care of the College's animal stock, including cleaning out and maintenance of accommodation and other relevant designated areas, provision of suitable feed, water, bedding, nesting material, enrichment, training, exercise, and daily health checks.
5. Organising and supporting animal management operations and veterinary intervention as required.
6. Designing and implementing informed, scientifically sound species-specific management strategies for the area of responsibility and the wider collection.
7. Ensuring the maintenance of any animal-related records, including but not limited to scheduling of routine treatments and preventative care.
8. Liaising with other departments in the College to ensure facilities are safe to use and provide high standards of animal welfare.
9. Coordinating stocktaking, introducing efficiencies where relevant.
10. Compiling staff rotas where necessary, assuring staff schedules and leave requests are planned and managed effectively for the area of responsibility.
11. Supporting team members to effectively exercise, train, and handle animal stock as appropriate and required.
12. Overseeing gardening duties within animal areas and liaise with members of the gardening, arboricultural, and horticultural team to ensure that the areas are kept at a professional standard.
13. Producing risk-assessments for any activities carried out within the collection, in liaison with the Collections Manager and the academic Team Leaders.
14. Enforcing requirements and regulations relating to health and safety, including by learners and other staff members.
15. Leading on communicating and following through emergency procedures and carrying out associated drill exercises, as required.
16. Liaising with external bodies e.g., veterinary professionals, RSPCA, Defra etc. as appropriate, including for the transportation of animals to and from veterinary or other relevant facilities.
17. Liaising internally with other staff as appropriate regarding animal activities and co-operating with them to maintain continuity of care during weekends and holidays.
18. Ensuring the completion of detailed records relating to routine animal care, appropriately investigating and mitigating any abnormalities or problems.

19. Supporting the College in promoting a culture of learning on the job, through internal and external training programmes.
20. Assisting the School's and College's leadership team with the development and implementation of ideas and improvements for animal husbandry and welfare, as well as educational activities, commercial operations, and outreach events.
21. Being flexible in supporting or carrying out animal operations in any collection of the College.
22. Any other reasonable duties of a similar nature as required by the Line Manager.

General Responsibilities:

1. Promote and implement all College policies, particularly those which refer to health & safety, equality of opportunity and Safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults
2. Participate in College programmes of staff appraisal and continuing professional development
3. Develop effective working relationships internally and with external partners
4. To operate at all times in line with the College's values and behaviours
5. Undertake other duties as may reasonably be required in the interests of the efficient functioning of the College

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications

- Possess a Level 2 qualification in English and Maths or a willingness to achieve within a specified period
- Level 3 qualification in Animal Management or a similar subject
- HND or Higher Education Degree in Animal Management, Animal Science, Zoology or similar
- Professional qualification meeting the requirements of the European Professional Zookeepers Qualification Framework (e.g. Diploma in Management of Zoo and Aquarium Animals (DMZAA)), or equivalent qualifications and experience

Experience

- Leadership experience in an animal collection setting
- Extensive practical experience of animal management for a range of animal taxa
- Experience of working with the public, demonstrating good principles of customer care
- Experience of working with learners in an educational environment
- Experience of working with the public, demonstrating good principles of customer care

Skills, Abilities and Knowledge

- The ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing
- Excellent administrative skills
- Effective organisation skills and ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team
- To follow rotas and working routines carefully and conscientiously
- Be able to demonstrate initiative and a pro-active approach to completing tasks beneficial to the animal collection without prompts

Other Factors

- An understanding of and commitment to safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people/vulnerable adults
- Emotional resilience
- The ability and determination to promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout all aspects of College life, including employment and service delivery
- Should the position involve regular driving, a clean driving licence is required