

JOB DESCRIPTION



Lead Teacher

Status: Exempt, Full-Time

Reports To: Head of School

Supervises: None

Dated: March 2025

Overview

Middle Way School is pioneering a new model of education based on the best in education research and enhanced by the wisdom and compassion of Buddhist traditions. Master teachers with a deep understanding of childhood development are the pillars of this education. Lead teachers are responsible for co-creating, evaluating, implementing and documenting curricula in cooperation with the Head of School, curriculum coordinators, and other teachers in the school. Lead teachers are responsible for supporting students' development in all areas including social-emotional, physical, and academic. They also work with the dharma curriculum coordinator to integrate Buddhist wisdom and practice into the classroom. Lead teachers assess students' progress and report to parents regularly. MWS school culture relies on daily meditation and ample professional support. We expect our teachers to meet conventional outcomes in unconventional ways and use skillful means to differentiate in ways that help meet students academically and socially. Teachers are expected to explore the Middle Way model of development and actively engage in its creation. Being a practicing Buddhist is not necessary, however, an understanding of Buddhist principles and terminology is expected. In addition, we ask that all staff develop a personal contemplative practice of some kind.

Responsibilities

- Creating a positive, nurturing classroom community
- Setting up and maintaining an organized and inviting classroom environment
- Developing and documenting curriculum including unit and lesson plans
- Working collaboratively and individually (with guidance from the Academic Curriculum Liaison) on curriculum development, instructional methods, assessment, and differentiation in all academic areas.
- Providing differentiated instruction to support and challenge students across academic subjects
- Knowledge in delivering strategy-based literacy and math instruction
- Able to implement a daily, productive, intentional, and engaging choice time
- Maintaining frequent contact with parents including a weekly newsletter
- Writing narrative reports twice per year and leading parent-teacher conferences with benchmarks documentation twice per year
- Supporting and training of interns/assistants
- Developing, planning and supervising field trips
- Attending staff meetings
- Planning and participating in seasonal celebrations and events



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- Supervising one lunch or recess period each day
- Participating in the admissions process
- Exploring and maintaining a contemplative practice and occasional dharma study
- Pursuing ongoing professional development
- Participating in summer curriculum development and classroom setup
- Other duties and responsibilities may be assigned from time to time as business needs require

Core Competencies

- Knowledge of current best practices in elementary education, including play-based learning, outdoor education, early childhood development, mindfulness, and social-emotional learning
- Background in progressive education and constructivist theory and ability to put it into practice
- Knowledge, understanding, and use of active learning strategies to support a range of learners
- Ability to creatively integrate and adapt curriculum to engage learners
- A creative and rigorous approach to information gathering and analysis, ability to understand broad ideas and synthesize
- Ability to implement effective classroom management strategies
- Demonstration of personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, justice and belonging.
- Clear communication – excellent command of written and spoken English
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team – especially when it is necessary to facilitate change, overcome an impasse, face an issue, or ensure that decisions are made.
- Ability to write and speak in depth about the tenets of Progressive education.

Qualities

- A passion for education and carrying out the vision and mission of Middle Way
- A love and understanding of children and early childhood development
- An interest in personal and professional growth,
- Open to the teachings of the Buddhadharma
- Flexible, open-minded, adaptable, patient with change
- Able to work independently and in teams
- Practical and resourceful
- Able to see the merits of perspectives other than his/her own; openness to different and new ways of doing things
- Reliable and respectful of deadlines
- Humor!

Required Education/Experience

- Master's degree required.
- Preferably 3-5 years of experience in grade level
- Familiarity with Responsive Classroom preferred
- Trained in a systematic, multi-sensory approach to reading instruction preferred



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Physical Capabilities

- Ability to kneel, reach, run, bend, lift and stand for periods of time.
- Ability to lift 25-30 lbs.
- Ability to move, see, hear, and speak with children to ensure children's health and safety.

Terms

- On-site at Middle Way School in Saugerties, NY
- Full-time, exempt
- Schedule is 7:55 AM - 3:30 PM plus one weekly staff meeting from 3:30 - 5:00 PM for the entirety of the 2025-2026 academic year
- All school breaks paid
- All employees must pass a New York State background check
- Annual salary \$45,000-\$65,000

We hire and enroll without discriminating against any identifying factor which may include race, age, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic background. We will make accessibility accommodations for individuals with disabilities to the fullest extent possible. As an institution and as individuals we recognize that we have the responsibility to actively change the power differences that perpetuate biases against historically underrepresented groups. Our inclusion efforts are a dynamic process. We welcome your experience and invite your input on how our school community can continue to evolve.