

Personal message about the SEND Lead/ SENDCo position

Hello, and thank you for showing an interest in the SEND Lead/ SENDCo position we have advertised. I would like to tell you a bit more about the school and the kind of person we are looking for:

- We have a preference, based on experience, for somebody working 4-5 days per week including a small amount of teaching. We might be open to persuasion otherwise.
- Our students are terrific: all have well-documented difficulties, but also untapped strengths and talents.
- We've been judged as 'outstanding' four times by [Ofsted](#), Most recently in [July 2018](#), which inspected our relatively new sixth form for the first time. (It's fair to say they were impressed!)
- However highly we've been judged, we are not complacent and are focused on continual improvement.
- We are a National Support School and among the first special schools in the country to receive the [World Class Schools Quality Mark](#). Our vision aims even higher: 'Achievement for all in a unique world-class school'.
- We take all that stuff in our School Development Plan very seriously: Preparing for Adulthood (PfA), Visible Learning (John Hattie), and Wellbeing (students and staff)
- We intend to be the best in the world at what we do; to achieve this we need staff who are already very good and also intend to be the best at what they do by being 'open to learning' (Viviane Robinson)
- We would welcome greater diversity in all areas of staffing to reflect more closely the community we serve (please see 'Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity').
- We have been involved in a long-term CPD programme linked to John Hattie's 'Visible Learning' meta-research, so we need someone that can lead strongly, evaluate the impact of our strategies when deciding whether to park, develop or share them, and is open to learning themselves.
- Ideally, and as we did with the previous postholder, we would like to develop his role over time into a 'Leading Practitioner' with an outward-facing aspect.
- Although our students are secondary age, they are working well within primary expectations of attainment in English and Maths, but many have talents in other areas of the curriculum, especially practical subjects.
- Whatever their starting points, all of our students achieve high-quality accredited outcomes at Key Stages 4 & 5.
- Many people tend to stay because their job is rewarding but remains challenging (I'm in my 26th year here), though some do relocate, retire, or get promoted elsewhere (hence this position becoming available)
- The work is never easy, and nor should it be, because our students deserve the absolute best from us.
- The best indicator for future success is whether someone is performing well in their current role, including the challenging parts of it (which usually involve other people!)
- If you are open to learning and change, and if your values and skills chime with us, you will love it here!
- We're not looking for clones or mavericks, but real leadership and team-playing. This means a willingness to learn from others as well as leading improvements in the practice of other colleagues.
- We need someone who will not just develop what we already have but be able to help lead us into new territory.

- I believe that this position is crucial to the students, staff, and our success as a school; top-notch leadership of SEND and inclusion is essential to becoming a world-class school!

This probably isn't the job for you if

- You don't like moving out of your comfort zone, learning, or working hard.
- You're looking for a way out of your current situation rather than a way forward.
- Your values are different than the school's.
- You are uncomfortable receiving and providing both support and challenge in order to improve.
- You find it hard to rapidly reprioritise, make tough decisions, give clear answers, or keep people on board.
- You don't like dealing with other people's problems!

We will not consider applicants who have not taken the trouble to find out about the school and/or send in 'generic' supporting statements or CVs. For safeguarding purposes, one of your referees MUST be your current or most recent Headteacher (or equivalent). Unfortunately, this job is not suitable for a newly-qualified teacher.

Hope to hear from you soon!

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Kean McDonnell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Headteacher