



# Westfield School

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Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the post of Headteacher at Westfield School.

The school, pleasantly located in the Thames-side village of Bourne End, is a maintained primary special school (NOR 55) catering for pupils with Communication and Interaction, with associated Social Emotional and Mental Health needs; the majority of pupils experience Communication & Interaction/ASd as their prime need.

Our retiring Headteacher has successfully led the school for more than twenty years, during which time it has significantly increased its intake and undergone changes in designation - the most recent in 2017 in response to emerging local trends in pupils' SEN profiles. Discussions are currently underway with the Local Authority on plans for a further increase in pupil numbers (to 70), which if implemented will require some building work and a possible review of the staff structure.

Notable milestones over the past year have been a positive OFSTED inspection in May, as well as accreditation by the National Autistic Society. Both have highlighted the school's strength in its focus on pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, and its specialist curriculum which, utilising recent academic research, is designed to incorporate social and emotional aspects in subject learning. A further recent innovation has been the introduction of Forest School; it has already had an impact and is establishing itself as an integral element of the whole-school curriculum.

Westfield benefits from a skilled and dedicated staff, and as OFSTED observed, parents are extremely positive about the school and how much their children enjoy attending.

The Governing Body, which has recently increased in number, possesses a good range of skills and experience. We enjoy the confidence and trust of senior leaders and staff alike, and remain committed to ensuring the school's future under new leadership.

We look forward to hearing from you and receiving your application. There will be an opportunity to visit the school on Wednesday 13 March.

Yours sincerely

Paul Roper  
Chair of Governors



## **INFORMATION ABOUT WESTFIELD SCHOOL**

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We are currently undergoing an LA requested expansion programme with the potential to raise the pupil number by at least 30%. This is an acknowledgement of the quality and success of our work, a significant investment in the future of the school and an exciting opportunity to further develop our provision.

We are a coeducational Primary Special School. Our pupils will have the cognitive capacity to work within their relevant mainstream age ranges, but on referral will usually be unable to access their cognitive capacity due to the learning barriers they experience. We expect the vast majority of pupils to experience special needs relating to Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASd), Speech, Language and Communication difficulties (SCLd) together with complex combinations of other associated needs. Because of their special needs, we expect our pupils to have displayed behaviours that are significant barriers to their learning when in mainstream school. However, we are not designated to work with children who have a prime need of SEMH.

### **WORKING AT WESTFIELD**

Westfield is a happy, relaxed, team-based school where staff feel valued and their support and training are a priority and children enjoy attending.

We recognise that although enjoyable, starting work at Westfield is a steep learning curve which must focus on developing the technical teaching skills needed. Those techniques and skills (and the theoretical understanding underpinning them) together with the experience gained in their development and practice, are transferable to all learning settings whether specialist or mainstream. This experience places any teaching professional at a real advantage in terms of personal development, broadening future options and career path.

We recognise that we are specialists in our field and that traditional external training does not often meet the needs of staff in developing the provision our pupils require. For this reason we work closely with a range of professionals and fully use the in-house expertise we have developed to support and extend the skills of new staff. Through ongoing work and research together with University departments we are also at the forefront of pioneering educational practice driven by evidence-based development of innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

### **SURROUNDS AND CATCHMENT AREA**

Pupils can be drawn from the whole of Bucks, though the school is most obviously linked with the High Wycombe and Chiltern & South Bucks Areas in the South of the County. We also take pupils from the Unitary Authorities in Berkshire and from other neighbouring Authorities.

The school enjoys a quiet site in a residential area, very close to the village centre with its shops, library and community facilities. The River Thames is a few minutes' walk away.

The school grounds include a large playground and a smaller Key Stage 1 playground, both with large play structures and other activity areas. We have a school field; half of which is developed as a large Forest School, a fundamental element of our provision. Our membership of Rotakids (an international Rotary Club gardening club) supports the vegetable allotments all the children work on, the various 'eco' areas around the site and our association with a school in Zambia.



The main building is laid out in a quad, with a secluded inner courtyard and pond. The light, well-proportioned school building is well maintained and resourced, and provides a great deal of space, allowing flexibility of use and provision ideal for our pupils. There is also a large PE Hall, dining room, a meeting room, an intervention room (used for delivery of aspects of the specialist curriculum and by external professionals) as well as specialist Food Technology rooms.

## **SCHOOL ORGANISATION**

The school currently has 1 KS1, 2 KS1/KS2 and 6 KS2 classes. Within those age ranges, children are allocated to classes with regard to their needs-profile rather than chronological age groups. This means that teaching strategies, resources and support can be precisely targeted and tailored to the needs of the pupils and delivery of both the national curriculum and our specialist curriculum can be achieved without the very high levels of differentiation otherwise necessary.

Each class has its own large room with computers and a quiet area for 1:1 work or for pupils to use to self-regulate their arousal levels.

Classes are grouped within Learning Bases so that staff can work as a team to share expertise and provide support to each other. Each class has a minimum of one teacher and one support member of staff. Class size depends on the needs profile of the pupils but rarely exceeds 6 pupils.

The school works closely with external professionals such as Occupational and Speech & Language Therapists so that professional knowledge and expertise is shared and staff always have a range of support available to them. Our own team of specialist staff provide training, supervision and advice to all staff on the delivery of or specialist curriculum and associated interventions.

## **WHAT AND HOW DO WE TEACH?**

We emphasise core skills and teach Literacy and Numeracy as discrete subjects as well as through other subjects. We teach the full National Curriculum (e.g. Science, History, Geography, Art) in the way that most suits the needs of the pupils and staff in that classroom.

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CURRICULUM**

This is an area of learning that bridges the National Curriculum and the specialist learning curriculum. Social and emotional learning is a very significant developmental area for all our children and we have created a highly specialised curriculum to meet these needs. It focuses on developing a child's understanding of how they think and feel and respond, and of how other people think, feel and behave, and on the development of positive and constructive social relationships.

## **SPECIALIST LEARNING CURRICULUM**

The specialist curriculum is designed to target specific learning skills and ways of thinking that affect how well children learn and behave. It is taught throughout the school to all children. It has four areas: Working memory, Attention, Inhibition and Thinking skills.