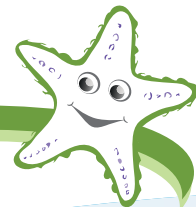


Making a difference



st.marys
Special School & College Bexhill

Principal

Candidate Information



Education, therapy and support for children with speech,
language, communication and complex needs

Welcome

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is an extremely exciting career-enhancing opportunity for a dynamic leader with special educational needs experience. The school is a special place in all respects; visitors always comment on the unique and welcoming atmosphere that the pupils, staff and facilities generate.

St Mary's is a 'Good' School. This is following a tough couple of years having been placed in Special Measures following an Ofsted inspection in November 2014. Dramatic changes were put in place with tremendous effect. In January 2016 the school was upgraded to Requires Improvement, then received Good for the Residential inspection in October 2016 and most significantly received a strong Good (in all areas) in the overall inspection in January this year.

The school is well and truly back on track! The Good rating provides an ideal platform for a new leader to further build on the improvements in place, make their stamp and take the school forwards. As you will hopefully see from this brochure and a visit to the school, St Mary's is able to offer integrated provision that is the envy of many schools, pupils and parents. The potential is enormous.

The role will appeal to individuals who thrive on challenge and innovation, but who are also able to lead and take with them our highly committed workforce. Recognising the challenging nature of the role, the Governing Board is committed to providing the next leader with appropriate support depending on their experience.

You will see from this brochure that the role of Principal at St Mary's is broad and requires both education and management experience. In addition to the specialist education provided, you will be overseeing care in the residential setting, therapy, health and well-being. As a non-maintained school, financial and commercial acumen and marketing skills will be required.

On behalf of the Governing Board I would like to thank you for your interest, wish you well in your deliberations, and look forward to working with the successful candidate. Please do not hesitate to contact our HR Manager (details on the final page) for further information and an opportunity to discuss the role further.

Please do come and visit the school!

Kind regards,

Mary Briggs
Chair of the Governing Board



St Mary's School and College

We are an inspirational non-maintained school and college for young people aged 7-19 with speech, language and communication disabilities, many of whom have other complex needs. Established in 1922, the school offers co-educational day and boarding provision. There are 67 pupils on roll (and growing) and approximately 150 staff. We are in the process of developing new employment-focussed provision for 19-25 year olds.

We are committed to providing integrated therapy, education and care tailored to each pupil's abilities and aspirations. The pupils follow an exciting, broad and balanced curriculum, which is adapted to meet individual needs.

The school has an expert team of specialist staff including Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Signing Tutors, Educational Psychologist, Autism Practitioner and Nursing staff. The team work alongside teachers and support staff, enabling us to have a truly holistic approach.

St Mary's is a family school. Pupils, parents and staff work closely together to give the pupils the very best educational opportunities – academic, cultural, artistic and sporting. Pupils are encouraged to have a go at everything, understand their own strengths and weaknesses and to be ambitious for themselves.

"Governors are highly effective in their work."

Ofsted 2018



"Pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school."

Ofsted 2018

Our Pupils

We have a wonderfully friendly and supportive community of pupils. Most pupils are placed through Local Authorities (often following a tribunal process). Pupils come from a wide range of schools across the country, many of whom have suffered poor progress and isolation elsewhere. Visitors to the school unfailingly comment on the calm and happy atmosphere.

All of the pupils have special educational needs often arising from severe and complex speech, language and communication needs. Pupils may also have additional physical, medical and moderate learning difficulties. The range of additional specific complex needs includes ADHD, ASD, ODD, Aspergers, Epilepsy, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Sensory Impairment, Tourettes, social interaction difficulties, mental health issues, acquired brain injury, visual and hearing impairments.

All pupils move on to further education and training.

Location

Bexhill-on-Sea is on the beautiful Sussex coast and St Mary's School and College is situated one mile from the town centre and seafront, adjacent to the link road that connects Bexhill with Hastings and Battle. Bexhill is home to the De La Warr Pavilion, part of the Coastal Culture Trail, with its internationally renowned programme of concerts, exhibitions and films. There are transport links to London, Brighton, Ashford (for HS1 and Eurostar), Gatwick and the channel ports.

Facilities

Set in a traditional house with lovely grounds, the school and college benefit from a fantastic range of modern facilities including:

- Aspire Vocational Centre which includes café, car wash, hair salon, shop, laundry and bank
- Specialist Key Stage 2 area with integrated therapy rooms
- Spacious and light classrooms
- A large modern hall
- Swimming and hydrotherapy pool
- Sensory Integration room and Sensory room
- Physiotherapy gym
- Food Technology room
- Science lab, ICT suite, Art room
- Spacious dining area
- Music and drumming room
- Soundfield systems
- Gym and climbing wall
- Adventure playground
- Tennis courts
- Gardening areas





"Pupils' experiences are strengthened by an integration of educational and therapeutic experiences."

Ofsted 2018

Residential Provision

We provide residential care, offering weekly, fortnightly and termly boarding. There are four very homely and welcoming residential areas. Some of the boarding is on site and there are also two houses close to Bexhill town centre and the sea front. This allows pupils to practice their independence and community living skills in real life situations.

The Curriculum

Pupils are arranged in mixed-age classes within Key Stages. The curriculum is highly individualised with IEPs, My Plans and Therapy Targets created for each pupil. Teachers, therapists, and support staff meet weekly to plan the delivery of subjects in an integrated and highly specialised way.

At Key Stage 2 and 3, the curriculum is based broadly on the National Curriculum. In Key Stage 2 we have launched a new integrated model of working to prepare pupils for a secondary style subject based model in Key Stage 3. The Key Stage 4 curriculum offers a wide range of academic and vocational accreditation at Entry Level and Levels 1 and 2. We are looking to develop GCSE programmes in the future.

College offers a broad range of curriculum studies including English and Numeracy, a range of AQA and BTEC courses and work experience programmes.

Social and emotional development is a crucial thread that runs through the whole curriculum and enables the pupils to learn vital independence and life skills for the future. Science, music, art, sport, food technology, horticulture, ICT and drama all benefit from the excellent facilities and specialist staff.

Extra-Curricular Activities

In addition to the broad creative curriculum, there are varied opportunities for pupils as part of the Waking Day programme. Activities on offer include horse riding, drum lessons, judo, soccer, cricket, high wires, with extended educational visits.

Total Communication Environment

Signing by staff and the use of symbols (the Widgit System) are integral to the school. Some of our students use communication books and electronic aids to maximise their potential for communication. We use Sign Supported English, which is based on the BSL vocabulary with elements of grammatical structures included. The school boasts an outstanding total communication environment.

Leadership Structure

The Principal is supported by a child-facing Senior Leadership Team made up of a Head of Education, Head of Care, Head of Therapy Health and Wellbeing and Head of 19+. Additionally, on the business side there are finance, HR, administration and marketing departments. We currently have a Head of Business, part time Financial Controller and a consultant working on the fee structure and business model. Depending on the experience of the new Principal there is flexibility to ensure the right balance of roles. Site and Domestic matters are contracted out.

There is an actively involved Board of Governors. An effective structure, clear roles and regular visits into school enable the GB to be effective in their monitoring and strategic role. The Schedule of Matters Reserved for the Board sets out clearly the delegation of duties to the Principal and areas that are the responsibility of the Governing Board.



Where are we now?

St Mary's has a clear and ambitious long term vision to provide nationally recognised outstanding provision with the USP of speech language and communication and complex needs. Following several years of effective change, the school now requires a Principal committed to driving forward this vision over the next few years. It is an exciting opportunity!

A recent significant donation enabled the school to revitalise its specialism in speech and language and the total communication environment. The recently opened Vocational Centre provides on-site work experience opportunities for pupils with a thriving café, hair salon and car wash. We are in the process of setting up St Mary's 19+ to enable our students to fulfil their potential in supported employment and independent living. Work experience and vocational learning opportunities are focusing on hospitality, retail and horticulture.

Please look at the promotional video and read the Ofsted report (both available on the website) to gain an accurate picture and feel of the school.

After several years of dropping pupil numbers, both day and residential pupil placements are increasing. Following a very positive monitoring visit, the local authority is actively working with the school to place pupils.

Financially the school's cash reserve as of 31 July 2017 was over £2 million. The school has no debts but is currently running with a budget deficit. The fee structure analysis and business plan currently being put in place is addressing this issue to ensure the long term sustainability of the school.

Key Priorities

An ambitious new Principal has the exciting opportunity to continue to lead the improvement that is already well underway. Key priorities include:

- Build on the all-round improvements achieved in the last 3 years to provide outstanding, challenging and individualised provision for all pupils.
- Continue to improve the level of teaching and learning and integrated therapy programme.
- Continue to develop the care provision supporting pupils' independence skills.
- Maintain excellent standards in all areas with strong staff, parent and pupil morale.
- Work with the school business plan and grow the school to its optimum size.
- Further develop the vocational programme that is already underway.
- Extend the excellent reputation of the school nationally.

"My daughter loves this school....the greatest asset is their staff."

Parent quote

Job Description and Person Specification



Principal's Job Description

Purpose of Job

1. To lead, motivate and develop the School so that the academic, pastoral and social needs of pupils are fulfilled by providing excellent broad-based education in line with the school's ethos and in partnership with families.
2. To enable the Board of Governors to fulfil its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the School and to ensure that the Board receives timely advice and appropriate information on all relevant matters.
3. To follow the Board's strategic direction in terms of its finances and site development.

Accountability

The Principal is appointed by the Governing Board (GB) and is responsible to them through the Chair. The GB delegates the management of the School to the Principal, with a terms of reference document that sets out the matters reserved for the GB.

Key Responsibilities

To lead, motivate and develop the school

The Principal is responsible, directly and by delegation, for:


- a) The leadership and management of the School.
- b) Leading, managing and motivating the School Leadership Team, and, with them and through them, all academic and support staff.
- c) The maintenance of excellent standards in teaching, therapy and care for the development of each pupil.
- d) Planning and implementing an effective curriculum, timetabling and the academic organisation of the School, and reviewing these as appropriate.
- e) Creating the appropriate balance between all areas of school life and activity, including art, drama, music, sport, vocational training and community involvement.
- f) Monitoring pupil progress data and outcomes, and ensuring that parents are provided with regular and appropriate feedback.
- g) The pastoral care, welfare and safeguarding of all pupils and staff.
- h) The appointment of all staff.
- i) The assessment, appraisal, guidance, support and professional development of all staff.
- j) The business and commercial development of the school including an understanding of local authority workings and funding opportunities.
- k) Monitoring the effectiveness of the site and domestic contractors plus catering and ICT.
- l) The marketing of the School, including fundraising, the production of publicity, literature and any advertising, the public relations profile, management of the School website and the establishment of positive relations with the local authorities, external professionals, and prospective parents.
- m) Recruiting a full complement of pupils, and overseeing admission and entrance procedures.
- n) Developing good professional relationships with the parents of pupils.
- o) Maintaining good communications and relationships within the School and with key stakeholders including neighbours, local schools, the local community, professional bodies and former pupils.

To enable the Board of Governors to fulfil its duties and responsibilities

The Principal is responsible, directly and by delegation, for:

- a) Ensuring that the School meets all its legal obligations including compliance with Child Protection, the National Minimum Care Standards for Residential Special Schools, Care Quality Commission, and Health and Safety Regulations.
- b) Implementing policies agreed by the Governors and contributing to the vision for the future of the school through strategic planning.



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- c) Submitting policy proposals for the approval of the Board and monitoring these policies. Where appropriate, recommend policy changes to the Governors.
 - d) Preparing and updating the Strategic Development Plan and reporting regularly to the Board on self-evaluation, external moderation, and progress towards the strategic priorities.
 - e) In partnership with the Chair, ensuring that the Board receives sufficient and timely information and advice in order to make informed decisions.

General

- a) To undertake other duties appropriate to the general purpose of the post, which may from time to time be reasonably assigned by the Chair or the Board of Governors.
- b) To set an example of continuous personal development, participating in appropriate training in order to maintain an up-to-date professional expertise. He/she should be aware of trends in education, the requirements of primary, secondary and tertiary schools, vocational training and of the National Curriculum.

Candidate Person Specification

The successful candidate will have the personal qualities, skills and experience to lead, motivate and inspire the School, and will:

- a) Be a qualified, experienced and successful teacher with relevant management experience in a Special Needs School, and a proven track record as a successful Headteacher / Principal.
- b) Display leadership, energy and imagination, with the courage to innovate, and an ability to make and implement sound decisions in the best interests of the School.
- c) Have a passionate commitment to the academic, personal and social development of pupils in the special needs' sector.
- d) Be fully aware of safeguarding requirements for both residential and non-residential special needs pupils.
- e) Appreciate modern educational theory and practice, and be able to develop an appropriate academic, therapy, extra-curricular, vocational and life-skills curriculum for the pupils.
- f) Lead by example, have an open and participative style, an inclusive and empowering approach to management, an ability to build trust and engender team spirit, effectively delegate and manage time, and an ability to deal sensitively with conflict.
- g) Demonstrate sound judgement in the appointment and development of staff, and show a commitment to best practice management through the establishment of clear standards and performance expectations.
- h) Have an understanding of the School's financial environment as a non-maintained school, and the self-discipline to work within predetermined budgets.
- i) Have the ability to plan and think strategically and actively contribute to Board discussions on organisational strategy, priorities and initiatives.
- j) Be able to market and represent the School effectively, through excellent communication to prospective and current parents and the wider community, including the local press, and foster relations with a wide range of local authorities.
- k) Be computer literate, and a confident user of IT for communications and management purposes.



A salary in the region of £90,000-£100,000 is offered (depending on experience) with a performance-related bonus of up to 20%.
A relocation package is available.

Closing date: **4th July 2018**
Interviews: **12th & 13th July 2018**

Start date: **January 2019**

We strongly recommend a visit to the school before applying.

Please contact Paula Fitzgerald (HR Manager) on 01424 739010 or pfitzgerald@stmarysbexhill.org for:

- an informal discussion about the role
- further information
- a date to visit the school
- an application pack

We are committed to equal opportunities, safeguarding, and promoting the welfare of children. The post is subject to an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references and a medical.



The proprietor of St Mary's School and College is The Talking Trust, a company limited by guarantee (no. 907923), registered with the Charity Commission (no. 307021), and governed by its Articles of Association.

"The vocational centre provides pupils with valuable experiences in a variety of workplaces and supports them to engage and integrate with members of the wider community."

Ofsted 2018

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Wrestwood Road
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex, TN40 2LU

www.stmarysbexhill.org

DfE Number: 133653 | Charity Number: 307021

