February 2018

Dear Colleague

Thank you for your interest in a teaching post at The Urswick School. This letter is designed as an introduction. Do also please look at our website which includes newsletters to parents and our prospectus.

We are a Voluntary Aided Church of England School located in the heart of Hackney, close to Mare Street and Hackney Central Station. Most of our children live locally and both our students and staff reflect the diversity of the area. We articulate this with the simple phrase ‘we are a Christian School but not a school just for Christians’. We are proud to be the only Hackney secondary school to have received the EQualities Award and we are also an LGBT Best Practice School for ‘Educate and Celebrate’.

Our students arrive at the school with attainment below the national average, although our current Year 7s are more able than other cohorts. Around 70% of our students are eligible for Pupil Premium Grant. A significant proportion live in overcrowded housing conditions and do not have internet access at home. We aim to ensure that students make accelerated progress, graduate into our Sixth Form and then to University. Our school mission statement is ‘Believe and Achieve’ – we have high aspirations for our students and offer them all the support possible to break the glass ceiling. This is one of the things that makes teaching at Urswick both enjoyable and rewarding.

I am in my eleventh year as Headteacher (and am also Executive Head of New Regent’s College in Hackney). Dele Rotimi is Head of School and he runs the school on a day to day basis. We have a stable and experienced staff team. We are an expanding school. From September 2019, Urswick will become six forms of entry and take 180 children in each year group. Our Sixth Form, which is in its seventh year, also continues to expand. A small additional building is due to be constructed at the far end of our site in order to accommodate this expansion. This also means we are recruiting additional teachers.

Behaviour at the school has been recognised as Outstanding by a series of OFSTED reports. This is not achieved by boot camp methods but by ensuring our expectations are made very clear to students and our behaviour policy is consistently enforced. There is a very positive atmosphere in the school and an extensive rewards system which students very much subscribe to.

Our current award winning building is a very pleasant place to work. From lettings income we provide every child with a free school lunch each day whether they are entitled to Free School Meals or not. The free lunches extend to staff provided you are willing to eat lunch within the canteen. Each subject area has a dedicated work room, teachers are all issued with an iPad, there are tea points where hot drinks are provided free to all staff, and a number of staff social events are organised each year.

We have an excellent record of supporting the professional development of NQTs. We also offer NQTs to start their employment on the first Monday in July, and so get paid for the Summer holidays.

I hope this has given you some sense of the school. When we interview for teaching posts there is always an opportunity to have a guided tour of the school and meet our children. I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully

Richard Brown

Richard Brown, Executive Head