



**Downs View School**  
**Executive Headteacher**  
**Application Pack**



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## SECTION 1: WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Dear applicant,

It is with excitement and anticipation that I thank you for your interest in our vacancy for the role of Executive Headteacher (EHT) of the Downs View organisation/network.

The position has opened due to the retirement of our current EHT, whose passion and vision for Downs View has ensured our Outstanding status for the past 10 years.

We are looking for an influential leader who is compassionate in their approach and has the needs of learners and families at the heart of what they do.

The Downs View organisation/network is made up of Downs View School, Downs View Link College and the Downs View Life Skills College. It is worth me giving some background on these settings so that you are fully briefed on the scale of the organisation!

### **Downs View School**

In 2018, Downs View School (previously a school for pupils with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties and ASC) merged with the Cedar Centre (previously a school for pupils predominantly with Moderate Learning Difficulties) to become the east hub for special needs education in Brighton and Hove. This merger means that Downs View School now supports and teaches learners with a broader range of complex needs than ever before.

We are in an exciting phase in the development. Currently the school is on two sites and is transitioning this academic year to a single site at Woodingdean. The merger will be completed ready for the school to open in September 2020.

As part of the east hub development there will be extended services for our families, creating a holistic approach to education, health and care. Outside the classroom we will provide extended days, play and extensive extra-curricular opportunities. We are looking to appoint a highly motivated, inspiring EHT who will build on the successful foundations and continue to drive the vision forward to future success.

### **Downs View Link College (DVLC)**

DVLC is a post-16 specialist college for young people whose Education Health and Care plans are for a range of complex needs relating to their Cognition and Learning. While many Downs View School learners move successfully to mainstream FE colleges, DVLC is an option for those who require more support than they would receive in a mainstream setting.

### **Downs View Life Skills College (DVLSC)**

DVLSC is an Independent Specialist Provider for 19-25 year olds with complex learning difficulties. We received charity status in September 2019.

Post 19 provision has long been an aspiration of ours, as so often we have seen our pupils at Downs View School and Link College struggle to find the right setting to meet their needs moving in to adulthood. While part of the Downs View network/organisation, DVLSC is an independent provision recognized by the DfE, concentrating solely on the life skills education of young people in the 19-25 age group.

As we enter our fourth year of operation, we are very proud of what has been achieved so far at DVLSC and are bursting with new ideas. We are keen to look into Supported Internships, for example, and are looking for an EHT who can see the opportunities of this extension to our offer.

## SECTION 1: WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

The relationships and sense of community across the sites is something that visitors see and admire. It is not an insignificant geographical spread, however, and with growing pressures on places across the organisation, we are looking for an EHT who is unphased by this and excited by the challenge.

### **Community and Inclusion**

We are a friendly, caring organisation. Locally Downs View is highly regarded and, as a result, is consistently oversubscribed. It is very much part of the community, with sites currently in Woodingdean, Withdean, Hollingdean and Patcham.

Our new EHT will continue our work on the inclusion agenda, supporting mainstream colleagues to meet the needs of learners with special educational needs and disabilities. We work closely with the local authority, mainstream schools and families to enable successful transitions from Downs View to mainstream settings.

### **Pride**

There are many areas that we're proud of across the organisation:

- We provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere on each site for our learners, staff, parent and visitors.
- We offer a broad and rich curriculum to meet the needs of our different cohorts. "Learners with complex and diverse needs make outstanding progress, academically and socially, from their various starting points". (Ofsted 2016)
- Our dedicated staff is led by an experienced Senior Leadership Team, all of whom go the extra mile for our students on a daily basis and work with parents and carers to help our students achieve their potential.
- We "encourage innovative practice among [our] staff, which has facilitated continual forward momentum since the last inspection". (Ofsted 2016)
- We have a collaborative relationship with our social care and health partners, to provide holistic, individualised support to all learners.
- Our parents are very proactive and committed in their support. We understand the needs of our families and work closely with them to make their lives that bit easier.
- The Governing Body is committed and supportive. We provide ongoing challenge as a critical friend and encourage strong partnership working with other schools and agencies across the city.

As a Governing Body and Board of Trustees (for DVLSC) we will ask for openness and honesty in your approach. In return, we will support and encourage you to achieve and develop as an individual - the same ethos that we have for our learners.

If our vacancy excites and inspires you, then please do get in touch. Our current EHT would be happy to meet with you to tell you more about Downs View.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully

Chris Girvan  
Chair of Governors

## SECTION 2: JOB DESCRIPTION

### **Our Mission Statement:**

*At Downs View we promote an ethos which demonstrates mutual respect for all children, young people and staff. We expect high standards of behaviour and all staff adopt a consistent and agreed approach based on the understanding of self and others. Every member of staff without exception has a part to play in establishing and maintaining a positive and supportive culture. This will include having positive expectations of children and young people, having respect for all, providing good social role models for everyone, constantly looking for ways to celebrate achievement, and to enjoy and have fun in school and college. We will encourage all children, young people and staff to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for other cultures and beliefs. Partnerships with parents and the local community are actively encouraged and equality of opportunity will be fully promoted.*

### **Core Purpose:**

The core purpose of the role of Executive Headteacher (EHT) of Downs View Schools includes maintaining outstanding professional leadership and management. As the lead professional across school sites, the EHT will:

- Continue to build on the organisation's already outstanding standards across all sites, ensuring each individual learner achieves their full potential in a safe environment.
- Provide inspirational leadership in a manner that is compliant with Downs Views agreed mission statement.

### **To achieve success, the EHT will:**

- Provide clear vision, leadership and direction across all sites.
- Effectively manage the senior leadership team to ensure teaching and learning is the best it can be across all sites.
- Continue our work on the inclusion agenda, supporting mainstream colleagues to meet the needs of learners with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Ensure a continuing safe and productive learning environment that is engaging, stimulating and fulfilling for all students.
- Understand the importance of the relationship with and the support for the family as partners in their child's education.
- Work closely with the local authority, mainstream schools and families to enable successful transitions from Downs View to mainstream settings.
- Deploy resources efficiently to achieve the organisation's aims whilst demonstrating sound personnel and financial management.
- Encourage innovative practice among [our] staff, which has facilitated continual forward momentum since the last inspection. (Ofsted 2016)
- Ensure we offer a broad, rich and aspirational curriculum to meet the needs of our different cohorts. *"Learners with complex and diverse needs make outstanding progress, academically and socially, from their various starting points".* (Ofsted 2016)
- Evaluate school performance and identify priorities for continuous improvement.
- Strengthen an effective 'behaviour for learning' policy.
- Communicate effectively with, and secure the continued commitment of, the wider community.

## SECTION 2: JOB DESCRIPTION

### The Executive Headteacher (EHT) - Job Description

The EHT will provide professional leadership for Downs View which secures its success and improvement, ensuring high quality education which inspires and motivates its learners and improves standards of learning and achievement. This job description, based on the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers (2015), amended to suit an EHT role, sets out in four domains a set of developmental, challenging and aspirational standards. The Governing Body and Board of Trustees (for DVLSC) will use these standards with the EHT in developing strategic targets for the school context and for the setting of performance development objectives.

### Qualities and Knowledge

1. Hold and articulate clear values and moral purpose, focused on providing learners at Downs View a world-class education.
2. Demonstrate optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitude towards their pupils and staff, and towards parents, governors and members of the local community.
3. Lead by example - with integrity, creativity, resilience, and clarity - drawing on their own scholarship, expertise and skills, and that of those around them.
4. Sustain wide, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally, nationally and globally, and pursue continuous professional development that reflects the needs of our learners.
5. Work with political and financial astuteness, within a clear set of principles centred on the organisation's vision, ably translating local and national policy into the school's context.
6. Communicate compellingly the organisation's vision and drive the strategic leadership, empowering all pupils and staff to excel.

### Pupils and Staff

1. Demand ambitious standards for all pupils, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, instilling a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes.
2. Secure excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of how pupils learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities and pupils' well-being.
3. Establish an educational culture of 'open classrooms' as a basis for sharing best practice within and between schools, drawing on and conducting relevant research and robust data analysis.
4. Create an ethos within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their own skills and subject knowledge, and to support each other. Additionally, support a culture of innovation in the organisation and amongst colleagues.
5. Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning.
6. Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice.

## SECTION 2: JOB DESCRIPTION

### Systems and Process

1. Ensure that the organisation's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose, upholding the principles of transparency, integrity and probity.
2. Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in the wider society.
3. Establish rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice
4. Welcome strong governance and actively support the Governing Body and Board of Trustees (for DVLSC) to understand its role and deliver its functions effectively – in particular its functions to set school strategy and hold the EHT to account for pupil, staff and financial performance.
5. Exercise strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, in the best interests of pupils' achievements and the school's sustainability.
6. Distribute leadership throughout the organisation, forging teams of colleagues who have distinct roles and responsibilities and hold each other to account for their decision making.

### The Self-Improving School System

1. Sustain an outward-facing organisation which work with other schools and organisations - in a climate of mutual challenge - to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all pupils.
2. Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues in other public services to improve academic and social outcomes for all pupils.
3. Challenge educational orthodoxies in the best interests of achieving excellence, harnessing the findings of well evidenced research to frame self-regulating and self-improving organisation such as Downs View.
4. Shape the current and future quality of the teaching profession through high quality training and sustained professional development for all staff.
5. Model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to school improvement, leadership and governance, confident of the vital contribution of internal and external accountability.
6. Inspire and influence others - within and beyond schools - to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education.

This job description forms part of the contract of employment of the person appointed to the post. It reflects the current position and, in consultation with the employee, can be reviewed in the future, as appropriate. The appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document as they relate to Executive Headteachers.

Downs View is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The person appointed as Executive Headteacher will be required to support and deliver to this commitment.

## SECTION 3: PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Essential Criteria

The criteria set out below will be assessed in the application form, through the selection process and through references.

### Qualification and Experience

- Significant and recent experience as a Executive Headteacher/Headteacher/Deputy Head (or equivalent) in a large special school.
- Experience of previous employment in a minimum of two large special schools.
- Experience of the broad range of need present in a generic learning difficulty school and college, and including cross phase experience.
- Experience in working effectively and sensitively with families to provide them with the skills and resilience to support their child.
- Experience of work with external partners and other agencies for the well-being of all learners and their families.
- Experience of collaborative working with external partners leading to improved teaching and learning and outcomes.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of safeguarding in special schools.
- Demonstrate resilience in the leadership role.
- Evidence of preparation for leadership/headship through CPD.
- Experience of a key role in a successful OFSTED inspection.
- Qualified teacher status.
- Full clean driving licence.

### Knowledge, Skills and Attributes

- An understanding and commitment to recent changes to policies relating to learners in special education.
- An understanding of data analysis and when it is appropriate to use.
- A track record of leading and empowering successful teams by providing inspirational and positive leadership.
- Evidence of any change management processes you have been involved with in special education.
- Ability to communicate effectively and confidently with a wide range of audiences and through a variety of means.
- Proven experience of implementing strategies for raising achievement and improving progress including experience of developing strategies which have led to improved progress for disadvantaged students.



## SECTION 3: PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Ability and experience in supporting and developing staff effectively, including the ability to recognise achievement, monitor and evaluate work and address poor performance and achieve work-life balance.
- Excellent organisational and interpersonal skills and flexible management style.
- Commitment to the promotion of an inclusive school and college community.
- Proven experience of implementing strategies for raising achievement and improving progress including experience of developing strategies which have led to improved progress for disadvantaged students.
- Ability and experience in supporting and developing staff effectively, including the ability to recognise achievement, monitor and evaluate work and address poor performance and achieve work-life balance.
- Excellent organisational and interpersonal skills and flexible management style.
- Commitment to the promotion of and support for diversity in all its forms within and beyond the organisation.

### Desirable Criteria

- Possession of NPQH.
- Knowledge of the non-maintained sector and of Charitable Trusts.



## SECTION 4: VACANCY AND HOW TO APPLY

### Headteacher Vacancy

**Required From:** 1 September 2020

**Group 7:** Range L33 - L39a £90,145 - £103,334, dependent on experience

**Closing date:** Midnight on Thursday 23rd January 2020

Using the Brighton and Hove City Council application form (CVs are not accepted) please complete all sections of the form. Application form guidance notes on completing the form and further information on the process can be found at the end of the application form; please read this before completing the application form.

#### Important Information

**Closing date:** Midnight on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020

**Shortlisting:** Monday 27<sup>th</sup> / Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**Interview & assessment dates:** Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Completed applications to be sent to:

Mrs Samantha Hendy, PA to the Executive Headteacher

Email: [samanthahendy@downsview.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:samanthahendy@downsview.brighton-hove.sch.uk)

Applications will be acknowledged.

Visits to the organisation are strongly recommended.

For more information or to arrange a visit please contact Samantha Hendy by telephone: 01273 601680 or via email: [samanthahendy@downsview.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:samanthahendy@downsview.brighton-hove.sch.uk)

Downs View is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check, and references will be taken for all shortlisted candidates



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