

The Blue School

Information for Candidates



Details about the school

The Blue School caters for approximately 1430 students aged 11 to 18 drawn from the City of Wells and its surrounding communities. The Blue is a state maintained, non-fee paying, co-educational, fully inclusive Church of England school. The successful postholder will be employed by The Blue School, an independent charitable trust under the Academies Act 2010.

The school's staff

There are over 200 people employed at The Blue School, within a range of full-time or part-time, permanent, fixed term or casual contracts. Teaching or support, all roles are deemed equally vital for the smooth and effective running of the school.

The school operates two conditions of service, teaching and support. This vacancy is a support post. Although an independent employer, the school continues to closely follow the terms and conditions of Somerset Council and other national agreements, including pay scales. On appointment, all support staff are automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) administered by Peninsula Pensions, with an opt-out option. The employee's contribution to the LGPS is enhanced by an additional contribution from The Blue as employer. Many of our staff are parents/carers of children attending The Blue or at other local schools and we endeavour to follow family friendly policies for our staff whilst balancing the need to fulfil the role in school. Staff can access the facilities provided at our Wells Blue Sports Centre, including fitness classes.

Many of our staff enjoy the associated benefit of working with and supporting our teenage students. Staff are encouraged and welcome to participate in the full life of the school, whether helping individual or small groups of students and staff colleagues. Staff volunteer to participate in our enrichment programmes including sports fixtures, a thriving Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Ten Tors, Year 7 Camp, Art exhibitions and annual music and drama productions. Working in a school such as The Blue can bring employees a sense of a positive purpose that is not always present in other work environments.

The school's estate

The Blue School's campus is a most pleasant one, situated to the north of the City at the foot of the Mendip Hills. Many visitors comment on the south facing aspect, with views to the Cathedral south-west, St Cuthbert's Parish Church directly south and Glastonbury Tor in the distant south-east. With two playing fields, over 70 trees plus an orchard, gardens and wildlife areas we work to maintain our grounds in accord with the local environment of this beautiful part of Somerset. The spread of our seven main buildings helps to provide a relaxed feel even at the busiest times when all 1400 plus students and staff are on-site.

The Blue School, being the school for the parish, had been located in various buildings around Wells for over 300 years. But in 1950 the first school building, a standalone Science block, was erected on the current campus with the rest of "The Blue School" following in

1956 comprising teaching block, gymnasium and school hall. In the early 1960s, a new grammar school for Wells was built adjacent to the existing school, but shortly after opening in 1973 (when the Government raised the school leaving age to 16) it was decided to merge both schools into one secondary, comprehensive provision for Wells to be called The Blue School. The campus today of 35 acres reflects the original 1950's Kennion buildings (west) and the 1960's Milton buildings to the east. Middle blocks were erected as part of this "bringing together" of the two schools. The arrival of Wells Road Bypass, slicing off the southern part of the school's playing field, enabled the 1999 build of Wells Blue Sports Centre. As of today, the sports hall (called Holland Hall), artificial playing pitch and fitness suite are used extensively by both students and the wider community for physical education and enrichment. In 2007, a new Science extension was erected to the Kennion building, expanding much needed specialist laboratory classroom facilities. 2013 saw the last major permanent build on-site with the completion of a general teaching block named after the Barkhams, the mid-17th Century "founders" of the first school for the parish children of Wells.

By the nature of the different designs and construction methods used over the decades since the 1950s, the buildings that make up the current campus have unique characteristics which bring their challenges in terms of general maintenance and upkeep in line with current building and safety regulations. But The Blue School has a track record of investment in the maintenance of its buildings and infrastructure. After successful bids for additional government funding, in the last 10 years nearly all of the school's heating and hot water boiler plant and significant areas of our flat roofing have been replaced. There have been ongoing upgrades to our electrical and plumbing systems, including a recent LED lighting replacement programme to help reduce energy costs throughout the school. The school continues to remove asbestos containing material as refurbishment opportunities allow, with continuous monitoring in line with regulation of the less accessible material that remains.

At Christmas 2023, following a series of structural surveys to all the school's buildings, a significant part of the Kennion building was closed for further investigation to cracks in its concrete floor planks. These investigations are ongoing and eventual findings will determine the extent of remedial works to take place in summer 2024, before the building can re-open. In the meantime, temporary classroom accommodation has been installed on-site.

As a fully inclusive school and as to be expected of a public building, there a number of physical facilities in place to ensure all students can access the full curriculum. Because the school is built into a slope at the foothills of the Mendips there is an extensive network of ramped walkways that need to be kept clear at all times. This in addition to the numerous automatic doors, lifts, hoists and specialist toilets on-site – all bringing their regulatory maintenance programme.

The Blue is a large secondary school with a full student curriculum and enrichment programme running 190 days of the year, including specialist facilities for Art, Science, Design and Technology and ICT. Wells Blue Sports Centre aside, activities continue out of school hours in weekday evenings and at weekends and throughout school holidays. The Estates team play a key part in the smooth running of the school's day to day operations, working with staff colleagues to facilitate events throughout the year.

The Estates team

The Estates Manager oversees our in-house estates team, currently comprising Deputy, two estates maintenance technicians, two caretaker keyholders and one grounds person. Subject to successful recruitment, the school will consider future recruitment of a facilities

maintenance apprentice to enhance the team. The team are experienced and knowledgeable of the school's site and the specific challenges it brings. They have a well-founded reputation as a pro-active, friendly and co-operative support service.

The Estates Manager works closely with the Cleaning Manager, who oversees the 30 strong "adult" and sixth form cleaning team.

The post has become available following the retirement of the current postholder.

JOB DETAILS – ESTATES MANAGER

This role is being offered on a full-time basis **40 hours per week**. The start-time and end-time of the 8-hour working day to be agreed with the successful candidate, falling between 7am to 6pm and excluding 30-minute unpaid lunch break. By the nature of the post, remote home working is not considered suitable with attendance on-site required Monday to Friday during school term-time (with some flexibility when working during school holidays).

All-year round, 52.143 working weeks per year. **30 days annual leave per year** (1st Sep to 31st Aug) plus 8 paid bank holidays. The postholder will be expected to attend on the first In-service day of the year in September to undertake statutory training. The postholder is expected to allocate 3 days of annual leave to the closure period between the Boxing Day and New Year's Day bank holidays.

Annual salary – minimum grade 10 point 26 £37,658* rising by annual increment to maximum point grade 9 £46,942* per annum based on 40 hours. *Apr23 prices, with Apr24 pay inflation award pending. Starting point negotiable at point of offer depending on the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate, enabling greater responsibility.

An additional allowance is paid to acknowledge weekend keyholder cover on a duty rota basis. Actual call-outs paid as additional hours worked attending site or time off in lieu.

Membership of pension scheme 6.5%-6.8% employee deduction (from above gross pay with tax relief), 24.4% employer contribution (of gross pay and in addition). Optional opt-out within 3 months of start date. Further 50/50 option available, 50% employee contribution, 50% final pension benefit.

Sick, maternity, paternity and shared parental leave in accordance with The Blue School's policies.

Job Purpose

With the aim of ensuring a safe, clean and pleasant environment for all students, staff and visitors at The Blue School. To undertake, organise and monitor activities relating to the management of the school's campus, including Team Leader responsibility for the Estates Team.

Major Tasks

- To support the Business Manager with the development and implementation of The Blue School's Estates strategy. With reference to the expectations of the Department for Education's Good Estate Management for schools guidance.

- To support the management and promotion of good health and safety practices in relation to the estate, plus equipment and plant, including the arranging and undertaking of compliance and safety checks as outlined in the school's Health and Safety Policy.
- To take on the defined level of the Estates Manager's responsibilities for health and safety, including as examples: devising, maintaining and communicating relevant risk assessments; awareness of fire safety; CDM; water hygiene; COSHH; PUWER; LOLER; LEV; electrical safety including PAT; ACM.
- To arrange, supervise, inspect and/or undertake planned, adhoc and emergency estates related maintenance and repair work including building, services, plant, equipment, furniture and grounds. This may include undertaking plumbing, electrical, carpentry and/or other building and handyman skills (within qualification limits).
- To work with external estates professionals, consultants and contractors to design and deliver estate related projects, including liaison on major building and maintenance projects on campus.
- To manage the physical security of the school's campus, including the maintenance of fire and security alarms, liaison with the security guard agency, boundary fences and barriers and keyholding (both external doors and boundary gates). To include the issuing of keys to staff.
- To lead the Estates Team. To include the allocation and direction of work activities, absence and cover management, co-ordinating training and development, acting as the first point of contact before reference to the Business Manager where necessary.
- To manage and participate in the out-of-hours, all year, all day emergency keyholding cover rota.
- To ensure that visiting contractors' personnel are aware of the school's safeguarding and safety requirements while on site and address non-compliance with the individual and/or their supervisors.
- To approve minor operational expenditure from the estates day-to-day maintenance budgets (within limits set), purchasing adequate and safe levels of stock and materials, to include regular liaison with the Business Manager on significant expenditure items and Finance Team.
- To support the management of the school's energy and utilities consumption, including heating operation, lighting (internal and external) and water consumption.
- To support initiatives aimed at protecting and nurturing the school's environment, working to protect biodiversity on campus around the school's operations and in response to the challenges of climate change.
- With liaison with the Cleaning Manager, to support the management of the school's disposal of waste, including recycling, in line with regulations.
- To manage the maintenance of the school's motor fleet (including grounds vehicles), ensuring they are maintained to safe and legal levels, with regular safety inspections in line with manufacturer expectations and monitoring of cleanliness undertaken by the team.

- To be prepared to drive the school's minibuses and site vehicles, including adhoc transportation of students with accompanying staff and for maintenance visits.
- To advise the Business Manager with regard to any significant defects to the school's estates assets discovered during the course of their duties.
- To coordinate (and on occasions undertake) portering: participating with the delivery of parcels and equipment for distribution around the site.
- To work with responsible staff colleagues to ensure that the school's equipment, store cupboards and chemical storage areas are maintained safely and securely.
- To support the Groundperson with management of the playing fields and other external areas, including liaison with the Head of PE and WBSC Manager regarding pitch markings and use; liaison with external drainage and other groundworks contractors as the campus adapts to increased rainfall; oversight of the maintenance and safe operation of grounds plant.
- To support the operation of the school, including the facilitating of activities and events, calendared and adhoc, such as learning activities, examinations, parents' evenings and meetings.
- To support the community activities of the school, in relation to estates and facilitating of events. This includes:-
 - support to the WBSC Manager in relation to the activities of and spaces used by WBSC Ltd during its opening hours.
 - support for lettings approved by the Governors.

Safeguarding

- As a Team Leader, the postholder will endeavour to ensure that all members of the Site Team are aware of the child safeguarding expectations of their employment at The Blue.
- As with all staff at The Blue, the postholder will conduct themselves and undertake their day-to-day activities in line with the school's child safeguarding policy, ensuring that any concerns are reported promptly following the specified communication route.

Health and Safety

- In addition to the specific responsibilities of this post, as with all staff at The Blue, the postholder will conduct themselves and undertake their day-to-day activities in line with the school's health and safety policy and procedures, ensuring due care for themselves and those around them.

Supervision received

- The post holder is line managed by the Business Manager. However, the postholder is expected to meet the objectives of their employment through their own initiative, working for long periods un-supervised, under their own initiative.

Supervision given

- The postholder supervises the members of the Estates Team, the structure and make-up of which may vary over time. On occasion the postholder may supervise individual or groups of students on work experience or other learning projects relating to estates maintenance.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

<i>E = Essential (we think you will need this qualification, skill or personal quality to be able to do this job)</i>	
<i>D = Desirable (we think this will help you to do this job)</i>	
<i>U = Useful (of benefit, but not part of the selection criteria as training will be provided)</i>	
Education	
5 GCSEs / O levels minimum grade 4/C including English and mathematics OR other externally assessed verified evidence of minimum level 2 literacy and numeracy skills.	E
Minimum level 3 estates related training/qualification such as estates management, facilities management, project management, building surveying and/or estates related health and safety compliance.	E
Minimum level 4 estates related training/qualification such as estates management, facilities management, project management, building surveying and/or estates related health and safety compliance.	D
Evidence of an up-to-date training portfolio in estates management and general health and safety compliance	E
Minimum level 3 relevant qualifications in construction, grounds, electrical, plumbing or other engineering skillset.	D
A first aid at work qualification (or willingness to achieve such training)	D
Full UK Driving licence	D
Right to work in the UK	E
Experience	
Verified work experience in an estates facilities environment preferably at or leading to management level	E
Work experience (beyond personal DIY) of an estates related skillset in construction, grounds, electrical, plumbing or other engineering skillset.	D
Evidence of (or leading up to) team leadership – leading by example, challenging performance when required, supporting, developing and motivating.	E
We expect the Postholder to have Personal Qualities that reflect	
Understanding and adherence to good health and safety practice, providing a safe estates environment for our students, staff and visitors	E
A desire to work with staff colleagues to ensure the smooth operations of the school, with a friendly, flexible and fair approach to all	E
A desire to fully contribute to all students' engagement in and enjoyment of school	E
Respect for the equality and diversity of all in our school community	E
Diligence to the task in hand and need for completeness, accuracy and honesty	E

Respect for confidentiality	E
Professional standards in line with the school's ethos of respect, empathy and politeness to and for all.	E

A planned programme of induction and on-the-job training will take place in order to prepare the successful candidate for the role. Candidates are not expected to be fully aware of all the needs of this varied role from the start.

Applicants - Safeguarding

The Blue School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. **The offer of this post to the successful applicant will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check and two satisfactory references**, one of whom must be the applicant's current or most recent employer, trainer or education establishment as appropriate.

A criminal record as disclosed does not automatically exclude potential applicants. In such circumstances, any potential offer of employment at The Blue School will follow a risk assessment that will reflect on the nature and timing of the circumstances. The safeguarding of our students is the primary concern and the Headteacher's decision is final.

The application process

If you are interested in applying for this post, our preference is that you complete the school's support staff application form fully and accurately. (We will review CV's at application but any subsequent offer of employment will be subject to a completed school support staff application form). Please ensure that there are no unexplained gaps in your training and/or employment history. In addition to your application form (or CV) please provide a brief statement as to why you are applying for this post and how you believe your skills and experience makes you suitable for this position.

Please return the completed application form to Miss Julie Biggadike at the school:

The Blue School

Kennion Road

Wells

Somerset BA5 2NR

Telephone: 01749 836264. Email: jobs@theblueschool.somerset.sch.uk

With no expectation to do so, with no impact on the selection process, individuals are welcome to book a tour of the school site before the closing deadline to help with their decision to apply or not. If you wish to book a tour please contact Julie as above. The school will endeavour to accommodate all requests for tours, but this may not be possible if school operations restrict access.

Closing date: Tuesday 7th May 2024 at Noon.

Version

4th April 2024