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Start date: **September 2024**

Location: **Lewisham**

Headteacher Candidate Pack



**BRENT KNOLL
SCHOOL**

CREATING EXCELLENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION



Chair's Welcome Letter

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in applying for the position of Headteacher at Brent Knoll School and becoming a part of the Brent Knoll community. Brent Knoll provides a dynamic and supportive environment for students, staff, and families. We are committed to working relentlessly to provide the best possible educational environment for all learners, enabling students to be the "best that we can be."

We recognise the responsibility and privilege we have supporting such a diverse range of pupils, each with unique aspirations, abilities, and interests. We are exceptionally proud of our students and have ambitious dreams for their futures and the future of our school. Brent Knoll also seeks to provide meaningful professional development opportunities for staff, enabling them to gain leadership experience and skills development in their areas of interest.

We believe this is an exciting time to join the leadership team at Brent Knoll and we are seeking a driven, engaging and inspirational leader who is passionate about our students and the school community. The new Headteacher will have demonstrated an in-depth leadership experience in SEN whose vision will build on the strength of our current provision and implement strategic improvement priorities.

Brent Knoll has an equal opportunities and inclusive employment policy and we warmly encourage suitably qualified applicants from diverse backgrounds to apply.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss any aspect of the role, please contact **Ross Laird** at **Academicis** on **07901 585959** or via email at **rlaird@academicis.co.uk**.

Laura Deitz
Chair of Governors

About Brent Knoll

Brent Knoll School is a Co-operative Trust special school for children aged 4-16 with complex social, communication and interaction difficulties, including autism. Located in the London Borough of Lewisham, we recognise the importance of meeting the needs of SEND pupils (special educational needs and disability) in this context while celebrating its diversity and our young people's place within it. We have recently begun a pilot programme for a post-16 provision alongside our core offer.

The school seeks to creatively deliver curriculum solutions that ensure the pathways for learners are well-defined and tailored to their individual needs. The implementation of the curriculum provides them with the necessary skills to move on and take their places at appropriate destinations after Brent Knoll. By developing their independence and allowing them to become engaged and active citizens in a rapidly changing world, we can positively impact their life chances.

Brent Knoll was recently awarded an accreditation for an Area of Excellence for "creating and maintaining a low arousal environment that supports autistic pupils' self-regulation, learning and transitions at all levels, promoting independence with reference to support in mainstream schools" by a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review (see attached report for full details) by implementing a consistent, school-wide approach that we call the Brent Knoll Way.

Aims, Ethos and Quality – Our Vision Statement

The Brent Knoll community will 'BE THE BEST THAT WE CAN BE.'

Our vision is that in three years Brent Knoll School will:

- Be the first choice for children and young people with social and communication difficulties
- Have a local and national reputation for excellence in all that we do with a focus on teaching and learning
- Be a school where our young people self-regulate, enabling them to be safe, flourish and succeed with independence
- Ensure that our young people transition to appropriate destinations with the skills and qualities needed to be as independent as possible

To achieve our vision, our aim is that each young person will:

- Value themselves and respect others
- Develop responsibility for their actions
- Make informed choices and decisions independently
- Develop the resilience to become a responsible and active citizen in their community

We will achieve our aims by:

- Working together as pupils, parents, governors and staff within our community to be an outward-looking school
- Having a relentless pursuit of excellence in all that we do
- Offering a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum – delivered by passionate and reflective practitioners – that meets the needs of its learners in a motivating and nurturing environment

Underpinned by our values of:

- Responsibility • Respect • Kindness • Fairness • Honesty

School Structure

Defining our cohort and community in numbers, we have:

- 154 commissioned pupils at the Brent Knoll School site
- 8 pupils in a pilot post-16 provision
- 44% of our pupils are eligible for free school meals
- 53% Pupil Premium Grant
- 19 Ethnicities represented in our pupil cohort
- 80%-20% split between male and female pupils
- 75 headcount school workforce:
 - o 5 SLT staff including the Headteacher
 - o 25.8 teachers FTE (Full Time Equivalent)
 - o 35.18 learning support assistants FTE
 - o 6.11 non-classroom support staff FTE

School Governance

The Headteacher works in close partnership with the school leadership team and our experienced and motivated Governing Body on all matters pertaining to school management, operations, and strategic improvement. We are very pleased with the positive and collaborative relationship the Governing Body maintains with the current Headteacher and look forward to building a similarly strong relationship with the successful candidate.

Our school has a rigorous and robust approach to prioritising the safety and security of the vulnerable children in our cohort. This is crucial principle underpins the way the Head Teacher and Governing Body work together to set the strategic direction of Brent Knoll School. We work in concert to deliver a culture which places an imperative on upholding safeguarding in all facets of school life including contextual safeguarding.

The Headteacher meets on a fortnightly basis (or as often as required) with the Chair of Governors to provide relevant updates on operational, financial, human resources, and quality of teaching and learning at the school. The Headteacher provides four headteacher reports per year at the Full Governing Body meetings and attends and provides updates at the termly Teaching and Learning, Pay and Resources, and Children, Families, and Communities sub-committees.

The Governing Body seeks to be a supportive partner to the Headteacher and provide meaningful professional development opportunities to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will receive support to access ongoing training and mentorship and other professional development opportunities.

Our Collaborative Links

Brent Knoll and Watergate Co-operative Trust



In 2012, Brent Knoll joined forces with Watergate School to form the Brent Knoll and Watergate Co-operative Trust.

Its aim is to create an exciting, new way to work with our partners and stakeholders (including higher education, social housing, the voluntary sector and the Local Authority) to improve the lives of our children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families, both inside and outside of school. With a changing educational landscape, it is hoped that there will be opportunities for the Trust to play a key role in developing special education in Lewisham in the coming years.

We recognise the value in presenting a co-ordinated approach in dealings with the local authority and in ensuring that the voice of children and young people with SEND and their families in the borough is properly heard.

The Trust is working hard to:

- Improve and enhance collaboration between the two schools. Although the pupil cohorts are different in nature, our schools share educational values and approaches. We have a staff working party drawn from both schools which looks at sharing best practice, showcasing each others' talents and running joint creative projects. We strive to develop ourselves as a centre of excellence, support and training for SEND provision in mainstream schools.

- Run out-of-school clubs during school holiday periods. Our children are unable to access mainstream holiday clubs and we strive to combat the sense of isolation and, often, educational regression, that can result from weeks away from the stimulation of the school setting.
- Establish a resource centre for parents, drawing together current information on facilities, schemes, resources and benefits available for children with SEND and their families which can otherwise be difficult to locate and negotiate.

In addition, as the profile of the Trust is raised and grant funding streams increase, we have the following ambitions:

- To facilitate the provision of post-16 educational opportunities for young people with SEND in the borough of Lewisham;
- To create training and employment opportunities through social enterprise;
- To support independent living including housing. Under current governance structures, the position of Chief Executive of the Trust rotates between the headteachers of the two schools every two years, with the position of Chair held by the Chair of Governors of the other school in each case.

Lewisham local authority actively promotes a culture of collaborative working between schools. Brent Knoll is a committed member of Lewisham Learning, the schools-led school improvement partnership, and the current headteacher sits on its School Improvement Board, as well as representing special schools at the Lewisham schools' consultative.

We are also a member of Challenge Partners, an education charity through which schools collaborate to improve each other and the education system as a whole.

Job Description: Headteacher

The job description for the Headteacher role is subject to the general conditions for a Headteacher as set out in School Teacher Pay and Conditions Document and the Headteachers standards 2020 for Headteachers.

Salary: Brent Knoll is a Group 6 Inner London School. Salary range within the group (£86,119-£116,535 in 2023) is open to negotiation and dependent on the experience and skills of the successful applicant.

Main Purpose

The headteacher will be expected to:

- Maintain and continuously improve high-quality education and support for all pupils
- Provide strategic and day-to-day leadership and management of the school
- Establish, improve and oversee systems, processes and policies, so the school can operate effectively and efficiently
- Establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction, together with the governing board and through consultation with the school community
- Identify problems and barriers to school effectiveness, and develop strategies for school improvement that are realistic, timely and suited to the school's context
- Make sure all school improvement strategies are effectively implemented
- Monitor progress and development towards achieving the school's aims and objectives
- Allocate financial resources appropriately, efficiently and effectively

Qualities

The headteacher will adhere to the first section of the Headteachers standards which outlines the ethics and professional conduct expected of headteachers, including:

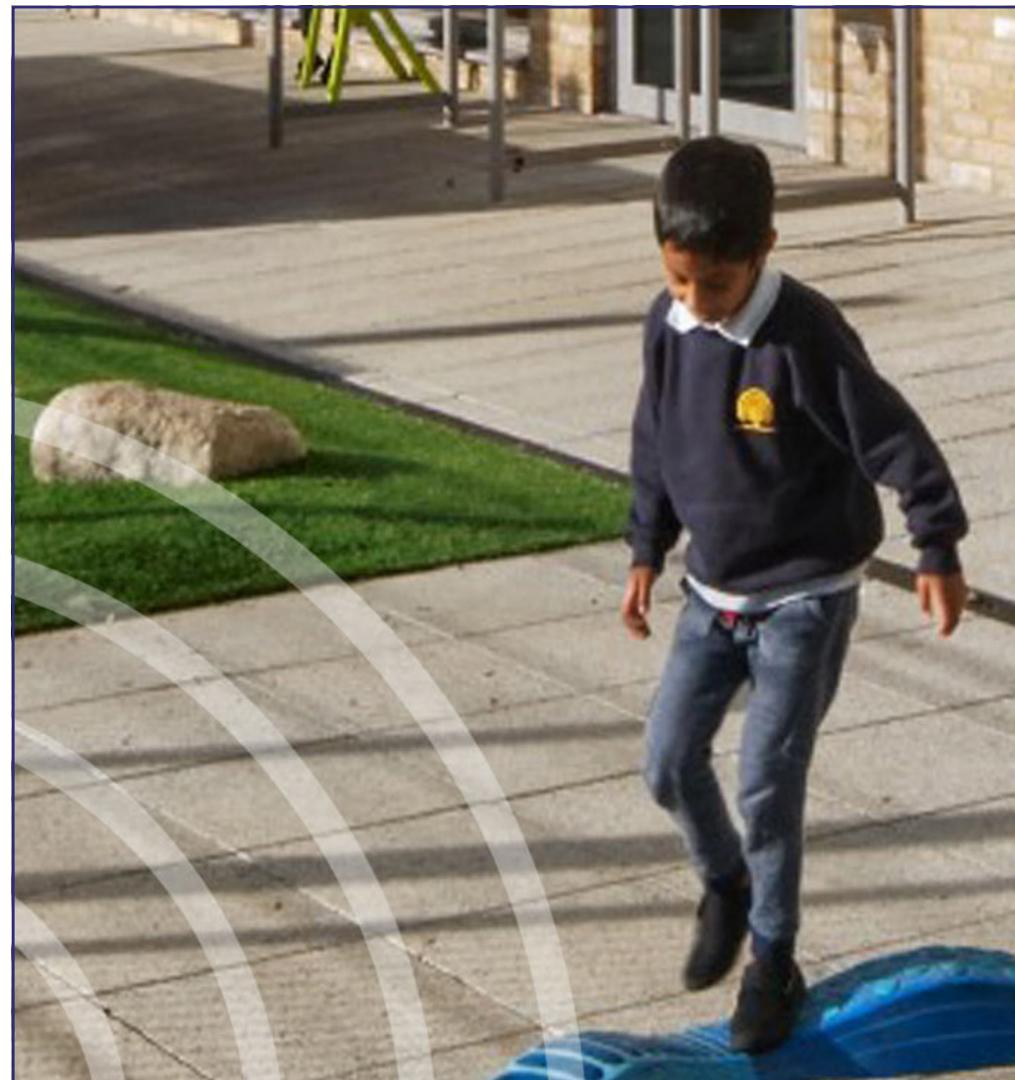
- Upholding public trust in school leadership and maintaining high standards of ethics, behaviour and professional conduct
- Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within the school, Lewisham, Greater London and contemporary Britain
- Building positive and respectful relationships across the school and local communities
- Serving in the best interests of the school's pupils

Duties and Responsibilities

School Culture and Behaviour

The headteacher will be expected to:

- Create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- Uphold ambitious educational and personal standards to support teachers to prepare pupils for their next phase of education and life
- Maintain a culture of staff professionalism, inclusivity, integrity and respect for pupils and others from inside the school or the wider community



Job Description *continued*

- Ensure the provision of opportunities for staff and members of the school community to engage in personal learning and development and expand upon existing initiatives where possible.
- Encourage high standards of behaviour from pupils, built on rules and routines that are understood by staff and pupils, and clearly demonstrated by all staff in school
- Use consistent and fair approaches to managing behaviour, in line with the school's positive behaviour policy (the Brent Knoll Way)
- Ensure that staff have a sound understanding of the impact of communication difficulties on behaviour and the importance of a total communication approach
- Provide staff with the skills and knowledge to support complex behaviours through training, external advice, liaison with parents and carers, relevant policies and agreed procedures
- Regularly review general behaviour support strategies and individual incidents with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the behaviour lead and where relevant and appropriate, make changes to policies and practices

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

All pupils at Brent Knoll have SEND, therefore the headteacher will be expected to:

- Ensure the school continues to fulfil its statutory duties regarding the SEND Code of Practice
- Be accountable for the implementation of individual Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs), for needs being identified and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) written, monitored and reviewed
- Work closely with the Local Authority (LA) in relation to admissions, EHCPs and funding to ensure pupil needs are met
- Maintain and expand upon the school's ability to work effectively with parents, carers and a wide range of other professionals to identify additional needs and provide support and adaptation, where appropriate
- Promote a culture and practices that enable all pupils to have access to an appropriate and stimulating curriculum
- Have ambitious expectations for all pupils at Brent Knoll and strive to ensure that pupils are supported to overcome any potential barriers to learning
- Oversee personalised learning for all pupils, as well as age-appropriate content
- Seek inclusion and engagement opportunities with other schools and the broader community
- Constantly strive to improve and develop pedagogy and a creative and stimulating approach to inspire the pupils

Teaching, Curriculum and Assessment

The headteacher will be expected to:

- Establish and sustain high-quality teaching across all subjects and educational phases
- Be accountable for teaching that is underpinned by subject expertise and appropriate approaches to support the varying needs and abilities of Brent Knoll pupils



Job Description *continued*

- Manage the teaching of a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum
- Ensure curriculum leadership across the school and pathways, including subject leaders with relevant expertise and access to best practice sharing with other schools and external organisations
- Support and encourage a wide range of enrichment opportunities for all pupils at Brent Knoll regardless of their social, sensory or communication differences
- Use valid, reliable and proportionate approaches to assessing pupil progress and personal development
- Ensure effective assessment leadership across the school and across pathways, including access to best practice sharing with other schools and organisations

Managing the School

The headteacher will be expected to:

- Adhere to **Health and Safety** and **Safeguarding** legislation
- Ensure staff and pupils' safety and welfare through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of a duty of care
- Ensure that structures and procedures are in place to ensure staff are trained in safeguarding to the appropriate level, and have read and understood the current Keeping Children Safe in Education document (KCSIE) – the version at the time of writing being 2023
- Ensure safer recruitment practices are adhered to, a Single Central Record (SCR) is in place and safer recruitment training has been completed by all relevant staff and governors
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk in all aspects of the school including staff, visitors, premises etc.
- Make provision for premises related legal requirements to be fulfilled, e.g., statutory maintenance checks, fire risk assessments and other safety checks
- Create an environment where staff are well managed by their line managers and that all staff are supported, motivated and recognized for their contributions, alongside ensuring that there are relevant policies in place detailing the management of disciplinary, safeguarding and capability issues
- Be aware of staff workload and wellbeing, creating systems and methods to address any potential issues and finding remediation where necessary

Professional Development

The headteacher will be expected to:

- Keep up to date with societal and policy developments in education
- Ensure they and all other staff have access to appropriate, high standard professional development opportunities



Job Description *continued*

- Ensure training and continuing professional development for all levels of staff is effectively planned, delivered and evaluated
- Make sure professional development opportunities draw on experts both within, and beyond the school

Governance, accountability and working in partnership

The headteacher will be expected to:

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, including accepting responsibility and accountability for key leadership decisions
- Work effectively and collaboratively with governors, preparing reports and information for full governing body and committee meetings
- Ensure that staff understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties
- Maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues to improve educational outcomes for all pupils
- Work successfully with other schools and external organisations including medical staff, therapists and educational psychologists, social care and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Work closely with the LA and other schools and headteachers in partnership for relevant opportunities and best practice sharing
- Ensure that a range of local enrichment opportunities are accessed by Brent Knoll pupils

Other Areas of Responsibility

Brent Knoll now includes a pilot Post-16 provision which we hope to make permanent.

Please note that the above specification is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the headteacher will be expected to carry out. The postholder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role.



Person Specification: Headteacher

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Teacher Status/Qualified Teaching and Learning Status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree level qualification • School leadership qualification or training • National professional qualification for headship
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and management experience in a SEND school • Teaching experience with SEND pupils • Involvement (as a member of a senior leadership team) in school self-evaluation and development planning • Demonstrable experience of line management and development of staff to achieve the best outcomes for pupils • Experience of financial resource management in a school environment, including budget planning and financial management delivering value for money without impeding educational outcomes • Experience of successfully working with parents, a governing body, LA and other stakeholders to enhance the education and development of all pupils • Significant experience creating inclusive teaching and learning environments • Able to demonstrate inclusive leadership with a passion for working in a culturally diverse environment • Evidence of managing change and of delegation • Ability to tackle difficult situations and make challenging decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced Deputy Headteacher or an existing Headteacher • Successful experience of a positive behaviour management approach • Teaching experience with Autism Spectrum/ Complex Social, Communication and Interaction Difficulties pupils
Skills and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge and understanding of the wider educational agenda including current national policies and educational issues in particular relating to SEND • A high level of expertise in the education and development of pupils with SEND • Knowledge of the potential barriers to learning pupils with SEND may face and how the support of a range of other professionals can assist • Ability to make data-driven, evidence-informed decisions to set targets and identify weaknesses • Demonstrable understanding of what constitutes high-quality education and the ability to mentor/sponsor more junior staff and leadership teams to aspire to and attain this level • Knowledge and experience of Safeguarding and Child protection procedures and able to sustain a safe and secure environment for pupils • Knowledge and experience of relevant HR processes around recruitment, dispute resolution and staff development • An understanding of how the governing body can be enabled to fulfil its role and statutory obligations 	
Personal Aptitude, Skills and Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils • Organised and able to work under pressure, prioritise effectively, delegate and manage the workload of the post • Ability to think and plan on a strategic level • Able to deal with complex situations calmly and effectively • Articulate, with effective communication and interpersonal skills • Ability to build strong and effective working relationships and inspire others 	

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If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or you would like to have an informal discussion, please contact **Ross Laird** at **Academicis**, our recruitment partner, on rlaird@academicis.co.uk or by phone on **07901 585959/01223 907979**.

Closing date: **Tuesday 30th January 2024** • Interviews: **Tuesday 6th February and Wednesday 7th February 2024**

Brent Knoll School
Perry Rise, London
SE23 2QU

