Dear prospective applicant

**Re: Vacancy for Assistant Headteacher (Teaching and Learning)**

Thank you for your interest in what we truly believe to be an exceptionally exciting opportunity.

Lymm High School is a fabulous place to be and those of us who are here tend to be very aware of just how fortunate we are. I cannot speak highly enough of the young people we have the privilege of working with, the community in which we operate or of the staff who work here.

However, the fact that it really is a lovely place should not lead anyone to under-estimate the level of ambition we have. There is no doubt that the school has improved very significantly over the past few years (something that is supported by all the usual metrics) but we are conscious about not wanting to rest on our laurels and recognise that we have created the opportunity to do something special.

This particular SLT post will be right at the centre of our key whole-school priorities for the next few years: developing the curriculum, teaching and learning across the school. As strong as it is, the quality of teaching and assessment still need to be more consistent (a real challenge to maintain in such a large school) and we need more teachers delivering at the top end in terms of classroom practice. Similarly, a lot of good work has taken place recently to improve the quality of the curriculum but there is plenty more to be done. Getting these things right are important in their own right, but they should also help us to improve academic outcomes for one or two key groups who still lag behind others.

Whilst these are significant challenges, they are certainly achievable - and there is a lot of goodwill around, which helps enormously. We are looking for someone who can make an immediate impact as an assistant head, but please be assured that you will also get plenty of support to help you succeed and you need not fear making mistakes as you grow into the role.

We know this will be seen as an attractive job; the “T&L” role tends to be the one on SLT that most people want to do and is often seen as the most ‘glamorous’ (insofar as such a word can ever be applied to our choice of career). However, we are looking for someone who can offer far more than simply the ability to run an engaging INSET session or produce a pretty CPD booklet. It will be important for you to show that you have a very secure understanding of what it really takes to improve the quality of curriculum and teaching at whole-school level. This will include an critical awareness of, and demonstrable interest in, the latest research and thinking in these areas; if you would need to make an effort to read something just to be able to answer a question at interview on this, then it probably isn’t the right post for you.

Your record in terms of raising achievement will also be very important. Exam results might not be the only indicator of high quality teaching but they are certainly an important one and, with this in mind, we are looking to appoint someone who can demonstrate a strong track record of delivering excellent academic outcomes. We ask that you be as specific as you can about these outcomes in your application, including reference to progress measures. Ideally, you will have had success in leading a good sized department, or perhaps you might have significant experience of a raising achievement role across the school. Either way, we need somebody who can look experienced heads of department in the eye and speak from a position of authority about what it takes to improve outcomes at departmental level and how to develop the quality of teaching of individuals and across a team.

Whilst we want the successful candidate to start in a role they feel most comfortable in, and to have plenty of opportunity to have an impact there, I also anticipate moving around the roles within SLT in due course in order to broaden your experience and best prepare you for deputy headship. It would therefore be to your advantage if you are able to use your application form to demonstrate the experience and willingness to carry out different roles on SLT.

Finally, the successful candidate will also need to show that they are prepared to roll their sleeves up and undertake the countless, somewhat more down to earth, operational tasks that SLT need to carry out in order to ensure schools runs smoothly. I am lucky to have a group of people on SLT who work exceptionally hard and they deserve a colleague willing to do the same. Beyond all of the above, the key qualities we are looking for are integrity, intelligence and a clear sense of moral purpose.

I hope this helps give a flavour of what the post will entail and what we are looking for, but please do contact us if you have any questions. You are also very welcome to visit prior to making an application (socially distanced, of course!) - though I appreciate this is not always possible and you should not feel that this would have any bearing on the application process one way or the other.

Kind regards

Gwyn Williams