



**Red Balloon – North West London**  
**13 Kenton Road, Harrow, London HA1 2BW**  
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[www.redballoonlearner.org.uk](http://www.redballoonlearner.org.uk)

May 2023

Dear Applicant

**Re: Student Support and Mentor at Red Balloon - NW London**

Thank you for expressing an interest in the role of Student Support and Mentor at Red Balloon - NW London. Red Balloon Learner Centres seek to transform the lives of traumatised children. Please find below information about Red Balloon, a description of the role and responsibilities, and a copy of the advertisement.

If you feel you possess the skills and passion to be student support and mentor at Red Balloon-NW London, please send your application together with a covering letter to Cathy Taylor, Headteacher of RB-NW London at [cathy.taylor@nwl.rblc.org.uk](mailto:cathy.taylor@nwl.rblc.org.uk)

Your covering letter should outline the following:

- a) your interest in the role and what you can bring to it;
- b) the names, positions and contact details of two referees, one of whom should be your most recent employer/line manager - please advise if we may contact them at any time;
- c) your current eligibility for employment in the UK;
- d) when, if appointed, you are able to take up the post;
- e) a declaration that indicates your commitment to safeguarding all young people who attend Red Balloon - NW London

For further information about Red Balloon, please visit <http://www.redballoonlearner.org.uk>

The closing date for applications is Friday 16th June. Interviews will take place week commencing Monday 19th June 2023. The successful applicant will be notified as soon as possible thereafter.

If you have any questions, please call 020 8864 6433 and ask to speak to Cathy Taylor. We look forward to receiving your application.

## **Charity Overview and History**

The first Red Balloon Learner Centre was set up in Cambridge in 1996. The original vision was to provide a programme of full time education in a safe learning environment for children unable to go to school because they had been severely bullied.

Since then, Red Balloon has seen a successful period of growth, meaning there are now four physical centres, in Cambridge, Reading, Norwich, and North West London. There is also an online provision, Red Balloon of the Air, for students who live in an area not covered by a centre, or who are unable to leave their homes. Each centre operates as an individual company and registered charity and is an autonomous entity operating under the Red Balloon name.

Red Balloon North West London (RBNWL) was set up in 2008 and operates from a three storey Victorian townhouse in Kenton Road, Harrow. The centre provides places for 20 full time equivalent students, all of whom have their fees paid by Local Authorities as they are in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The Centre covers core subjects in the National Curriculum as well as the humanities, art, drama, modern foreign languages, PSHE, and home cooking. The centre offers additional qualifications according to students' interests and aptitude. The centre has access to Harrow School's sports facilities which are used twice weekly for Physical Education sessions.

All students have either music or art therapy to support their emotional well-being, and the centre offers a range of extra-curricular activities, such as visits to museums and galleries, weekly horse riding lessons, and many students complete their Duke of Edinburgh award.

The centre has a strong community of staff and students. Vegetarian food is home-cooked at the Centre, with staff and students sitting together at lunchtime. The centre has a garden where students may grow vegetables, play table-tennis or simply relax when the weather permits.

### **Admission Criteria**

RBNWL admits 20 full time equivalent students. All students have an EHCP or have an application in place for an EHCP; students with an EHCP are funded from the Local Authority SEN budget, whereas any students whose application is in progress are funded from the referring school or private funding from parents. Student suitability for admission is determined on a case by case basis, but usually students have experienced one or more of the following: severe bullying; social anxiety; trauma within or outside their family; undiagnosed learning difficulties; or sensory difficulties making a mainstream schooling environment difficult for them to cope with. RBNWL does not usually admit students who have a history of violent or challenging behaviour, although this is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Educational Practice**

All students are welcomed into the centre using an individually constructed transition plan. Entering the building for the first time can be particularly challenging; many students have been out of formal education for a significant period of time before they come to the centre. Some students who have

particular difficulties transitioning to the centre may be offered some education or wellbeing sessions outside of the centre in order to build a relationship with staff before they transition into the centre.

Once they have become comfortable with coming into the centre and getting to know the staff and students, they will follow an individualised curriculum. Students are placed in a group of between two to four students, based on their personalities and work styles. This may mean students are in a group with different aged students. The students will participate in academic lessons in core subjects, additional lessons on subjects of their interest, as well as following an explicit wellbeing curriculum consisting of sessions such as Yoga, Meditation, Art or Music Therapy, Horseriding, and various trips and extra curricular activities.

Centre staff make every effort to be friendly, welcoming, and create an atmosphere that is totally different to students' previous experiences of education, which have often been very negative. Staff are on first name terms with students, and dress casually; students are also welcome to dress casually and comfortably. The community is built with an atmosphere of mutual respect and unconditional positive regard; there are few explicit rules but students are supported to reflect regularly on their behaviour and understand the impact of poor behaviour choices, as well as using restorative practice.

### **Outcomes**

Once students have begun to feel more confident in attending the centre, transitions and next steps become at the heart of all curriculum planning for the student. Each student has a dedicated "Careers" session weekly, in which they can explore their aptitudes and interests, research jobs, colleges, apprenticeships, and other appropriate next steps, identify required and desired qualifications, and plan their pathway towards achieving this. All this planning is student led but supported every step of the way by RBNWL staff.

At present 100% of students leaving the centre (2018/19 and 2019/20 academic year) have gone on to further education, employment or training. Students almost all achieved their target grades in a wide range of qualifications to suit their interest and were supported by a member of RBNWL staff to help them cope with transition to their next provision.



**Red Balloon**  
LEARNER CENTRES  
For the recovery of bullied children

## Job Description

<b>Job Title</b>	Student Support Assistant and Mentor
<b>Salary/Hours</b>	8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday £23,100
<b>Responsible to</b>	Headteacher

<b>Role and Context</b>	
<b>Job Purpose</b>	The purpose of the role is to support students and staff, and to participate fully in the community of RBNWL in order to aid the recovery of the students
<b>Context</b>	The aim of the Learner Centre is the recovery of bullied or traumatised children. The means by which this is done is by enhancing students' self-esteem, encouraging them to make decisions and gradually take control of their own learning to build their self-confidence, helping them to understand themselves and others, and providing a safe environment. It is important that the job holder concur with this aim.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Safeguarding young people is the responsibility of everyone who works for Red Balloon. The post holder must agree to implement our practice in this area. The person appointed will be subject to an enhanced DBS check.
<b>Dimensions</b>	Red Balloon – North-West London offers places to a maximum of 20 students.
<b>Relationships</b>	Works closely with the Headteacher, is part of the staff team, is a participating member of the Red Balloon community, and develops a good relationship with parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.
<b>Other Job Information</b>	Red Balloon and the Trustees will be accountable for all working arrangements and welfare provision.

## Principal Accountabilities

### As a mentor;

- Provide pastoral care for all students acting as a mentor, employing counselling skills where appropriate;
- Role model appropriate behaviour and communication.

### As a support assistant:

- To support students in their work in all subject areas;
- To accompany students on trips;
- To cooperate, liaise and assist the teaching staff in their work with the students;
- To run projects with individual students in conjunction with teachers to supplement their work;
- To oversee individual and community "own work", and liaise with tutors;
- Advise and consult Headteacher regularly, discussing any concerns that arise and act on any agreed decisions;
- Respond to any identified need for in-service training;
- Timetabled sessions to work with specific students
- Targeted in session support for specific students – you will be in lesson with another teacher to work with a student to enable differentiation for weaker or more able students;
- Manage some own work sessions;
- Manage and maintain any photos taken within RB or on trips.

### As a member of staff:

- Abide by and support the philosophy of Red Balloon;
- Implement and support the boundaries of behaviour in line with the ethos of the centre;
- Role model appropriate behaviour and communication;
- Take responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students;
- Co-operate with the other staff in the running of the Centre, communicating effectively to work as part of a team;
- Be aware of and adhere to Red Balloons Health and Safety policies and procedures;
- Report and record all accidents, injuries and first aid in the appropriate place;
- Report any hazards and maintenance needs to Health and Safety officer;
- Attend staff meetings and INSET when possible.

### Additional Responsibilities

- Travel training with students

## Key Performance Indicators

- Feedback from students and parents/carers
- Feedback from managers and colleagues

Person Specification	
<b>Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows evidence of being suitable for working with children</li> </ul>
<b>Skills/Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good written and verbal communication skills</li> <li>Good understanding and knowledge of bullying and the effects of bullying</li> <li>Good team building skills</li> <li>Effective and empathetic student support skills</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Of working with young people</li> <li>Dealing with bullying and its effects</li> <li>Of taking responsibility</li> </ul>

Key Competencies	
<b>Self Management</b>	Manages personal priorities, pressures and workload in an efficient, proactive and effective way
<b>Communications</b>	Listens to and communicates clearly, and supportively, with individuals and groups to help mutual understanding
<b>Equality and Diversity</b>	Is constantly mindful of equality and diversity issues in providing services and opportunities, and seeks to avoid discrimination. At Red Balloon, bearing in mind that we treat children according to their social, academic and emotional needs, we provide a differentiated service.
<b>Teamwork</b>	Develops and maintains constructive team working relationships and works with all colleagues, students, parents/carers, trustees and managers to achieve the objectives of Red Balloon

<p><b>General Information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The job specification details the main outcomes required and should only be updated to reflect <b>major changes</b> that impact on the outcomes for the job. Specific tasks, goals and performance criteria will be agreed through the Appraisal Scheme.</li> <li>All work performed/duties undertaken must be carried out in accordance with relevant Red Balloon policies and procedures, within legislation, and with regard to the needs of students, staff and parents.</li> <li>Post holders will be expected to be flexible in their duties and carry out any other duties commensurate with the position and falling within its general scope, by negotiation.</li> </ul>
<b>Date: 05/05/23</b>