



**Headteacher Application Pack  
Chapel-en-le-Frith High School**





Dear candidate,

Thank you for taking an interest in joining our school as our next headteacher. I have no doubt that all schools describe their job opportunities as exciting, but this post gives you the chance to lead a vibrant, happy and successful school, based in a relatively new building, with great facilities, on the edge of the idyllic Peak District National Park.

Some years ago, our school set itself a challenge *“to deliver an education ranking alongside the best schools nationally; whilst remaining a highly inclusive, friendly, community school”*. We promised that we would not achieve our aims by putting staff under unreasonable pressure, by coercion, or by endless bureaucracy. Here we would do it a different way: by being supportive, putting learning at the centre of our work and by working as a team. We believe in developing outstanding teachers and respecting their professionalism. We want our staff to enjoy their work and our students to enjoy their education.

As this pack explains, we are an unusual school, hosting one of Derbyshire’s largest specialist SEND provisions, but also committed to academic excellence and exceptional personal development. We pride ourselves on accepting students with a wide variety of sometimes complex needs, and we work tirelessly to ensure the best possible outcome for every single young person in our care.

We offer a broad curriculum and work hard, in this rural setting, to - first of all - open students’ eyes to the world ‘beyond the hills of the High Peak’, and then provide them with the skills and pathways to venture into that world, should they wish to.

Undoubtedly, the balance between inclusivity and academic excellence is a difficult one, but both governors and staff are fully committed to making it work, and the successful candidate will join a school in a strong position. The school is consistently oversubscribed and is financially stable, provisional progress 8 for 2024 is +0.35, and, with almost perfect timing, the school has just had a graded inspection by Ofsted. Unfortunately, the report from that inspection has not yet been published, so I cannot share the outcomes!

As governors we value our happy school community, our motivated staff, and our ambitious drive for improvement. As our new headteacher, you'll play a crucial role in shaping our future, ensuring that we continue to be a school that adds value to our local community. You will be able to rely on the support of a strong, experienced and effective governing board with a wide range of skills.

We believe that educational achievement and wellbeing of both staff and students are inextricably intertwined and so, if you're passionate about inclusion, fostering a safe and happy environment where both students and staff flourish, whilst at the same time delivering the high quality education that our students need to progress, we would love to hear from you.

Finally, please do take advantage of the opportunities to learn more about our school that are offered in this pack.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Andrew Semple  
Chair of Governors

## **An introduction to our school**

Our school is an 11-16 mixed, community, comprehensive school of around 950 students. We are lucky to be based in a relatively new building, with great facilities, on a beautiful site at the edge of the Peak District market town of Chapel-en-le-Frith. The Peak District National Park is quite literally on the school's doorstep and provides endless opportunities for walkers, cyclists, mountain bikers, climbers, cavers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

The nearest big towns to the school are Buxton and Stockport but good transport links mean that the school's staff travel from a wide area with many commuting from Manchester, Sheffield, Chesterfield and the towns of East Cheshire. A sizable contingent of staff live in the villages of the Peak District. For anyone considering relocating it is a wonderful area in which to live, with a good mix of housing, decent schools, easy commutes and a good quality of life.

Chapel-en-le-Frith is a rural Peak District market town. The biggest employers in the area are however industrial, mainly manufacturing and quarrying. The school takes students from a wide rural area beyond the town with some students travelling for up to an hour by bus to reach school. There is considerable socio-economic variation across the school's catchment.

We believe that our school is unusual in several ways; perhaps the most obvious of these is structural. The current school was formed by merging, in a new building, the local area special school with the existing high school. The special school became the current 50 place enhanced resourced SEND provision, always referred to simply as 'Learning Support' in school. To meet the moderate to severe special educational needs of its cohort, Learning Support operates as a 'school within a school' with a full independent curriculum with significant dedicated SEND trained staffing, including 7 teachers of SEND.

Students based in Learning Support study an independent curriculum appropriate to their needs. The curriculum is highly adapted to the social and academic needs of the individual, with a strong focus on independent living, interpersonal and employability skills. The aim is always that a student's school life should be as 'normal' as possible. Almost all students based in Learning Support attend mainstream tutor groups and assemblies. All can integrate at breaks and lunchtimes and share social and eating facilities. Many students attend at least one mainstream subject and some will progress to take several mainstream subjects including GCSEs. These arrangements make for a wonderfully inclusive school with young people who are very accepting of difference.

Our inclusive approach spreads more widely too and we often buck local and national trends by being positive about accepting students with difficult and complex backgrounds. We have, for example, an unusually high number of looked after children in school, and we often take students who have been excluded from other schools.

Raising aspirations is of critical importance to us, as many students in this isolated rural area are not naturally exposed to the wider opportunities that an urban area might offer. Significant resources are devoted to bridging this gap, we have good links with further education providers and, despite being an 11 to 16 school engage with a number of universities including Oxford and Cambridge. As a result of this work, and despite being in an area with few local post 16 provisions, the school maintains superb progression rates to successful post-16 education. Students in a typical year may transition to over 20 different post-16 institutions.

We think that we are different in other ways too. Our governors value the arts and creative subjects and we retain high uptake in these areas. We aren't a top-down organisation; we are a team and we work together to do the best we can for the young people in our care. Perhaps most importantly, we recognise that happy, committed staff make for a successful school. We work really hard to look after and develop our staff.

Visitors to our school notice these differences. People frequently comment on the sense of community, the calm atmosphere, and the fact that our staff smile, joke and enjoy what they do. At the start of our 2019 Ofsted inspection the lead inspector commented, after meeting the staff in briefing, that he had never met such a

welcoming, smiley and relaxed staff team at the start of an inspection. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that we are always fully staffed and are often 'cold called' by people wanting to work here.

Like most schools, we have our strengths and weaknesses. We are proud of the work we have done recently on curriculum development, on teaching and learning and on behaviour. We believe in research-based practice and many staff are now engaged with research and further professional qualifications. Our 2024 results are very strong, with a provisional progress 8 (from DfE) of + 0.35 and impressive consistency across subjects. Our challenges remain those of many rural schools; further improving our results requires that we better engage disadvantaged students, the increasingly complex SEN needs that face us require constant adaptations to practice in Learning Support, and while we've always set balanced budgets, and are proud that we've never had to make staff redundant, finances remain tight.

We are in the minority of secondary schools that remain local authority run. This is by choice after careful research and consideration and is regularly reviewed by governors. We are not however an isolated school, we benefit from support from Derbyshire County Council, we're a member of the Peak Edge Group of schools (PEGS) a local grouping of rural primary and secondary schools, and we have good links with local employers, universities and teaching schools.

The school is very popular with parents and has been oversubscribed for year 7 entry for the last thirteen years. For September 2024 the school received 223 applications for 185 places in year 7. This is despite having only 150 students 'in catchment'.

The school site is shared use, with a private gym and a nursery on site. In another example of bucking trends the PFI contract here works well and causes us few issues.

## Leading at Chapel-en-le-Frith High School.

We are proud that our most recent published Ofsted report from 2019, opens by describing the “clear moral purpose” of leadership here. We have always tried to do what is right for our students and right for our staff, even when occasionally this causes us problems with some of the accountability measures currently applied to schools. The fact that we are comfortable with very high levels of SEND is the most obvious example of this, but there are others.

Our governors are absolutely committed to the approaches that the school takes. To protect our values they have agreed the following principles by which we operate:

Our school’s actions are led by its values:

- We will operate according to the Nolan Principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- We will remain a highly inclusive school that works to meet the needs of all students eligible for admission. Whilst we may sometimes have to say that we cannot meet the needs of a student, we will never discourage or refuse to accept a student simply because they are different, difficult or complex.
- We will base our work and our decisions on research findings, and we’ll try to give our staff opportunities to engage with research.
- We will provide the best working conditions that we can. We try hard to educate and develop staff as well as students, to engage with, and to listen to, everyone on our staff team. By doing this we will attract high quality staff.
- We will ensure that the school remains outward looking, both contributing to the development of other organisations and benefiting from their help.

Should you choose to join us you are signing up to these values.

In practice, we operate a very flat leadership structure; we see our role as supporting our brilliant staff and allowing them to do their job well. We give our staff a lot of freedom to experiment, we encourage engagement with research and with new ideas. We rarely tell people what to do, in truth we rarely have to, because we are lucky to work with a great staff team who work incredibly hard and who give a lot.

All of our leaders operate an open-door policy to staff, parents and students. We expect all of our leaders, including the headteacher, to have a high profile around school, to help out with those dull but important day-to-day jobs, and to act as good role models for our students.

There are many advantages of being a leader in this school. We are lucky to work with a skilled, professional and supportive governing body. The governors are very clear in their role, that of oversight and accountability and they delegate responsibility to the maximum degree allowed by regulation, to the leadership group. However, they hold leaders highly accountable for delivering for our young people and for staff. Many governors have a strong business background and understand well corporate governance and accountability.

The staff team here are incredible; skilled, knowledgeable and committed to the school and its values. Importantly, a very strong admin and data team supports our work; this team includes a dedicated PA to the leadership group.

Finally, we take our role in developing people very seriously, and that includes members of leadership group. If you join us, you will receive considerable support, both formal and informal, to settle in and to get to know the school. Whatever your background and experience, we are happy to ensure that you gain the training and experience that you need.

Does all of the above make this an easy place to work? Well, no, it doesn't always. Running a highly inclusive school puts us at the forefront of the current national issues around SEND funding and provision. Running a rural school brings its own unique challenges, not least rural poverty and a surprisingly high safeguarding workload, and running the school the way we choose to run it, collaboratively, and with a very 'flat' structure is probably not the most straightforward way to lead, even if it is perhaps the most satisfying.

This is however an amazing place to be a school leader, you will be part of a supportive and highly effective team in a school where people really enjoy their jobs, and you'll have the chance to make a difference to young peoples' lives, including many who face significant challenges, and you'll have a chance to contribute to the career development of our staff.

### **The Senior Leadership Group**

The current senior leadership group consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, four assistant headteachers and the school business manager. This is a strong and experienced team, with a core of staff who have worked in the school for many years and know it very well indeed. Roles have changed over the years and all members of the team are flexible and able to take on new and different responsibilities.

The school's current deputy headteacher has secured, partly on the basis of experience gained here, a prestigious headship at a school in Lancashire and will be leaving us at Christmas. Governors have decided to put in place an acting deputy headteacher, one of the current experienced assistant headteachers, for the period from Christmas until summer 2025. This will cover the role until Easter with the current headteacher, and support the new headteacher when they arrive after Easter. It will be for the new headteacher and governors to advertise and appoint to the substantive role of deputy headteacher for a September 2025 start.

This acting promotion will leave an assistant head role vacant. Additional leadership capacity will be provided by two fixed-term appointments to the senior leadership group from the school's very experienced and capable middle leaders. These will run until summer 2025.

We hope that these arrangements will give the new headteacher the 'best of both worlds', they will have a strong, experienced and knowledgeable team to support them in the first few months in post, but will be able to shape their own team once they have a feel for the school and what will be needed in the future.

## **Headteacher Job Description**

Title: Headteacher

Grade: L29 – L35

Accountable to: The governing board.

Accountable for: All aspects of school performance.

The headteacher will undertake their responsibilities in accordance with the standards set out in the National Headteachers' Standards 2020 and all relevant statutory requirements.

### **Strategic Direction and Development of the School**

As a member of the school's governing board, the headteacher will contribute to the overall strategic direction of the school and will be responsible for its implementation.

In addition, the headteacher will:

- Lead by example, sharing the vision, direction and ethos of the school;
- Provide professional leadership to ensure the school delivers a high-quality education for all its students;
- Ensure that all those involved in the school are committed to its aims, motivated to achieve them, and involved in meeting long, medium and short term objectives and targets which secure the educational success of the school;
- Ensure that the management, finances, organisation and administration of the school meet statutory requirements and support its vision and ethos;
- Ensure that policies and practice are based in sound educational research;
- Monitor, evaluate and review the effects of the policies, priorities and targets of the school in practice, and take action if necessary;
- Create a culture of continuous professional development based upon sound, evidence-based educational research.

### **Teaching and Learning**

The headteacher will secure and sustain the highest quality teaching and learning throughout the school based on sound educational research.

In addition, the headteacher will:

- Create and maintain an environment that promotes and secures excellent teaching, effective learning, high standards of achievement and good behaviour and discipline;
- Develop, organise and implement the curriculum, and quality assure its effectiveness, in order to identify and act on areas for improvement;
- Ensure that effective, appropriate pastoral support is available to all students;
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and standards of learning and achievement of all students;
- Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents to support and improve students' achievements and personal development;

- Ensure the highest standards of literacy and numeracy for all students;
- Develop positive strategies to improve student and staff well-being to ensure that staff feel valued and consider the school a desirable place to work;
- Create and maintain a culture which is supportive of all individuals;
- Create and maintain a high quality professional development programme.

### **Leading and Managing Staff**

The headteacher will lead, motivate, support and develop all staff to secure improvement.

In addition, the headteacher will:

- Seek to recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre;
- Plan, allocate, support and evaluate work undertaken by groups, teams and individuals, ensuring clear delegation of tasks and responsibilities;
- Implement and sustain an effective performance management system;
- Motivate and enable all staff to carry out their respective roles to the highest standard, including through the provision of high quality professional development based on the assessment of needs and the school's priorities;
- Work with senior colleagues to deploy and develop all staff effectively in order to improve the quality of education provided;
- Manage and organise facilities efficiently and effectively to ensure that they meet the needs of the curriculum and of health and safety regulations;
- Manage, monitor and review the range, quality and use of all available resources in order to improve both the quality of education and student achievements, and to secure efficiency and best value;
- Embrace every opportunity to engage with the local community and act as a passionate advocate for the school;
- Ensure that the school continues to adopt an outward facing approach, embracing opportunities to engage with other educational providers, employers and other stakeholders.

### **Accountability**

The headteacher will:

- Provide information, objective advice and support to the governing board in executing its statutory duties. Enabling it to meet its responsibilities for securing effective teaching and learning, improved standards of achievement, and for achieving efficiency and best value;
- Create and develop an organisation in which all staff recognise that they are accountable for the success of the school;
- Present a coherent and accurate account of the school's performance in a format appropriate to a range of audiences, including the governors, local community, Ofsted and others;

- Work in partnership with parents and students so that they are well informed about the curriculum, attainment and progress, and about the contribution that they can make to help achieve the school's targets for improvement.

### **Safeguarding**

The headteacher will ensure that the school remains committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The headteacher will:

- Ensure that policies and procedures adopted by the governing board are fully implemented and followed by all staff;
- Allocate the necessary resources and time to enable the designated person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other multi-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of children;
- Create and maintain an environment in which all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in relation to children and ensure that all concerns raised are addressed quickly and sensitively;
- Ensure that relevant safeguarding and Prevent training is undertaken by all staff and volunteers and that relevant records are maintained.

### **Operational**

The headteacher will:

- Work collaboratively with the local authority, the building owners, other tenants of the shared use site and the facilities management provider to ensure the continued smooth running of the PFI contract.

### **Note:**

**This job description is not an exhaustive list of the tasks that the Headteacher will carry out. The Headteacher may be expected to carry out other duties commensurate with the level of the role.**

## Person specification

	<b>CRITERIA:</b> <i>in assessing these criteria, the focus will be on demonstration of the necessary experience/knowledge to fulfil the overall strategic function as Headteacher.</i>	Essential	Desirable	Where assessed
<b>A</b>	<b>Education and Qualifications</b>			
1	Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).	x		A
2	NPQH or equivalent qualification.	x		A
3	Evidence of continuing professional development either at headteacher level or in preparation for a headteacher role.	x		A
<b>B</b>	<b>Professional values</b>			
4	A commitment to leading with integrity and moral purpose.	x		A, I, R
5	An absolute and demonstrable commitment to inclusive education and a passion for working with young people with complex needs.	x		A, I, R
6	A collaborative approach to leadership that is based on teamwork and joint planning; an approach that empowers and develops all staff, encourages all to lead in their work whilst having due regard for staff well-being and workload.	x		A, I, R
7	A commitment to leading an outward looking school, building relationships with the community, other schools, further and higher education organisations, employers and other stakeholders to support the work of the school.	x		A, I, R
8	A willingness to get involved in tasks at any level that help the school run smoothly and maintain the school's ethos of a 'flat' leadership structure, all being members of one team.	x		A, I, R
<b>C</b>	<b>Experience, knowledge and skills</b>			
9	Substantial leadership experience as a headteacher or deputy headteacher.	x		A, I, R
10	An understanding of the strategic role of the governing board in a maintained school and experience of working collaboratively with governors to achieve success.	x		A, I, R

11	An ability to plan strategically and operationally, allocating resources effectively and evaluating impact.	x		A, I, R
12	Experience of successful curriculum development aiming to cover statutory requirements, contribute to personal development, and ensure that students 'know more and remember more'.		x	A, I, R
13	A strong classroom practitioner with an excellent understanding of how students learn, barriers to learning, and the essentials of successful classroom practice.	x		A, I, R
14	Knowledge and understanding of the importance of pastoral support, specialist interventions, and approaches to breaking down barriers to learning for young people with SEND, SEMH needs, or who are facing other challenges in engaging with education.	x		A, I, R
15	Have a good understanding of the use of data in schools. Be skilled in quickly assimilating and summarising complex data into forms that are useful in self-evaluation, planning and governance.	x		A, I, R
16	An empathetic understanding for students who exhibit challenging behaviour, a willingness to build relationships with them and to go the extra mile for them.	x		A, I, R
17	An understanding of the SEND code of practice, its operation in schools and of the basics of SEND funding.		x	A, I, R
18	Knowledge and understanding of statutory requirements relating to education: child protection, safer recruitment, safeguarding, health and safety etc.	x		A, I, R
19	An understanding of school finance and the skills necessary to work productively with the school business manager and governors on finance matters.		x	A, I, R
20	An understanding of employment law and HR processes as applied to schools and the skills necessary to work with school and local authority HR staff.		x	A, I, R
21	A commitment to developing people through training and coaching approaches.	x		A, I, R
22	Experience and skills of robust appraisal and performance management of staff, recognising good performance and tackling underperformance to resolution.	x		A, I, R

23	Experience of systematic, rigorous school self-evaluation to inform school improvement planning.	x		A, I, R
24	Experience of working constructively with trades unions and professional associations.		x	A, I, R
<b>D</b>	<b>Personal Qualities</b>			
25	Have excellent communication skills, be able to relate to and communicate with, students, staff, parents and other stakeholders clearly, empathetically and at an appropriate level whether individually or in meetings, assemblies or presentations.	x		A, I, R
26	Have excellent written communication skills, be able to write accurately and concisely for a variety of audiences.	x		A, I, R
27	Be resilient. Be able to remain positive and maintain a sense of proportion and a sense of humour when the job proves challenging.	x		A, I, R

Key: A - application form, I - interview, R – references.

## Applying for the role of headteacher

Before you apply, we want to give you the chance to learn more about our school.

If you would like to visit the school for a tour with the current headteacher, Simon Grieves, you can do so at one of the times below:

Tuesday 5th November at 9.15am  
Wednesday 6th November at 2.00pm  
Thursday 7th November at 9.15am  
Monday 11th November at 9.15am

We anticipate that a tour and a chat about the school will last about 90 minutes.

To arrange to visit the school on one of these dates or, if you would like an informal telephone discussion with the current headteacher Simon Grieves, please e-mail Diane Hibbert, PA to the senior leadership team, at [recruitment@chapelhigh.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@chapelhigh.org.uk).

The appointment is being supported by Peter Monk, from the ASCL Leadership Appointment Service. Interested candidates who wish to have a conversation about the role should contact Peter at [peter.monk@ascl.org.uk](mailto:peter.monk@ascl.org.uk) who will arrange a telephone conversation.

## The Application Form

**We do not use the Derbyshire County Council, or the TES online application process. Please download an application form from the TES website or from our school website and e-mail the completed form to [recruitment@chapelhigh.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@chapelhigh.org.uk).**

Please complete the application form fully and accurately, including exact dates. From a safeguarding point of view, we are required to ensure that there are no unaccounted-for gaps in your employment or educational history. Please explain any gaps that do appear; notes like “gap year” or “bringing up children” are really helpful.

## Referees

Please use referees who have direct, recent experience of your work. Normally referees should be from your current school. If you are a deputy headteacher, references should be from your chair of governors and your headteacher. If you are a headteacher, references should be from the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority or the trust.

## The Supporting Statement

Please leave the box in the application form headed “suitability for job” blank. Provide a separate supporting statement in the form of a letter. This should be no more than two or three sides of A4 in size 12 font.

The supporting statement is probably the most important part of your application. You should make statements which demonstrate how your qualifications, experience and personal qualities match the person specification included as part of these details. Try to focus on the impact of the work that you have done.

## Arrangements for Interview

Interviews will take place in school on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

## Appointments

Appointments are conditional on the successful candidate meeting the Local Authority’s requirements for health; satisfactory references; satisfactory DBS checks; qualification checks and checking of Qualified Teacher Status. Evidence of right to work in the UK is also required.

## Safer recruitment and our values

The school uses robust safer recruitment procedures that meet the requirements of [Keeping children safe in education](#) . These processes are designed to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for, or securing, employment or volunteering opportunities in the school.

Our safer recruitment processes form a vital part of our whole school approach to safeguarding and are an essential part of creating a safe environment for our students. Further details on the safer recruitment of staff in school can be found in our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy which is available on our website. School staff and governors have received training in safer recruitment processes.

When you apply for a job in our school you will be asked to disclose any previous criminal convictions. You will be asked to provide a full employment history and the names of two referees. One of these referees must be your most recent employer and, if the employer is a school, it must be the headteacher. We will follow up on any issues raised by your references at interview and we may contact your referees to verify their identity or for further information.

Everyone who works in the school, including volunteers will have appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks. For teachers, qualified teacher status will be checked. Appointment to a post will be subject to satisfactory references, satisfactory DBS checks, the checking of qualified teacher status (for teachers), checking of the right to work in the UK, and health clearance.

In line with current safer recruitment guidance social media checks will be carried out on shortlisted applicants.

Chapel-en-le-Frith High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Chapel-en-le-Frith High School is committed to creating an inclusive workplace which promotes and values diversity in age, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability and ethnicity. We expect our staff and volunteers to share and uphold these values.