



**Head of School**  
**Springboard Project**  
Information for candidates

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the Head of School role at Springboard Project which is a member of New Bridge Multi Academy Trust. We believe it is a truly remarkable place to work.

Our vision statement '**Creating Meaningful Futures**' captures our commitment to ensuring our educational offer consistently supports the meaningful destinations we achieve for each child. Our vision statement equally relates to our staff team in the knowledge that investing in their professional learning and enabling their continued development supports successful outcomes for our pupils.

Our mission statement '**Learning together, learning for all, learning for life**' illustrates our inclusive approach that values contributions from every individual and sees learning (in both pupils and staff) as a driving force for improving the outcomes for our young people.

The successful candidate will join a passionate and innovative team with a strong 'can do' attitude

The role brings with it the opportunity to work in partnership with the other Heads of School across our Trust and an amazing Executive Leadership Team who share a single-minded ambition to constantly progress and modernise everything we do. From an individual perspective you will receive direct mentoring, support and advice from a National Leader of Education who works as an Executive Director within the Trust.

All our schools remain a very popular choice for our families. Our nationally recognised curriculum model, our unique 48-week provision and our fantastic extra-curricular opportunities have meant all of our schools are now well over commissioned numbers. There will be a need, as we move forward, to develop new ways of working with our mainstream colleagues. We'd love to hear your ideas.

I hope you will feel empowered to put an application together. I'd personally like to thank you for the time, energy and thought you will put into it. We really want to recruit a brilliant school leader - our children deserve nothing less.

If you have any questions, either I or a member of our team would welcome the opportunity to have a discussion with you.

I look forward to meeting you,



Graham Quinn  
Chief Executive Officer

## **Trust History**

Our Trust was formed in 2012 with the conversion of New Bridge School into Academy status. In 2015 we worked with the Oldham Council to build and open Hollinwood Academy. In 2016 we sponsored Spring Brook Academy and brought them into the Trust.

Working with Spring Brook leaders, we bid for and were successful in building and opening a new free school for those pupils with SEMH aged 14 to 19 – Springboard Project. This resulted in the Spring Brook upper site accommodating Key Stage 3 pupils and the Spring Brook lower site housing Key Stage 1 and 2 in a shared building with Focus Trust.

In 2018 we welcomed Hawthorns School, in Tameside, into our organisation.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 Samuel Laycock, in Tameside, became the sixth school to join the Trust. All six of our schools are over-subscribed, most by more than 50% of PAN.

We have considerable pressures on future places in all areas of SEND and are proactively seeking solutions with local authorities across Greater Manchester in an attempt to predict and cater for those young people that will need specialist support in the coming years.

We have considerable experience in building and redesigning schools, having undertaken this work for 3 of our current organisations. In addition, we have leased and remodeled buildings to adapt to the changing needs of our pupils and students.

We are presently building a new free school in Rochdale for young people in the secondary sector with a diagnosis of ASD (due to open in 2025) and are about to embark on the building of a new £13m, 220 place school for primary aged pupils with SEND in Tameside, funded by Tameside Council.

Our Trust is in a position to be the organisation of choice in developing SEND provision across the region. We look for solutions that are the best way to adapt to the changing face of SEND and are capable of taking advantage of opportunities to bid for new accommodation and/or remodeling existing buildings.

### **About our SEMH offer Oldham Family of Schools**

As part of the Oldham family of schools, our Trust is highly committed to working in partnership and will participate fully and actively in developing, implementing and taking a leading role in a range of significant areas. The Springboard Project will develop strong partnerships with local mainstream schools as part of the continuum of provision and will ensure that individualised learning and care is planned holistically, with a range of partners. Local schools will be aware of the scope of the provision and will recognise the contribution Springboard Project makes to the family of schools.

We want our young people to feel "taken care of." Their need to trust our staff allows them to feel confident in their learning

### **Ofsted**

Springboard Project is currently in the inspection window for its first inspection.

## Oldham's Unique Challenge

In line with the rest of the country, EHCPs in Oldham are increasing, with a particular growth in the numbers of pupils and students diagnosed with SEMH/ASC. Before the pandemic began, numbers were increasing year-on-year. These two PLACS codes remain the two highest ranking reasons for a child to be issued with an EHCP in Oldham. In addition to these there are pupils/students without an EHCP who are challenging the present systems as a result of, for example, late diagnosis. These numbers need to reduce as do the pressures on the high needs block.

The worry is that over the next two/three years the demands will intensify. During the pandemic Oldham experienced only one week when it wasn't in either tier three restrictions or full national lockdown. These had an associated impact on the numbers of children and young people experiencing domestic abuse, child abuse, exploitation and neglect in the borough. The pandemic has widened the equality gap in the borough. We believe we need to act quickly to reduce this for SEMH cohorts so they can thrive in employment once their formal education ends.

Progress on a more appropriate continuum of provision across all schools and the work on developing a secure graduated response within schools, has started but is at an early stage of development. There has been significant investment in Oldham's whole school wellbeing approach over the last 4 years. However, this investment has not yet correlated with a reduction in demand for SEMH specialist provision.

Many pupils/students with SEMH/ASC needs should be able to make good progress in existing mainstream provision. However, there is a small but significant (and probably) rising number who are not engaged and consequently are unhappy, socially isolated and make poor progress. In addition, there is a steadily increasing rate in the number of pupils and students being excluded from mainstream secondary schools. The LA holds consistent data on exclusions.

Oldham has a high level of permanent exclusions in the secondary phase and it is clear that current arrangements are not working as well as they should. The opportunity of both Inclusion and SEND reporting into one structure in the LA means we can do more than ever as a system to address these interdependent issues together.

We believe that more work needs to be done (in relation to ensuring the LA's vision for these children is secure) and although not directly part of this business plan we would welcome further discussion on how the Trust can support this policy direction.

Current provisions are full and/or working over capacity to try to accommodate the soaring demand for school admissions.

The present SEMH (school based) arrangements across Oldham need further improvement. The challenges currently affecting these young people are:

1. supply outstrips demand by four requests for one place. This is true for children and young people with EHCPs that we know about. More are in the pipeline awaiting collated information for a decision to assess/under assessment
2. increasing admissions, creating larger class sizes
3. a lack of appropriate space for learning, self-regulation and extended learning activities
4. appropriate key Stage 2/3 facilities based within the existing Spring Brook Upper site

5. the need to explore revised a Key Stage 1 assessment centre
- Mainstream schools are also hampered by:
6. a lack of appropriate ICT systems and apps to learn in mainstream provision
  7. increasing prevalent mental health issues in pupils and students and the limited availability of appropriate support (particularly HYMs and SALT)
  8. the lack of effective “outreach”/satellite support

### **Vision for SEMH Provision in line with local and national policy direction**

Our vision is to create an aspirational and sustainable continuum of provision for pupils and students with a primary diagnosis of SEMH across Oldham, collaborating with existing mainstream schools, colleges, voluntary organisations, community partners/employers, local business, and industry.

This specific brief enhances, by offering extra capacity, for pupils and students diagnosed with SEMH across the 4-14 age range. This will ensure that learners continue with their learning journey through a vibrant offer. Where appropriate, pupils and students currently educated out-of-borough may be able to return to education in their locality. The provision will be linked to clear and aspirational adult outcomes, offering a continuing relationship with families.

The Trust will work in partnership with pupils, students and their families to ensure a collaborative and consistent approach to personal/social development and learning. We will offer a wide range of support services and training programmes, which will include personalised support with communication and behaviour management strategies.

We will use our national and international reputation of using the latest technology to advance learning, as a key pillar of change.

Our vision is driven by a moral imperative to inspire and support young people with SEMH in achieving the most successful outcomes of which they are capable. It will encompass in detail:

1. the opportunity to secure additional capacity in local SEMH schools through the establishment of a high quality, cutting edge curriculum. A remodeling and extending of current buildings and facilities to enable high quality learning in an appropriate environment.
2. provision of extending support services to families and to other schools.
3. high expectations of individuals linked to aspirational adult outcomes for all its young people.
4. engaging pupils and students, through the use of technology, as active participants in their education and in making a positive contribution to their school and local community.
5. an inclusive environment for pupils and students with EHCPs.
6. underpinning the work of the organisation with agreed values based on a strong sense of community, interpersonal relationships, respect and empathy.
7. extension of the school day to enhance the overall provision for pupils, students and families
8. working collaboratively to provide a place of learning for the whole community.
9. academy freedoms to ensure flexibility of provision.

Young people attending the remodeled provision will experience a personalised approach to their learning. They will be taught by fully qualified specialist teachers and an extended support staff sensitive to their needs, providing a nurturing and stimulating environment. The Trust will provide 4-14 education based upon key elements of the national curriculum.

The remodeling and extension of the current physical environment, personalisation of curriculum delivery and development of personal interests, will create a setting in which pupils and students feel safe, valued and are able to make friends with others of the same age.

There will be an expectation that teaching groups are sufficiently small to enable delivery of lessons to the whole class thereby avoiding social exclusion as a consequence of individual support staff being assigned to support individual pupils and students. Teaching groups will be supported by one or more trained support staff as well as periodic involvement by specialists such as family support workers, social workers, educational psychologists, clinical psychologists, CAMHS etc.

Through an initial internal assessment process, we aim at achieving four main objectives:

1. to identify the real needs of pupils and students academically as well as social and personal needs.
2. to give young people an opportunity to feel confident in expressing their abilities and knowledge.
3. to reveal a student's range and quality of previous educational experiences,
4. to collect accurate information on a young person's knowledge as well as his/her potentials, and accurately assess their SEN.

The school will be outward facing and will engage with the community utilising 'beyond the school gates.' Opportunities to share the school facilities with the community will also be sought in order to challenge the stereotypical images of SEMH.

### **Curriculum overview**

The organisation of the remodeled school will ensure timetabling arrangements that will create a calm, stable learning environment, which minimises movement between lessons / staff. Evidence from our MAT tells us that pupils and students with SEMH succeed best when supported by a small group of consistent, trusted staff.

There will be an approach which focuses on developing communication and social skills, interaction, tolerance of others, British Values and preparation for life in modern Britain. As a result, pupils/students will benefit from excellent opportunities in all aspects of the vocational and academic curriculum to achieve and improve their skills, social, knowledge, understanding, well-being and physical development.

The school will work closely with a number of local organisations to give pupils and students opportunities to learn to communicate with their peers within the local and wider community. Young people with SEMH have significant difficulties in accessing mainstream social and leisure activities throughout the school holidays. Our full-year, extended school provision will ensure that they remain engaged, motivated, safe and healthy.

There is an expectation that all pupils and students will work towards external accreditation in Core areas of the curriculum. They will work towards GCSE and Entry level qualifications. It is essential that the qualifications on offer carry value within the adult world of work. However, experience tells us that many of these pupils/students have disengaged from traditional curriculum models.

### **Behaviour**

The school will maintain very high expectations of pupil/student behaviour. The Trust has robust and well-established processes to encourage excellent behaviour and recognises that pupils and students will potentially require the opportunity to discuss incidents in detail and need appropriate adults to discuss social and emotional interactions in a variety of real-life situations.



There will be a need for consideration to be given, both within the remodeled / extended build and staffing structure, to allow for this targeted intervention to take place. There will also be support given to families to enable pupils and students to receive a consistent response to their behaviour both in and out of school in order to make progress in this area. Poor behaviour in schools can lead to poor outcomes for young people not only academically through disruption of learning, but it can also have a negative impact on the wellbeing of pupils, students and staff. Pupils and students need to feel safe and valued in school in order to achieve their best.

For pupils and students with SEMH some associated behaviours can become life-limiting. It is therefore vital that the school works closely with the young people, their families and other agencies such as the family support team, educational psychologists and social care support. This is in order to modify behaviour that is a barrier to learning or impedes on them participating in family life and the wider community.

We will aim to have very low incidence of problem behaviours. We will take a positive and pro-active approach to managing behaviour using an eclectic range of proven techniques. All staff across the school will be trained in Team Teach which is an approach used to manage challenging and aggressive behaviour. The Headteacher will keep a list of those staff authorised to use Team Teach and will ensure that staff receive regular refresher training from instructors. The basic philosophy of the approach is as follows:

1. 95% or more of all incidents should be managed without recourse to physical intervention
2. It is a flexible framework of responses stressing a holistic approach.
3. De-escalation of situations is a priority (e.g. using communication skills, humour, diversion, diffusion, distraction etc.).
4. Gradual and graded positive handling techniques are based on providing the maximum amount of care and control and therapeutic support for the shortest possible time necessary to ensure the safety of all concerned.

Half-termly visits from an external behaviour consultant will be made in order for staff to have the opportunity to discuss any issues and to relook at strategies in a supported environment. Some pupils and students will have behaviour support plans with targets that are reviewed regularly with the young person and their family and clear, consistent strategies identified for a graded response to challenging behaviour.

Appropriate documentation will be completed as soon as possible after any incidents and parents will be informed. These incidents will be monitored and analysed and the results used to inform planning next steps and strategies.

Restorative approaches within a solution focused ethos, will guide pupils/students towards taking responsibility for their actions as they become more aware of the effect their behavioural choices have on those around them and on their own futures. The Trust is fundamentally opposed to punitive methods, but consistently applies predictable consequences to facilitate a reflection and repair process to help young people explore and experiment with safer ways of managing their emotions. Pupils/students within our community will have the opportunity to develop their skills in a climate of risk taking where mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning.

Inappropriate behavioural choices often lead to missed opportunities and increased anxiety around learning. For this reason, behaviour expectations will provide a framework and a vocabulary that will be used in school to maximise engagement with learning and facilitate increased self-esteem through regular experiences of academic success.

Adults working with pupils and students with challenging behaviours need an extraordinarily high level of skill and understanding so they can consistently model professional behaviours and attitudes. On-going personal and professional reflection and development is vital.

## **Objectives**

In order to deliver this business plan, we have five objectives:

1. to offer a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment
2. to offer a quality provision with meaningful pathways for life in a stimulating and active age-appropriate environment for all learners on the role of the school.
3. to provide ongoing support to develop life skills, independence and employability skills.
4. To provide qualified and skilled staff for our pupils and students.
5. To provide appropriate professional development to our staff that, in turn, will enhance provision for all young people.

We also have three financial objectives:

1. to afford to extend the facilities at the Spring Board Town Centre site that allow for the projected increase in pupil numbers over the next two/three/four years.
2. to raise adequate funding to carry out necessary internal adaptations to the Spring Board site and utilise satellite sites.
3. To ensure appropriate funding for each individual pupil/student by working with the LA, which will allow us to further develop and bespoke the offer to meet the pupils/student needs.

## **Mission**

At the heart of our Trust's mission, "Learning together, learning for all, learning for life," is the belief that all our pupils, whatever their background or ability, will be successful and valued.

Our pupils and students will have access to high quality facilities, and they will be encouraged to make informed choices to develop the awareness and skills for their chosen destination pathway.

The school will provide a range of after-school activities and holiday activities that keep young people safe through stimulating extended school activities.

The Trust will draw upon the successful experience of our Springboard Project school in preparing pupils at Key Stage 3 for initiatives such as our "Vocational curriculum" Our innovative curriculum model will ensure that the community is utilised as a main resource for learning. Our curriculum pathways will prioritise the pupils/students' skills and interests, ensuring continuous attainment, achievement and social development.

## **Keys to Success**

We have identified the following keys to success for the SEMH remodeling plan:

1. ensuring Oldham has enough local capacity for the next 3 years and to avoid children and young people needing to go out of borough
2. bringing back into borough some of Oldham's young people with the most complex needs for learning and intermediate short-term respite. (Having children back in borough will ease LA and CCG budget pressures on the High Needs Block, CCG bespoke health and/or Continuing Care budgets and the CLA Placements Budgets)



3. creating a desire for our pupils and students to actively participate in the opportunities on offer
4. communicating with the young people and their families and other key stakeholders as key contributors to success

### **Extending Role Numbers**

Whilst we are improving the offer at Springboard Project it is clear that the school's increasing role needs further intervention work.

### **Targeted Strategy**

Satellite provisions in and around the local community is the preferred option as it offers an important opportunity to continue to build on local relationships and generates trust with business owners. This will allow the pupils and students to develop vocational skills and build relationships and confidence in their local community.