Our ref: JA/lf

4th May 2022

Dear applicant,

**Assistant Headteacher Additional Needs: Specialist and Alternative Provision**

I’d like to welcome you to Falinge Park and for your interest in this new post to our structure. Inclusive practice is at our core and we are constantly looking to ensure that our pupils with additional needs are given the extra that will help them to succeed.

Since 2018 we have developed a continuum of provision that is attached as part of this pack. We know that for some children with additional needs it is in class support that is needed; some children need regular check ins or specific interventions; some children require what we term high support which might be a period of time in the school day with trained specialists; or supplementary support that for whatever reason will have the child learning with specialised staff in small groups. The aim is that we always reintegrate back into the ‘formal’ curriculum but that for some children it takes a little longer to get to that point. We also provide alternative provision for pupils who are at risk of a permanent exclusion. This is for pupils currently in Key Stage 3 but we do need to look at extending this into Key Stage 4. This alternative provision is a re-setting of behaviours with support in small groups. It is always with the aim of supported reintegration.

We invested significantly in this area providing opportunities for progression for Teaching Assistants, mentors and HLTAs. We appointed a Speech and Language Therapist to provide additional support and training two days a week and have developed a programme with Educational Psychologists to give evidence enriched guidance and allow professional practice groups to run with interventions from the EPs. The way it is set up is primed for our pupils to succeed and in many ways meets the recommendations from the new Green Paper. However, in the spirit of openness, honesty and transparency, the impact of Covid on the pupils was significant because we were limited by restrictions as opposed to working with the need of the pupils. It meant that the work that needed to be done on the curriculum was not as focused or targeted as it could be and whilst it is still good, it is not as good as it could be, nor should be.

To address this, we are looking for a new Assistant Headteacher to join our team to oversee the development of the Additional Needs: Specialist and Alternative Provision. This is an ideal opportunity for someone to build on the excellent practice and make it a beacon of excellence. It’s challenging – many of our children have significant need and we have high levels of poverty – but it is perhaps one of the most rewarding roles. We have seen a number of children develop in this continuum of provision who are successful and our practice is widely shared locally.

I have a particular interest in this area of school and want it to succeed. I lead with three other Heads on system leadership related to inclusion across the authority; I sit on the Inclusion Board and the new SEND alliance and another of our team is leading on Ordinarily Available Provision across the authority. We are working with the organisation Right2Succeed to hopefully develop the inclusion practice across the authority. For me, our school can only be truly good if all the children who need that specialised support are given strong pathways throughout the school.

If you are interested in this role I am happy to talk to you about our work in this area and share with you our vision. I have attached as part of this pack our values as a school, our vision for this area and our structures. I welcome you to come and visit and the interview process will involve you observing on the first day what you have seen and sharing with us how you will make a real change to our children and families. It’s a tough job, I’m not going to lie to you about that, but it’s a brilliant job too and hopefully if you believe in inclusion as much as we do but inclusion that does make a positive difference then maybe this is an opportunity for you.

**Why Falinge?**

Our objective is simple at Falinge: **to create a compelling learning experience.** We do this by believing in people and positive relationships. This underpins our actions with each other and with the children. We have only one non-negotiable in school and that is our commitment to Safeguarding.

If you visit the school I would hope you would notice the warm, welcoming environment; the excellent behaviour of the children; strong staff morale; a commitment to professional development of all staff; and a strong sense that this is a place where learning is valued. It is a place where calculated risks can be taken in a supportive environment and where we operate through a positive culture rather than a criticising, deficit model.

Our values are writ large: securing equity; strengthening communication; building communities; celebrating diversity. Our big aims of the curriculum and the learning behaviours we hope to instill in our pupils are: show kindness; show empathy; be curious; be responsible; take positive action.

We have developed our community wing of the school and are working closely with our charitable and voluntary organisations on social action and social justice projects. We believe in the beauty of civil society: of schools and community partners working together, ultimately benefiting the wellbeing and agency of communities. We would expect the successful applicant to be part of this approach.

We do work hard at the school but wellbeing and sensible policy making is at the heart of our practice. We do not have a culture of “meeting for meeting’s sake” or a tick-box approach to school improvement. We are sensible with workload and expectations and are not afraid to stop if what we are doing isn’t having an impact on compelling learning.

As with any organisation, we don’t get it right all of the time – but we make sure that we work in a non-judgemental environment and we focus our actions have to be for the benefit of the children.

**Next steps?**

If you are interested in applying, please look at the person specification, our website and familiarise yourself with what we are about. If you would like to visit the school please contact my PA Lisa Fitton on fittonl@falingepark.com to arrange a visit and we will make sure we accommodate you. If you want to have a conversation prior to applying then please contact me via Lisa Fitton. When writing your application, I am interested in understanding **why you want to work at our school** as well as gathering information about your skills, knowledge, leadership and vision for this role.

Yours faithfully,



**Janice Allen**

**Headteacher**