

March 2024

Dear Applicant

Assistant Headteacher (Director of Post 16), L11-15 from September 2024

Thank you very much for your interest in the post of Assistant Headteacher (Director of Post 16) at Sir Bernard Lovell Academy (SBL). I hope this letter will help to inform your application.

School context

We are proud of our heritage and association with Sir Bernard Lovell who was born in 1913, just a stone's throw from the school entrance. He is well known for designing and constructing the world's largest telescope which enabled many discoveries to be made about our solar system. In 1972, Sir Bernard Lovell returned to his childhood community to open our school which was named in his honour. The inspirational life of Sir Bernard Lovell demonstrates many of the qualities we want to instil in our students including ambition, determination, curiosity and humility.

SBL has been on a journey of rapid improvement over the last 5 years and is now a very different school to what it was back in 2018 when Ofsted judged the school as requiring improvement. Thanks to the excellent work of my predecessor and the dedication and loyalty of our staff, SBL is now a very good school with a strong reputation in the local community. This was confirmed when Ofsted returned in 2021 and judged the school to be good in every area. Our record number of over 270 students starting Year 7 in September 2024, as well as our growing sixth form, is evidence that SBL has a strong reputation and is the school of choice for the local community.

The school has a well-established sixth form with a collaborative provision with Wellsway and IKB School, located a few miles away in Keynsham, which together makes up Futura Sixth Form. Students travel between the sites to access a broad curriculum offer of mainly A levels and level 3 vocational courses. Approximately 150 students are based at SBL, with an additional 200 at Wellsway. At SBL, we also have a small intake of students who follow a level 2 curriculum in Year 12 which enables them to then access our level 3 courses or progress to college or an apprenticeship.

With significantly larger year groups progressing through the school, there is huge potential to boost our sixth form intake, broaden our post-16 offer and improve outcomes. To provide capacity for the future, the sixth form will be moving into expanded and refurbished accommodation over the summer that will provide a mature and inspiring learning environment for our students. This will provide a genuinely exciting opportunity for the appointed Director of Post 16 to really make their mark and strengthen our culture of aspiration and high expectations. The development of a leading edge sixth form centre of excellence is very much part of our current 2030 vision project which will develop a collaborative vision for what an exceptional education will be like at SBL and a long term strategic plan to achieve this.

A key factor which puts SBL in a strong position to achieve our ambitious vision is being part of the Futura Learning Partnership. Futura is a family of 27 primary, secondary and special schools in the Bristol, Bath and Somerset area who all benefit from close collaboration and shared values, while retaining their individual ethos and identity. The four values of the Futura partnership which underpin everything we do at SBL are respect, opportunity, collaboration and aspiration. This year at SBL we are having a particular focus on collaboration. To quote the philosopher Aristotle, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. At SBL, we call this 'the power of the collective'.

The role of Assistant Headteacher (Director of Post 16) and the Senior Leadership Team

The post is suited to an ambitious current middle or senior leader with a passion for post 16 education and the drive to raise the quality of our sixth form provision. The role will appeal to someone who shares our vision of an exceptional education for all and our commitment to high standards. It is essential that your leadership is underpinned by our school values and that you lead by example.

While the focus of the role is the strategic development and day to day management of the sixth form, it is important to stress that the postholder will collaborate closely with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team to promote the vision and strategy for the wider school. You will have a teaching load of approximately 0.5 FTE.

The Senior Leadership Team currently consists of the Headteacher, two Deputy Headteachers, three Assistant Headteachers, three Associate Assistant Headteachers (who have been seconded to the SLT for this year) and the Headteacher's PA. There is a strong work and team ethic, along with a genuine commitment to staff wellbeing. We endeavour to strike a healthy balance between supporting each other and professional challenge. Our meetings are short and business focussed but we like to enjoy lighter moments with a shared sense of humour.

Application and interview process

To apply for this post, please read the job description/person spec carefully and complete the application form with a supporting statement (within the form) of no more than 2000 words. You should explain how your experience, personal qualities and leadership impact make you a strong candidate to develop our post 16 provision into a sixth form centre of excellence.

We welcome visits to the school to help inform your application. If you wish to visit or arrange a call with the Headteacher, please e-mail Liz Vaughan, Headteacher's PA, on lvaughan@sblacademy.org.uk to make an appointment.

The deadline for submitting applications is **11:59 pm on Sunday 14th April 2024**. Interviews will be held during week beginning 22 April 2024.

I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely



Robin Bassford
Headteacher