

Assistant Principal - SENCO

Leigh Academy Blackheath



More than just a job. More than just an employer.

Leigh Academies Trust is a dynamic, vibrant multi-academy trust, founded in 2008. Today we encompass 32 academies across Kent, Medway and South-East London.



LEIGH
Academies Trust

Simon Beamish

BA (Hons) MSc PGCE NPQH NLE FCCT

Chief Executive
Leigh Academies Trust



Welcome

Through a model of education that creates a network of inspirational and inclusive academies that share the same values, the Trust provides the drive for educational improvement and dynamic transformation. All of the academies work closely and collaboratively together, along with our partners, seeking to exploit the key educational philosophy of human scale education. To maximise the levels of achievement across each of our learning communities, all activities are focused on improving the life chances of the young people in our care.

As of 1st April 2024, our Trust comprises 32 geographically organised academies (16 secondaries, 14 primaries and 2 special) educating over 20,000 students, and employing 3,000 talented staff. Nearly 40% of our academies are judged outstanding overall by Ofsted, versus 15% nationally. The Trust is establishing four 'clusters' of academies: North Kent; Central Kent; South East London; Medway. In addition, the Trust is responsible for one of the region's biggest initial teaching training organisations, a large teaching school hub and is an accredited apprenticeship provider. Our future plans are found in our [Vision 2030](#) document available on our website.

We are now recruiting to appoint a suitably experienced and qualified SENCO at Leigh Academy Blackheath. This is a truly rare and exciting opportunity for the appointed candidate to join a very successful and financially sound, mature and geographically local multi-academy trust that combines management freedom for effective leaders with secure central support that encourages collaboration for success. The successful candidate will work closely with the Principal and other senior leaders across the academy and wider Trust.

Our ideal candidate will be an existing SENCO with considerable experience and you will need a strong commitment to raising educational attainment for children and young people with SEN and have a willingness and ability to develop specialist knowledge and keep up to date with local and national developments.

Emma Smith

Principal
Leigh Academy Blackheath



Leigh Academy Blackheath

We are an 'Outstanding' co-educational 11-18 yr comprehensive school and an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School. We are driven by the belief that every learner is entitled to an enriching, varied and personalised education; delivered through a broad and balanced curriculum that provides challenge, irrespective of need, starting point or background. Our mission is to ensure all our students develop into powerful citizens of the digital future on both a national and global scale.

'Pupils behave exceptionally well. Classrooms are calm places where pupils can focus on their learning' - OFSTED December 2022

Our strong learning community works together and shares the value of collaboration; every member of our academy family collaborates to achieve success, cultivating a strong sense of belonging. Our belief in 'human-scale' education, delivered through a schools-within schools model, ensures every one of our students is known and valued. Strong pastoral care is at the heart of our academy and we place great importance on building strong partnerships with parents and carers.

'Staff are proud to work at this school where everyone's contribution is valued' - OFSTED December 2022

Since opening in September 2018, Leigh Academy Blackheath (LAB) has established itself as the local community's preferred choice for their child's secondary education. We received over 1,000 applications for this September's 180 Year 7 places, with over 300 first choice preferences. It is an exciting time to be joining our learning community as our sixth form

provision - LABP16, is set to open in September 2023. Building upon our well established IB roots, LABP16 will offer our students the opportunity to study the IB Diploma and IB Career-related programmes.

'Leaders provide a curriculum which matches and far exceeds the ambition of the national curriculum' - OFSTED December 2022

At LAB, everything we do is built upon our core values of: Respect, Integrity, Ambition, Scholarship and Resilience. We are a strong team and work hard together to ensure every student realises their full potential. Staff have access to a wide range of professional development opportunities both within the academy and across Leigh Academies Trust (LAT).

Our dedicated staff are the most important factor in transforming lives and delivering the best outcomes for every student. Every colleague has access to a wide range of professional development opportunities, tailored to the individual depending on aspirations and key areas of interest.

'Leaders provide excellent development opportunities for all staff. They are conscious of staff workload and well-being' - OFSTED December 2022

Our successful candidate will have ample opportunity to work collaboratively with other academies and senior leaders within the Trust, as well as share resources that will ultimately benefit our students and the community that we serve.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Vacancy

From September 2024, we are seeking to appoint an experienced and qualified Assistant Principal - SENCO who, with the support of the Principal, Academy Leadership Team and the SEN department will take responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy, SEN information report and provision made by the school for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The successful candidate will also work closely with staff, parents/carers and other agencies.

We understand that each student has different learning needs and experiences, but they must always have the same opportunities. Leigh Academy Blackheath's goal is to always act quickly to identify undiagnosed needs and always support students with SEND needs. Our digital curriculum, which includes Chromebooks for students and an incredible team of teaching assistants, has removed barriers for children, laying the groundwork for this successful approach. We make every effort to ensure students with SEND thrive and grow in confidence alongside the rest of our community.

A flexible approach with a can-do ethos is necessary, as is drive, grit and boundless enthusiasm, as nearly everyday we experience something new for the first time. It is essential that our SENCO has a positive outlook, is supportive of others and openly shares best practice, modelling this constantly to the growing staff body. Our SENCO will need to embrace a forward thinking approach to raising standards in teaching for SEND, implementing a high quality intervention programme and working with SE London and Kent teams to ensure we are doing the absolute best for our most vulnerable students at all times.

The role of SENCO can be highly rewarding, as you will have the opportunity to directly contribute to pupils receiving the support they need to achieve their full potential.

We wish to hear from you if you are committed to changing our education world and are:

- an enthusiastic, energetic and ambitious school leader with a track record of success at secondary level;
- a motivational and inspirational leader with high expectations of staff;
- confident and able to communicate a clear vision for the school;
- able to develop children to reach their full potential regardless of background or circumstance;
- approachable and keen to work with staff across the Trust to ensure wide success;
- able to establish and develop excellent relationships with the community and other stakeholders.

Position	Assistant Principal - SENCO
Location	Leigh Academy Blackheath
Responsible to	Principal
Basis	Permanent, Full-Time
Commencement	September 2024
Salary	Leadership scale commensurate with experience

Application Process

Naturally, we are seeking to appoint the best possible candidate and therefore the application process will reflect our desire to undertake all necessary measures to achieve this.

On the basis that interested candidates may be keen to visit the academy before making a formal application, you can arrange this by contacting Helaina English (helaina.english@leighacademyblackheath.org.uk) Visits will be offered and will be hosted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Please ensure you offer Helaina a range of dates when you are available in your initial email to ensure we can coordinate a visit that works for both you and the academy.

Candidates wishing to have an initial conversation with the SLT about this role can also arrange for a telephone call. Those wishing to do so should also contact Helaina English (as above) in the first instance.

To submit an application in full, please do so online via the following link:

[Assistant Principal - SENCO - Leigh Academy Blackheath - Online Application](#)

If you have any queries on any aspect of the application process or need additional information please contact Charlotte Herberts (Recruitment Coordinator) on **01634 412 245** or [**charlotte.herberts@latrust.org.uk**](mailto:charlotte.herberts@latrust.org.uk).

The academy is committed to safeguarding children and successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check. Our commitment to safeguarding is underpinned by robust processes and checks which are in place across the Trust.

Closing date for applications	Tuesday 21st May - 9am
Shortlisting date	Tuesday 21st May - noon
Interviews and assessment activities	Thursday 23rd May



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Job Profile

Role: Assistant Principal - SENCO - Leigh Academy Blackheath

Reporting to: Principal

Leigh Academies Trust is a highly successful multi-academy trust. Our model of education enables students to reach their full potential, through an IB curriculum, transforming their lives and ultimately the communities in which they live. This position would suit an experienced Vice Principal/Deputy Head Teacher with an aspiration for Headship. To work closely with the Vice Principal for Inclusion, Senior Leadership Team and colleagues in the strategic development of the Academy's Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy and oversee the day-to-day operation of that policy with the aim of raising SEN student achievement.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Direction and Development of SEN Provision in the Academy (with the support of, and under the direction of the leadership team)

- exercise a key role in assisting the senior leadership team and governors with the strategic development of SEN policy / provision
- support all staff in understanding the needs of SEN student and ensure the objectives to develop SEN are reflected in the school development plan
- monitor progress of objectives and targets for students with SEN from teachers' plans, evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning by work analysis and use these analyses to guide future improvements
- analyse and interpret relevant school, local and national data and advise the senior leadership

team on the level of resources required to maximise achievement

- liaise with staff, parents, external agencies and other schools to coordinate their contribution, provide maximum support and ensure continuity of provision

Learning and Teaching

- support the identification of and disseminate the most effective teaching approaches for students with SEN
- work with the senior leadership team and staff to develop effective ways of bridging barriers to learning through:
 - assessment of needs
 - monitoring of teaching quality and student achievement
 - target setting, including IEPs
 - developing a recording system for progress
- collect and interpret specialist assessment data to inform practice
- undertake day-to-day co-ordination of SEN students' provisions through close liaison with staff, parents and external agencies
- work with the senior leadership team, teachers, key stage co-ordinators and pastoral staff to ensure all students learning is of equal importance and that there are realistic expectations of students
- consider the range of teaching strategies / equipment that could be utilised for students at School Action Plus.



Leading and Managing Staff

- provide professional guidance to staff to secure good teaching for SEN students, through both written guidance and meetings
- advise on and contribute to the professional development of staff, including whole Academy INSET provision
- provide regular information to the senior leadership team and governing body on the evaluation of SEN provision

Effective deployment of staff and resources

- advise the senior leadership team and governing body of priorities for expenditure and deployment of staff, and utilise resources with maximum efficiency
- maintain and develop resources, coordinate their deployment and monitor their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of Academy and SEN policies
- lead the SEN team, including LSAs, and the HI and SLCN specialists, overall responsibility for the HI and SLCN SRPs

Other professional requirements

- Coordinate all Annual Reviews and attend / chair when necessary

The post holder will also be expected to undertake any other tasks as reasonably required by the Principal or Governors to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the academy.

Safeguarding of students and Duty of care

All staff, regardless of role, level of seniority and location, have a responsibility to ensure the highest

levels of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils, and we expect all our staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We must collectively create an environment where children feel safe to learn, play, and grow. Children should feel comfortable in their surroundings and know that they can approach any responsible adult with any problems or concerns.

All staff must be able to identify any children who are at risk of harm, and know the characteristics of abuse or neglect. If you suspect or confirm harm then it's essential you know what actions to take.

Annual safeguarding training is offered to all staff at Leigh Academies Trust, and it is the staff member's responsibility to be aware of the most up to date guidance documented in the [Keeping Children Safe in Education document \(Department of Education\)](#).

Notes

The job description allocates duties and responsibilities but does not direct the particular amount of time to be spent on carrying them out and no part of it may be so construed. This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the post. It will be reviewed at least once a year and may be subject to modification or amendment at any time after consultation with the holder of the post.

The duties may be varied to meet the changing demands of the academy/business unit at the reasonable discretion of the Principal/Director. This job description does not form part of the contract of employment. It describes the way the post-holder is expected and required to perform and complete the particular duties as set out in the foregoing.

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Person Specification

We seek to recruit talented individuals who can not only help to build the success of our academies but also people who are engaging and passionate about everything they do. The person specification is related to the requirements of the post as determined by the job description. You should refer to these requirements when completing the application.

Essential	Desirable
Experience	
• As SENCO/supporting children with special educational needs • Effective working with a variety of stakeholders • Monitoring and identifying areas for improvement • Leading, motivating and developing practice • Effective use of assessment and analysis of SEND children's progress in raising standards • Teaching experience across the primary range having taught at all levels of ability to at least a good standard	• Experience as SENCO in more than one school
Education & Qualifications	
• A graduate in a relevant discipline • To hold a teaching qualification that is recognised by the DfE • To have evidence of continuing and recent professional development relevant to the post • National SENCO award	• National SENCO Award or willing to complete training • Evidence of other qualification/s eg BSL, SLCN

Essential	Desirable
Professional knowledge, skills and understanding	
• Previous experience of effective SEND development and pupils based learning • Thorough and up to date knowledge of SEND code of practice and SEND issues • Proven Management and SENCO skills to support inclusion teaching and learning • Ability to produce accurate work to tight deadlines under pressure • Ability to communicate clearly in writing and orally a variety of audiences • Ability to be able to deal sensitively with pastoral issues relating to staff and students • Extensive ICT skills that reflect the impact of technology on today's classrooms	• Experience of managing successful change
Personal Qualities and Abilities	
• An enthusiastic, confident and able communicator with excellent interpersonal skills • An effective organiser who can get the most from all types of resources through their development and deployment • A positive and resilient individual with drive, initiative, vision and commitment to improve standards in the school • Can lead, motivate and inspire others including teachers, parents and governors • Commitment to inclusion and raising standards for all	• Able to demonstrate strong leadership and management skills
Management	
• Ability to analyse and evaluate data on students • Ensure appropriate curriculum provision for all students across the Department • Ability to establish credibility with colleagues, students and parents	

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work closely and
collaboratively together,
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Benefits at Leigh Academies Trust

At Leigh Academies Trust, we want to provide you with a rewarding and enriching career and to help you to reach your full potential, both professionally and personally. As an employee of Leigh Academies Trust, here is a taster of the great benefits you can receive from day one;

- An open and collaborative working environment, not just within your academy but also across the Trust where innovation is encouraged
- A career in an organisation that values individuality and diversity
- Dedicated focus groups to ensure we have the optimal working environment in all aspects.

Professional development opportunities

- Regular training and access to a range of internal and external programmes tailored to your learning needs throughout your career
- Educational sponsorship (application required)
- Opportunities for career progression as we are willing and able to support moves from one academy to another.

Financial

- A competitive salary for both teaching and non-teaching staff whereby pay progression is possible on an annual basis, following successful performance
- Access to a highly attractive pension plan
- Neyber platform – support provided to build your financial confidence and support when needed with Neyber loans
- Access to a range of benefits and discounts that are sourced specifically for our staff.

Well-being

- Full-time associate staff receive 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays which increases to reflect your length of service
- The chance to work with a company who received a 'Platinum' Workplace Wellbeing Award for the last two years
- Wellbeing champions and access to Mental Health First Aiders
- 24/7 access to a free Employee Assistance Programme to provide confidential advice and guidance
- Student Wellbeing support from our Educational Psychologist team
- Personal resilience and Wellbeing courses
- Access to our Wellbeing platform with a range of ever evolving benefits
- Wellbeing campaigns.

Facilities

- Great school buildings with many state-of-the-art facilities across our academies, providing positive working environments
- Free gym access on selected academy sites
- Free car parking at every site
- On-site catering with great food, all reasonably priced for staff (with the option to buy evening meals so you don't have to cook!)
- Social networking opportunities across the trust to create new relationships both inside and outside of the work setting.

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An overview of the Trust you'd be joining

Leigh Academies Trust is a non-profit making charitable company limited by guarantee, based in Strood, Rochester, Medway. The Trust exists to support and assist schools to build upon their existing strengths and to help them achieve educational transformation. It has significant experience in running schools, and today includes both sponsored academies and schools which have chosen to convert to academy status.

The Trust was formed in 2008 with the linking of The Leigh Technology Academy and Longfield Academy under one governing body. It now encompasses over 20,000 students, between the ages of 2 and 19, in 32 primary, secondary and special academies, across Kent, Medway, Bexley and Greenwich. Nearly 40% of academies are judged outstanding versus 15% nationally.

Leigh Academies Trust – Our Values:

- We care – about our pupils through our human scale approach to education, our staff and their well-being and the communities that we serve, driven by our high ideals and strong moral values.
- We have boundless ambition – to achieve excellence for all and create confident young adults with high levels of resilience and integrity.
- We work together – as one team in the belief that we are greater than the sum of our parts. We foster an enterprising culture through collaboration and in close partnership with industry and other educators.
- We keep getting better – using our 'can-do' attitude towards continuous improvement and innovation.

Trust Advantages:

- Expert central services for finance, HR, IT, facilities and business functions.
- Innovative approaches to teacher recruitment and retention.
- Fast track development of leaders for internal promotion opportunities.
- Central reserves protect individual school budgets.
- Substantial investment in cross-Trust initiatives to improve teaching and learning.
- Close collaboration between senior leaders across the Trust.
- Integration of primary and secondary approaches into all-through education.
- Adequate scale to design and test new ideas.
- High quality strategic governance with wide business and professional experience.
- Robust delivery models as government policies, rules and measures change.

Our Mission:
Education for a better world

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